Report to Cleobury Mortimer Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting Monday 11th April 2016

Lacon Childe School (The Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust)

Mr D Reynolds Headteacher

This has been another very exciting and challenging year for all involved with Lacon Childe School and the Academy Trust we have formed with Cleobury Mortimer Primary School, Clee Hill and Stottesdon.

We now have a dynamic nursery provision for local children with a view to this extending to Clee Hill gateway Nursery becoming part of the Trust in the near future.

One of the exciting developments of our partnership is the ability to move our staff from one setting to another dependent upon needs for the children, something that we are looking to develop this term. All Trust staff can be deployed in any of the trust academies giving greater staffing flexibilities.

We have made some site improvements due to the increased government focus on safeguarding and protecting our children. Our school site is now fully enclosed with fencing with the exception of the driveway between the car park and sports centre. Hopefully this will reduce the amount of dog fouling on our fields and reduce the number of unwanted visitors on our school site.

We have been once again fortunate to receive a grant from the education funding agency to replace our old boilers. The efficiency savings will pay for their replacements over a 3 year period.

Our allotment project, started in conjunction with Claire Todd from the Country Centre continues to thrive and engage our students.

There has been a great deal of change recently following the schools white paper on education and the academies and adoption Bill being passed. Our students in Year 11 will be the last to receive the old style grading system A\*- G for all of their subjects, which is be replaced by the 9-1 system for maths and English this year (Year 10) and for all subjects next year (Year 9). There will be a new format for reporting the successes of schools based on a much fairer system which identifies progress. Last year Lacon Childe finished in 7th place in the County league tables based upon 5A\*-C grades (the old measure) but 1st in County under the new Progress 8 measure. This suggests that we make more progress with our students from when they join till they leave than any other school in Shropshire in their best 8 subjects.

We have retained, for the 6th consecutive year, our standing as the best English dept. for progress in the County and have also achieved this accolade in Science with our students making 3 levels of progress at the top of the County lists. We are very proud of our academic achievements and confident that we can maintain and build on this in the future.

Our exclusion rates and behaviour are once again outstanding and lowest in the County, and our attendance rate has improved for the 3rd consecutive year. It currently stands at 96% which is nearly 2% higher than in 2012. We host a fully functional CHAT service and cannot underestimate the work that Mark Grieves has done with some of our most vulnerable students. He is an amazing asset to the school, the town and most importantly our students.

School admissions and pupil numbers continue to increase, although we have a very small cohort in Year 8. This has had a dramatic effect on our school funding, losing over £160,000 from our budget. The government’s proposal to adopt a fairer funding policy is much needed to help us through the difficult years ahead. Shropshire is still one of the least well-funded authorities nationally and it is hoped that the new policy will address some of the issues we face.

We will be running 7 minibuses next year to meet the demands of our ever increasing catchment area. These buses bring in students from as far away as Bridgnorth, Ludlow, Tenbury, Newnham Bridge and Bewdley. Without them our school numbers would be considerably lower.

We have continued to offer a variety of additional experiences for our students this year. They have visited Barcelona, Arthog in Wales, Paris, Poland and Auschwitz as well as visiting sites both locally and nationally.

We hosted our annual senior Citizens Christmas party to over 80 local residents and been involved in a variety of fund raising activities. Our yr11 24 hours of sport raised over £2500 for a local Hospice and Sport Relief this year raised over £1500. We have also made generous donations to chosen charities for each individual year group. This term we will be supporting a charity run by a former pupil of Lacon childe which looks to providing clean water to villages in Kenya.

Our school production of Carlotti’s “Pinocchio” was seen by over 500 people and we are looking forward to our end of year Speech Day when we celebrate the successes of our students.

We have had continued successes in sport at Lacon Childe this year. Our show jumping team were the Midlands, Wales and North West District Champions, Emily Price (Yr11) has once again represented England and GB at golf and recently won 3 championships including 2 women’s events and the Scottish Juniors Championships. Charlie Brown, Year 8, finished 5th in the national biathlon event held in London and has been selected for the elite performance squad. We have enjoyed County representative honours in golf, rugby, football, volleyball and hockey.

One of the conditions of becoming an Academy was the added responsibility for the Sports Centre at Cleobury Mortimer within the first 3 years of operation. There has been a funding review by Shropshire Council who are not keen to maintain some of its non-statutory responsibilities, one of which is leisure provision. This could mean that they will cease to make any funding available to run Cleobury Sports Centre. This could leave the town with no community sport and leisure provision. As a school we are desperately trying to find a solution to this problem and hope that we can come to some agreement with the Local Authority and possible management groups, i.e. Teme Leisure, to make sure that the provision for community sports and leisure is maintained in our town. We cannot do this without financial support.

Last year I was asked about 6th form provision at Lacon Childe and explained that it just was not viable. This year, our students went to 17 different post 16 providers including schools, sixth forms, colleges, apprenticeships and work placements around the whole of the Midlands. We have the distinction of being in only a handful of schools nationally who had 0% NEET figures last year. (NEET – Not in Education, Employment or Training).

DJR 11th April 2016