

I am really disappointed that we are unable to host the meeting here this year because of COVID-19 restrictions but delighted to be able to report to you all that Cleobury Mortimer Primary School is still thriving, in spite of the challenges we have had to meet over the past year.

The primary school remained open throughout all of the lockdowns which have closed many schools nationally over the past twelve months and we were able to provide care for all of the children of critical workers and those children who were considered to be vulnerable. Staff have worked hard to provide remote learning and support for families during this very difficult time.

We have had to follow Government guidelines to ensure that all of our staff and children have stayed safe and well, and these have necessarily placed some restrictions on the contact we have been able to have with visitors to school and activities off-site. However, challenges also present opportunities and we have managed to replace some celebrations and activities with on-line events such as sharing a 'virtual' Christmas performance and a very popular Easter egg competition.

During the past twelve months, we have worked hard with other agencies in the local community to make sure that the children and their families have been able to access support, whether this has been educational, emotional, social, medical or financial. It has been a privilege to have been able to contribute to the excellent community effort that Cleobury were able to provide. A school is so much more than a bricks and mortar building and provides so much more for its community apart from education.

That said, those of you who have walked past the site this year will have noticed that we have had a lot of building work carried out. We successfully bid for funding for a new roof and boilers. We have struggled with a leaking roof for several years and also with a less than efficient heating system. I am pleased to say that both projects are now nearing completion.

We currently have 242 children on roll and an additional 25 in nursery. We also have a waiting list of children waiting for places in school as several year groups are full at the moment. In September, we are oversubscribed and are currently expecting 45 children to join our reception class which means that we have had to fund a new classroom to be able to accommodate all the children who want to be at our school. Whilst it is very encouraging that we are such a popular choice with parents, it does mean that we need to look at strategic planning moving forward as we want to ensure that all local children have the option of being educated within the community. This is something we will be discussing with the town council and local authority so that we can ensure that all the children in our community have access to an excellent education locally, not only this year, but well into the future as well.

Another very positive development is that we are going to have a Hub for children who have additional learning needs based at our school. This means that children who are currently having to travel to Shrewsbury or out of county to have their educational needs met will have the opportunity to attend a local school in their community. Mrs Leigh Hector, who is our Special Education and Disability Needs co-ordinator will be responsible for running the unit which will be a part of our school and not apart from the school. This will also require repurposing the old kitchen to house the unit. The school was approached by Shropshire Local Authority and funding for the unit will come through the LA.

Another project due for completion in September is a new staffroom to allow the staff to have a dedicated space to use for breaks and also non-contact preparation work. This will be within the courtyard in the centre of the building.

Over the past few years, the School Council has been able to work with the Town Council on several different projects. Understandably this work has had to take a bit of a back seat during the pandemic but the children are looking forward to working closely with the Town Council again in the future. This work forms an invaluable part of the children's education, enabling them to understand what it means to be part of a community and make an active contribution towards the town in which they live.

I hope it will not be too long before I can welcome you all back to school and share with you the developments we have made over the past twelve months.

Carmel Mayfield

Headteacher

20.04.2021