

06 January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Our School – Annual Update

I'm delighted to be the principal here at Lightwoods, and even more delighted to tell you about the various changes and improvements that we've been making over the past year. Obviously, we tell you as much as we can in the weekly newsletters but the point of this letter is to add an overview to that information and tell you more specifically about continuous school improvement.

Our big themes over the past year have been focused on (1) developing the curriculum, (2) investing heavily in the buildings and environment, and (3) continually raising the quality of teaching and learning.

Our "E3L" curriculum has been a real improvement. E3L stands for Excite, Explore, Excel. It shows our learning journey to you – children get immersed in a theme (Excite), explore lots of different learning activities and then show off and demonstrate what they know as they 'Excel'. The children have made instruments, built castles, written biographies, told stories and held exhibitions. We hope you agree that our curriculum is broader, as well as more structured and sequenced than it was previously.

In English and mathematics, we have also been working hard on the 'small steps' that we teach the children, so their learning neatly stacks on top of previous learning and the children can progress. For example, our new phonics scheme, 'Rocket phonics' is now smoothly running across all of the lower school classes, with over £10,000 worth of new reading books and resources. We try to share the key points of our learning with you in 'Learning Together' sessions. Trips and residential visits have restarted and are in full-flow!

Beyond the curriculum, we've spent thousands of pounds on the building: upgrading computing infrastructure and connectivity; new flooring in Tinywoods; painting areas; and looking after the building much more. We have continued to upgrade the curriculum resources, bought lots of new equipment and revitalised the library book stock.

The quality of teaching has continued to improve, and on this one in particular, I cannot thank the staff enough. All of the teachers and support staff have really taken on board the new ideas given to them, be that from the Trust, training courses or in-house development. They are a fabulous team, with every single one of them approaching children warmly and wanting the best.

As a team we will not stop striving for excellence in all that we do, and can I also thank all of you for your continued support of the school. It makes a massive difference to feel the support you all give us – thank you for that.

Wishing you all well,

Mr Matthews