

Dear Jayne

Thank you for giving up so much of your valuable time when I visited yesterday. I appreciated our talk and the informative and illuminating conducted tour that I was given by your Head Girl and Head Boy. They were both proactive, knowledgeable and very polite; a real credit to your school.

We touched on some important subjects that are currently, impacting on remarkable and dedicated school leaders such as yourself. I was impressed by your genuine passion and honesty in your role as a C.of E. Church school Headteacher. It is always a privilege to speak with you, to meet your welcoming and friendly staff and pupils and to see the exciting and innovative things that you are all doing to enable all members of Deerhurst and Apperley Primary school to thrive and flourish.

You talked about the enormous effort that you and all the staff are putting into maintaining and expanding 'in house' efforts to give all the children the widest possible exposure to a broad curriculum. You mentioned, the various awards that you have achieved this year. This included the Music Mark, aimed at encouraging and enriching music throughout the school, from ukulele playing reception children to the school choir. You have also utilised 'I Sing Pop', a Christian organisation that provides a hub of resources to help create inspirational collective worship experiences. Other awards include the Healthy Schools award and the Eco award (with distinction). You are particularly proud that, as a result of the STEM engineering workshops that have been introduced in school to encourage DT and IT skills, your team competed in the County finals at Wotton-Under-Edge. The Active Nature Club, run by a group of parents, have also won a Wildlife Trust trophy and are in the County finals. The Eco committee are also instrumental in funding a new greenhouse for the school. You talked about the work you have been doing across the school community to promote wellbeing, especially the development of resilience in the children. You take staff wellbeing very seriously and have enabled staff to have extra training where appropriate. You have, with the encouragement of the whole school community, made a conscious decision to continue with bi-annual residential journeys so that all the oldest children benefit from a stay at Croft Farm at the beginning of the school year. Your innovative project around 'enterprise' gives your pupils the chance to learn and understand the concept of profit and loss in real

terms. The children were excited to tell me that they made and collected things to sell at the Christmas fair. They then had the chance to decide how they spent the profit.

You give the oldest pupils some real responsibility in planning their outside areas and using their individual gifts. All the school seem very aware of your school's 'vision and values'. The children were happy to point out the 'prayer table' and tell me that 'actually you can pray anywhere and God will hear and understand'. Particularly impressive were all the display boards that amply reflected God's love, (Ephesians 5 v1). The children were justifiably delighted to show me the 'Spirituality Garden', the prayer space and all your outdoor provision. On a recent visit I had been inspired by the richness and variety of activities on offer to help each child have a creative and living experience of 'prayer' in your beautiful 'Prayer space'. You described clergy led worship as being well received and the school enjoys good relationships with the local Anglican churches. You praise the partnership and support given to the school by the PTFA who have promised to fund vital laptops in the next academic year and without whom a lot of 'extras' would not be possible.

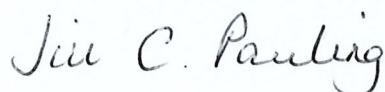
You and your governors are constantly aware and challenged by the shortage of funding for education as a whole. You are particularly concerned that the shrinking budget is barely able to support the challenges and aspirations of the school. You are passionate about providing the best educational opportunities for all your pupils but the insufficient funding for SEND pupils means that life is a constant struggle to provide more with less. You admitted that you are using the money gained from the extra work you do as a SIAMS inspector, to prop up your school budget. As I walked round your school, I was impressed by the working hum, the laughter and the bright displays reflecting your undoubted Christian ethos. I encourage you and your staff to take time to pause and reflect on all your many achievements and the 'visible flourishing' that all your hard work has enabled.

I look forward to working with you and your school community next year.

Best wishes

Jill Pauling.

(Bishop's Visitor)



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