



Dear Parents

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you my blog 'Living with the Label' written to explain and share the journey of our school following OFSTED in January 2017.

Inadequate: Living with the Label.

Being a school labelled as inadequate by OFSTED in January 2017 simply marked the start of a special journey, something that is making us effective and better in our practice.

My journey with Astbury School began twenty-one years ago when I started teaching in the infant class. Since that very first day, my heart has been drawn to serving the children, families and community who are the life of the school. Upon my appointment as Head teacher, in January 2016, I started to build a strong governing team to challenge and support the school in its actions and developed leadership across all levels of the school. This brought renewed vision and strategic direction to set the pathway to planning for excellence and my staff embarked on a rigorous and enriching training plan, giving them the tools that they needed to deliver outstanding teaching in a nurturing environment.

I knew that first class education was essential and that my children deserved the very best.

I received the first major milestone from the Church SIAMS inspectors in December 2016, where we were rated as 'good'. This involved looking at the school's Christian vision, how we embraced that in the running of the school, and most importantly enabling all pupils to flourish.

A SIAMS inspector stated: "All members of the school community recognise that, although the Head Teacher has been in post for less than a year, the impact of her vision on the development of the school's Christian character has already been and continues to be extensive...this has impacted strongly on all aspects of church school improvement."

When the school was labelled in January 2017, I also took solace in the following comment from Ofsted: "The new Head Teacher's responsiveness to pupils' needs, particularly for new arrivals to the school, has ensured that these pupils make sufficient progress from their starting points."

Ofsted also reported that: "Governors monitor and evaluate the work of the school with increasing vigour. They ensure that the needs of all pupils are met through the effective use of additional funding and human resources."

Parents were aware that the school had experienced difficulties, but they had faith in my ability to lead the school forward and commented favourably on the change in atmosphere within the school and on the recent changes in the way in which expectations of pupils' behaviour have been raised.

Testament to this were the Pupil Progress Scores in July 2017, they had dramatically improved from being inadequate in 2014, 2015 and 2016, a clear sign that the school was no longer 'coasting'.

In the latter half of 2017, after a delay brought about by the General Election, we were finally able to access significant school improvement funding. This accelerated our progress, enabling further staff training, including working with an educational consultancy, the Literacy Tree and the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics. The Literacy Tree placed children's literature at the core of our English teaching, transforming English across the school and mastery in maths enables our children to participate, be inspired and succeed in mathematics and supports our teachers in lesson planning and meeting the needs of all children.

Our School Improvement partners, Cheshire East and Chester Diocese Academy Trust (CDAT) - Sue Riley previously of Brereton C of E Primary School, and temporary Head Teacher before I took my position, have all provided positive observational evidence and feedback which supports how far we have come as a school on our journey towards outstanding provision and gives external validity to our progress. "The children showed good attitudes to learning both when working individually and collaboratively. The lesson was well planned and the children were engaged in their learning. The classroom environment is bright, colourful and supportive of pupils learning." June 2018.

We have also been able to invest in our buildings and infrastructure, with our brand-new extension to the reception area, creating an altogether safer and more inviting entrance to our school and enhancing our flexible learning environment. The classrooms have been refreshed with new furniture, carpet and attractive displays being used to support children in their learning and to show off our children's hard work.

Through it all, our children have continued to flourish: they have confidently taken place in the 2nd Annual Town Triathlon, Eaton Bank Dance Festival, Town Choir Festival, the School Gardens' Competition and the Cheshire Police Social Media Challenge; where we took first place. Not forgetting their well-renowned performance at Astbury May Day and two floats in the Congleton Carnival.

Further improvements on the horizon

During the remainder of this year and the start of next, we shall be developing a daily mile running track on the school field, which will support active learning. We will also be regenerating the EYFS outdoor classroom, creating a stimulating all year round learning environment.

Most significantly, we are due to become an Academy in early 2019, joining an established Multi Academy Trust (CDAT) with a proven record for school improvement. Once that milestone is achieved, we will be ready, and on countdown for the next Ofsted visit under a new Ofsted framework currently being developed for September 2019. It is only then that we will be able to cut off the label, which is a cross we have had to bear for some time now due to Ofsted being unable to re-inspect us until academisation.

Overall, I am proud of how far we have come, and although it has been an up-hill climb, we are able to see the shoots of growth being recognised, these are being nurtured, and my aspirations are becoming a reality.

Please take a look at some of the exciting things that we do at our school on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/astburyschool/>

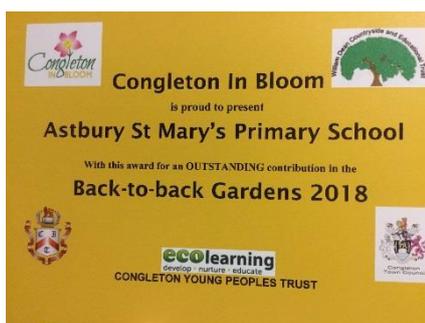
If you want to discuss this in any more detail, please ask to see me.

Yours faithfully,

Pip Worswick

Eco club award for the school

On Tuesday evening, Eco club received an award at the Congleton in Bloom presentation evening at the Town Hall. It was awarded to Astbury school in recognition of our outstanding contribution in the back to back gardens in Congleton Park. Thank you to Mrs Moore and Mrs Morris for their work each week with Eco club.



Celebrating our awards 26/10/2018

	Class Noah	Class Mary	Class Jacob	
Caring sharing and learning	Bradley	Courtney	Evie H	
Secrets of success – concentrate	Rebecca	Jodi	Jacob	
Attendance	96%	97%	92.3%	
Team Points	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	4th Place
	St Patrick	St Andrew	St George	St David

Celebrating our awards 09/11/2018

	Class Noah	Class Mary	Class Jacob	
Caring sharing and learning	Pippa	Sid	Ellie	
Secrets of success – don't give up	Cruz	Rufus	Theo	
Attendance	99%	95.2%	96%	
Team Points	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	4th Place
	St Patrick	St Andrew	St David	St George

Open Evening

We will be holding an open evening on Tuesday 20th November.

The staff have planned activities in different rooms around the school as we will be showcasing our school to prospective parents. We would like as many of our children to come into school from **6-7pm** and take part in class and school activities. Mr Bibby would like some children from coding club to be working on their robots and Mrs Bonney would like some of the school council children to showcase a council meeting. Miss Hall will be leading a science activity, Mr Stanlake maths and Mrs Hodder computing as well as EYFS.

Many parents have already let us know that their child is able to be involved – thank you. So we can plan who will work where, please let us know asap if your child wants to help out.

If your child would like to take part, they will need dropping off at school for 6.00pm and will need collecting again at 7.00pm. To leave the staff car park free for visitors to the evening, parents must use the school path from the village hall car park when dropping off and collecting. A member of school staff will be at the pupil entrance to sign your child in and out. Please note that the path is not well lit and a torch will be essential.

Governors

Corrine Astins Ward has been re-elected as a Parent Governor. Her term of office is for four years. There were two Parent Governor positions available, so a vacancy remains. If you are interested in supporting the work of our school and have the skills that we need to compliment those already on the Governing Board then please seriously consider applying for this role. Before the half term break, all children were sent home with information about how to apply. Please return your application form to school by Friday 30th November.

PFA

Help needed for the Christmas Fair on Friday 30th November 3.30-6.00pm.

If you can help prepare, tidy up or during the event, please see Jo Boffey, Jane Moore or inform a member of staff.

Tomorrow, children can wear a Christmas tie (or decorate their school one with tinsel) and bring in a bottle donation.

Friday 23rd November – children can wear Christmas socks and bring in a donation of chocolate for the tombola

Friday 30th November – children can wear a Christmas jumper and bring in cakes.

Head Lice

There have been cases of head lice in schools in Cheshire East. The link below provides the most up to date information and links to information on treatment and control. There is no requirement for children with head lice to be excluded from school. Treatment is simple and can be done in 10 to 30 minutes with a 'nit comb' on (ideally) wet hair with conditioner, repeated every few days for 2 weeks. Medicated shampoos and sprays are only recommended if wet combing hasn't been effective. For more information visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/>

It is imperative that ALL parents are proactive in this.

Christmas Lights Switch on in Congleton

The Congleton Christmas lights switch on takes place on Saturday November 24th. Our school children will be singing on the main stage in the town at 12.30-12.45pm - by B and M Bargains. School staff will be there to sing with the children and parents will need to stay by the stage as your child sings.

There will be a fun full day of events from 12.00-6.00pm. There will a Christmas Market throughout the town with local produce, street food, crafts, magic show and fair rides.

The grand lantern procession will be at 5.00pm from Lawton Street car park and will parade up to Moody Street. The light switch on will be at 5.30pm followed by a firework display and Santa.

If your child would like to join in the lantern parade then you need to go to the electric picture house on Cross Street THIS SATURDAY (17th November) from 10.30-3.30pm

PE uniform

You can now purchase some personalised Astbury hooded sweatshirts or polo tops for children to wear during PE. Some children are already wearing them and if you did not order last time round then ordering will now be available until Friday 23rd November. The polo shirts are white and the hooded sweatshirts are navy. All clothing will have the Astbury school crest on and for an extra £1.00 your child's initials can be printed on the opposite lapel.

If you wish to purchase any of the clothing then please fill in the order form below and return to the school office no later than Friday 23rd November.

All orders must be paid for in full before ordering. Cheques payable to Astbury St Mary's Primary School.

Size guide:

Age 3-4	24" chest
Age 5-6	26" chest
Age 7-8	28" chest
Age 9-10	30" chest
Age 11-13	32/34" chest

Sweatshirts £11.00 each, Polo shirts £7.00 each, Set of Initials £1.00 extra

Order form for polo shirts and hooded sweatshirts

I would like to order ___ hooded sweatshirt(s) age _____ at a cost £11.00 each

I would like my child's initials _____ printed on the sweatshirt at an extra cost £1.00

I would like to order ___ white polo shirt(s) age _____ at a cost of £7.00 each

I would like my child's initials _____ printed on the polo shirt at an extra cost £1.00

Total amount enclosed £ _____ (cheque/cash)

Child's name _____

Parent's signature _____

Parents' Evening Tuesday December 4th 2018 3.30pm and 6.50pm

Please indicate a preference of afternoon/evening and a time and return to us. Appointments are issued on a first come, first served basis. If you had an appointment and attended the parents' meetings on Friday 9th November then you do not need to attend on 4th Dec.

If you are not able to make this date please contact the school office or speak to your child's class teacher to try to make an alternative 10 minute appointment before or after school on a different day.

Name of child (ren) _____ Preferred time (s) _____

Appointments are to be ten minutes in length so that teachers are able to complete their schedule and give a reasonable amount of time to all parents. If you wish to discuss your child's progress in more detail than this time allows please arrange for another visit with the class teacher.

A text will be sent out to confirm your appointment time/s

Diary Dates

Friday 16 th November	Parents of years 5 and 6 invited to assembly at 2.45pm.Children would like to share their Bible Explorer work. Family bingo in the village hall 6pm - EVENT CANCELLED
Thursday 22 nd November	Bikeability day 1 for Yr 5
Friday 23 rd November	Bikeability day 2 for Yr 5
Saturday 24 th November	Christmas lights switch on in Congleton
Tuesday 27 th November	"Travelling Books" book fair
Thursday 29 th November	Last after school sports club
Friday 30 th November	Christmas Fair 3.30-6.00pm
Monday 3 rd December	Last swim for group 1 Last day for the book fair
Tuesday 4 th December	Parents' Evening 3:30 – 7:00 (6.50pm is the last appointment time)
Wednesday 5 th December	Christmas lunch for children staff and governors
Monday 10 th December	Class Mary trip to The Imperial War Museum, Salford
Thursday 13 th December	PFA Christmas film night
Sunday 16 th December	Whole School Nativity in church 11:00am
Monday 17 th December	Live Nativity in Astbury Village 6.30pm
Tuesday 18 th December	Class Christmas parties - bring a change of clothes Live nativity in Astbury Village 6.30pm
Thursday 20 th December	Christingle 9:15am in church – all welcome
Friday 21 st December	Last Day before Christmas holiday