What an eclectic year we have had at Cradoc! Unlocking the talent and realising the potential of every child in our school is our ultimate aim. To this end, school life continues to be very busy with all staff ensuring that children experience a wide range of events and activities throughout the year, and that they are supported to be the best they can be.

During the Autumn we were proud to be identified as a “Curriculum Pioneer School”, working with Welsh Government and other Pioneer Schools across Wales to write the new National Curriculum that will be published in 2018. This project is still comparatively in it’s infancy, but provides us with an opportunity to influence education across Wales for generations to come and is a clear acknowledgement of the good practice undertaken at Cradoc.

During the last year, pupils have continued to experience a variety of activities and achievements and we continue to be involved in many initiatives, such as Healthy Schools and Eco-Schools. Many of you will have noticed the painted tyres filled with colourful flowers which brightened up the village over the summer, a result of the older children taking part in “Cradoc in Bloom”. Parents and volunteers from the local community donated plants, compost and time to brighten up the village and a white stone with a poem on the top has been placed at the junction of the Aberyscir turning with the school road, to explain the project. A good time was had by all, pupils and adults alike, with new skills being developed. This initiative was also supported by the Community Council, for which we thank you.

This was only one of the activities which helped us gain the Eco-Schools Platinum Award this Spring, the highest Eco award available to a school, clearly acknowledging the high quality work at Cradoc. Aspects of this work are now being submitted to Welsh Government, having been identified by the Eco-School Assessors as practice worthy of sharing across Wales. Our thanks, in particular, to Mrs Barbara Wood, who throughout the 12-year project has un-failingly supported the school and helped us to embed practices that the children will use for the rest of their lives.

Whilst we believe that academic results are not everything, they are of course important. We are very proud of the hard work the children have put in to achieve last Summer’s excellent end of key stage results and I would like to publicly express my thanks to the staff across the school for their consistent hard work and dedication in supporting the children to achieve these outcomes, which only result from year upon year development.

Artistically, the pupils have once again participated in numerous events, from Gala Christmas Concerts at Brecon cathedral, to singing at local hospitals, to creating works of art for local Eisteddfodau and country dancing during our annual St David’s Day celebrations. Perhaps the highlight though was the fantastic Christmas Concert, which this year was enjoyed by over 500 family and friends over several performances. Well done to the children who gain such a lot by way of increased confidence, performance skills, singing, dancing and drama.

On the sporting front, four pupils won through to the All Wales Tennis finals in Cardiff, one pupil was chosen to represent Mid Wales in cross-country, 4 girls were chosen to represent Powys at swimming at the David Lloyd Centre in Cardiff, and we came third in South Powys Netball tournament and third in athletics. We have participated in numerous football, netball, rugby and cricket matches throughout the year and all those pupils involved have enjoyed themselves immensely – to say nothing of the day to day sporting activities undertaken in school itself!

We continually seek to improve the experiences for the children and the school as a whole. The staff and governors work as a team to identify priorities, plan and action developments, and monitor impact and outcomes. This year we are working on improving pupils spoken Welsh,

raising attainment in English for all pupils, particularly the more able and talented, developing pupils' independence and perseverance, ensuring the effective use of digital technology throughout learning, improving assessment procedures, and further developing sustainable and effective distributed leadership.

We are very aware that parking is an issue on the road outside school, particularly at peak drop-of and pick-up times. We have already had a dropped kerb installed to improve vehicular access to the playground to ease congestion during special events. We urge you to support our planning application for development of a further 29 parking spaces and safe bus drop off points within the school grounds. Full details can be found at <http://planning.powys.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=139638>

In response to parent requests, we are looking to increase the opening hours of 3@Cradoc to provide nursery care and education from 9am to 3.30pm. Working in partnership with Kids Club @ Cradoc this will enable us to jointly offer wrap around care for children aged 3+ from 8am to 6pm during school time and most school holidays, thus providing a stimulating, competitive childcare experience for the younger members of our community and peace of mind for their parents! We are hopeful that this facility will open in the Summer Term and in the meantime, we continue to operate in the mornings and hold weekly toddler sessions on a Wednesday afternoon and Shake, Rattle & Roll on a Friday. If you are interested in any of these, please see our advert elsewhere in the magazine or contact school direct.

At this point I must mention the achievement of Mrs Jan Owen this year. In November, Jan was shortlisted in the Kellogg’s Breakfast Club Hero award for the work she does with Kids Club @ Cradoc. This award recognises an individual who has made a significant difference to the operation of a Breakfast Club and ultimately the lives of the attendees. It identifies someone who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to help enrich the lives of the pupils. This is no mean feat and we heartily congratulate Jan on being among the top 6 in Britain. Well done Jan.

Our pupils continue to benefit from our strong partnerships with parents and the local community. The school grounds continue to be used by a number of Community Groups and we welcome families using the school facilities outside of school hours but respectfully point out that dogs are not welcome due to the health risks for the children. We are very fortunate to have an active PTA, and the range of resources we have in school is greatly enhanced by their hard work and fundraising. We value those who help in school on a voluntary basis and welcome new volunteers for long term or one off events – from supporting to transporting – your contribution enhances the children’s education greatly and we couldn’t do it without you!

I hope the information above gives you a taste of some of the activities on-going at Cradoc School. As always if you would like further details, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Regards

Mrs Judith Morris

Headteacher

Cradoc Primary School