

Headteacher's Reflection on our Year

2025-2026

As another academic year draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on the many moments that have shaped our journey together. It has been a year filled with learning, laughter, challenge, achievement and growth. From the excitement of new beginnings in September to the celebrations and farewells of July, our children have embraced every opportunity with enthusiasm, kindness and determination.

At Crowcombe and Stogumber, we often talk about the importance of flourishing, and when I look back over the past year, I can see countless examples of our children doing just that. Whether stepping onto a stage, representing the school in sporting events, leading community projects, exploring the outdoors, supporting one another through challenges or achieving personal milestones, our pupils have continued to demonstrate the very best of themselves.

Our vision, **"Together, let us Love, Encourage, Achieve and Flourish,"** remains at the heart of everything we do. It shapes our decisions, guides our relationships and underpins the experiences we provide for our children. Throughout the year, our Christian values of **Generosity, Optimism, Determination, Curiosity and Courage** have been evident in classrooms, playgrounds, churches and the wider community, helping to create the nurturing and ambitious environment that makes our schools so special.

This year has reminded us of the power of community. The partnership between pupils, families, staff, governors, churches and the wider community enables us to provide rich and meaningful opportunities for our children. Together, we have celebrated successes, supported one another through challenges and continued to ensure that every child feels valued, known and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Throughout the year, our curriculum has been enriched by a wealth of memorable experiences that have brought learning to life. Learning Outside the Classroom remains a defining strength of our schools. Children have explored woodlands at Combe Sydenham, undertaken forest school activities, investigated biodiversity at Viper Woods, cleaned beaches, studied rivers at Holford Stream, explored local farms, visited museums and galleries, and enjoyed regular outdoor learning opportunities across both sites. These experiences enable our children to develop resilience, curiosity and a deeper understanding of the world around them.

There have been many unforgettable educational visits this year. KS1 children explored Victorian life at Allerford Museum, participated in art workshops at East Quay, and were joined by Reception to visit Williton Library and enjoy a wonderful beach trip complete with a steam train journey and RNLI visit. Woodpeckers developed their historical understanding through a visit to the Roman Baths, Cheddar caves and explored farming and food production through work with local farmers and visits to a working dairy farm. Our curriculum has also been enhanced by science workshops, geography fieldwork, theatre visits, environmental speakers and numerous visitors who have shared their expertise and experiences with our pupils.

One of the most exciting developments this year has been the growth of our Climate Action Plan. Led by our Climate Ambassadors, children have taken meaningful action to improve sustainability within our schools and wider community. Pupils have organised toy rehoming initiatives, investigated waste reduction, participated in The Great Plastic Count, developed plans for a community garden, undertaken beach cleans, planted trees and created habitats for wildlife. Our partnership with Carymoor Environmental Trust further enhanced pupils' understanding of recycling, composting and environmental responsibility. It has been inspiring to watch our children become passionate advocates for positive change.

Pupil leadership has flourished across the schools. Our School Council has championed road safety, organised fundraising opportunities and contributed important ideas for school development. Our Year 6 Sports Leaders have dedicated their time to supporting younger children through sports clubs and lunchtime activities, while our Climate Ambassadors have demonstrated courageous advocacy through their environmental work. Through these roles, children have learned that their voices matter and that they can make a genuine difference to the communities around them.

Developing confident communicators has been another important focus this year. Through performance poetry, drama workshops, class presentations, worship opportunities, concerts and our annual Performing Arts Café, children have developed confidence in speaking, performing and expressing themselves creatively. World Book Week provided a wonderful celebration of reading, while opportunities to work alongside visiting performers and peers helped nurture a lifelong love of literature and storytelling.

The performing arts have once again played a central role in school life. The Reception and KS1 children delighted audiences with their production of *The Twinkly Nativity*, whilst KS2 impressed with a joyful Christmas Concert. The whole school enjoyed a memorable visit to the Brewhouse Theatre to watch *The Nutcracker*, and the year concluded with Kingfishers' wonderful performance of *Do You Remember the First Time?* Through humour, music and storytelling, the children celebrated the experiences, friendships and memories that shape primary school life.

We have also worked hard to support children's wellbeing throughout the year. Children's Mental Health Week encouraged pupils to reflect on the importance of belonging and community, while our online safety curriculum helped children become kind, responsible and confident digital citizens. Our inclusive ethos ensures that every child feels valued, supported and able to flourish as an individual.

Sport has been another area of tremendous success. Our children have represented the schools in gymnastics, rugby, hockey, athletics, dance festivals, cycling, cross-country, swimming, cricket, netball, quadkids athletics, invasion games and equestrian competitions. We celebrated success in local, area and county events, including winning the Taunton Area Small Schools Sportshall Athletics competition, achieving excellent gymnastics results and qualifying for national equestrian championships. Most importantly, our pupils have consistently demonstrated determination, teamwork, respect and sportsmanship in every event they have attended. We are incredibly proud to have recently been awarded the Gold School Games award for opportunity and participation in Sport and PE.

Our residential visits have provided some of the year's most memorable experiences. Year 3 and 4 embraced challenge and adventure during their residential at Kilve Court, where they demonstrated courage, determination and teamwork whilst tackling climbing, abseiling, grass sledging, low ropes activities and fossil hunting. Year 5 and 6 enjoyed an unforgettable residential at Reach Outdoors in Paignton, packed with adventure, challenge and fun. Following a scenic train journey, pupils took part in a wide range of outdoor activities including giant stand-up paddleboarding in the sea, team challenges, gorge walking and ridge walking on Dartmoor, and the excitement of coasteering along the South Devon coastline. Throughout these residential visits, children continually stepped beyond their comfort zones, showing outstanding resilience, courage and determination while supporting and encouraging one another. Evening games and shared experiences strengthened friendships and created lasting memories. Both residential visits provided invaluable opportunities for children to develop independence, confidence and teamwork whilst demonstrating the very best of our school values.

Academically, we have much to celebrate. Our Year 6 pupils approached SATs with maturity, determination and resilience. Year 1 pupils rose confidently to the challenge of the Phonics Screening Check, whilst Year 4 pupils demonstrated commitment and perseverance in the Multiplication Tables Check. We were also delighted to receive highly positive feedback during external moderation of Year 6 writing, which recognised the strength of

our writing provision and the high-quality opportunities pupils are given to develop as writers. These successes reflect the hard work of children, staff and families alike.

This year has also been characterised by the strong partnership between school, church, families and the wider community. From family church services and celebrations, community partnership and events, PTA activities, parent forums and not forgetting the Spring Fete and colour run! We have continued to work together to provide the very best experiences for our children. We remain deeply grateful for the support of our governors, volunteers, churches, PTA and families, whose contributions enrich school life in countless ways.

As always, I would like to thank our dedicated staff team whose commitment, care and professionalism make our schools such special places to learn and grow. I would also like to thank our governors for their support and challenge, our PTA for their tireless fundraising and organisation of events, and our families for the valued partnership we share.

Most importantly, I would like to thank our wonderful children. Every day they inspire us with their kindness, curiosity, resilience, creativity and determination. They embody our vision and values and continually remind us what can be achieved when we work together.

As we look ahead to the future, we do so with optimism, confidence and excitement. To our Year 6 pupils, we wish you every happiness and success as you move on to the next stage of your journey. You leave us with wonderful memories and we could not be prouder of all that you have achieved.

Thank you for being part of another truly special year at Crowcombe and Stogumber. I am incredibly proud of all that we have accomplished as a school community and am already looking forward to next year!