



St. Elphin's
School

Welcome to St. Elphin's . . .

Elphin was a little-known male saint who perished in battle in the 7th century AD. The parish church of Warrington, Cheshire, is dedicated to St. Elphin, and it was in Warrington, in 1844, that St. Elphin's School was founded. Known originally as the Clergy Daughters' School, St. Elphin's moved to the Derbyshire countryside in 1904, and celebrates its 150th anniversary in 1994.

With a school roll of about 300 – girls from 3 - 18, boys from 3 - 7 – St. Elphin's is a small enough community for all its pupils to feel at home, to know and to be known by everyone. Approximately one third of the girls are full or weekly boarders. One of the school's strengths is the close relationship which exists between boarding and day pupils. In all senses it runs as a boarding community, with senior school day girls remaining at school until 6.15 p.m. on weekdays and taking part in matches and other weekend activities. Junior school pupils may leave at 4.00 p.m., though many remain at school until 6.00 p.m. to complete their prep and enjoy club activities, as at the senior level.

The setting is delightful. Amidst the Derbyshire Dales, on the borders of the Peak District National Park, the school's grounds extend to some 36 acres, alongside the main A6 road. This gives easy access to airports, motorways and all centres of population. A school bus brings pupils to and from Chesterfield each day, and an escort is provided to and from London at the beginning and end of each term.

Aims

Three important principles guide much of our work at St. Elphin's: respect for the past, an awareness of the present and preparation for a challenging and uncertain future. Whilst valuing tradition in various ways, we encourage our pupils to think and speak for themselves. Visitors often comment on their friendliness, courtesy and pleasing self-confidence. Looking to the future, we are developing further our links with Europe, especially France and Germany. We also make sure that the girls are aware of the world of work and are taught technology in its different forms.

We believe that a single-sex education gives girls the best chance of high academic achievement, especially in mathematics and science, and helps them to gain poise and assurance through having positions of responsibility.

We hope, too, that our girls can forge friendships here which last throughout their lives, that they enjoy their years spent in Derbyshire and that above all they feel proud to have been members of this community.





A first-rate start. . .

St. Elphin's has excellent facilities. Over the years a carefully planned programme of building and refurbishment has provided modern teaching blocks, library, gymnasium and all-weather sports area, assembly hall/dining room, serving meals in cafeteria style, and appropriate boarding accommodation. Since 1989 alone, teaching and recreation rooms for the youngest children, a new boarding house and separate leisure facilities for sixth formers, improved middle school boarding accommodation and a new music wing have all been completed.



Nursery Department

Pupils are usually admitted to the nursery department from the age of 3 years. The nursery has its own area and resources but can also use those of the junior and senior departments. The fully trained, experienced staff provide a sound basis for the more formal education of the junior school.

As part of a much larger school, this department has many advantages; familiarity with the staff and buildings makes for a trouble-free transfer from nursery to infants to junior departments.

Infant and Junior Departments

These departments have recently been rehoused in separate premises, with extensive play and recreational areas, both indoors and outside. They make use, too, of many senior school facilities and there is close contact between the girls and the staff of junior and senior departments. The National Curriculum is followed from the start, and the basic skills of writing, number and reading are approached through purposeful, structured activities. French, music, P.E., drama, textiles, science, technology and computing are also important elements in the curriculum. Class sizes are small to allow for individual attention. Both at junior and senior levels, the school employs a trained teacher to help with learning difficulties such as dyslexia.









Aiming for the top. . . .

Senior School

The school admits girls of wide-ranging academic ability, but the small classes and generous staff: pupil ratios enable staff to cope successfully with this spread of ability. Examination results are excellent – specific annual details are enclosed with this prospectus – and most sixth formers leave us to follow an ever-widening range of degree courses at university, with some gaining places at Oxford or Cambridge.

In years 7 - 9 all girls follow the same broad and balanced curriculum and are 'setted' according to ability in different subjects. All girls at this stage take courses in computing, technology and information technology, as well as studying Latin and German.

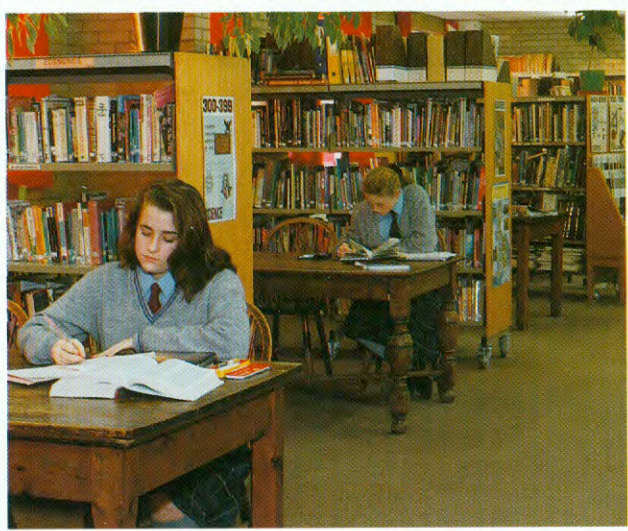


In years 10 and 11 girls follow a framework of basic subjects which is combined with an 'options scheme' devised to suit the needs of each individual. Most girls are entered for 8 or 9 subjects in the GCSE examinations.

In the Sixth Form a full range of 'A' and 'A/S' level subjects is available, including economics and business studies. There is a general studies course which includes mathematics and modern foreign languages and other topics offered on a modular basis.

Academic excellence is obviously an important goal, but never the only concern of the staff. Girls are encouraged to develop their own talents in all spheres of activity.





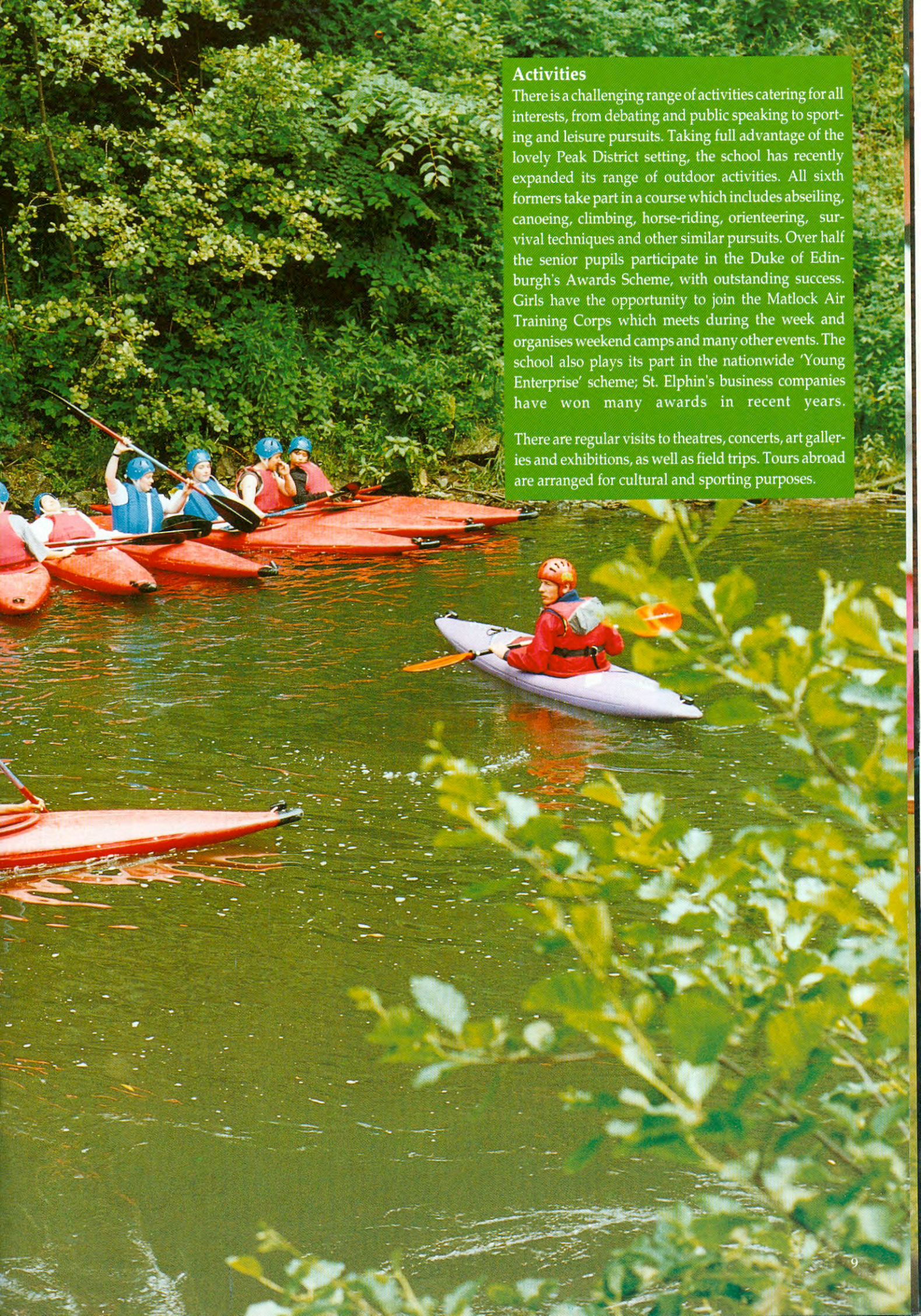


Boarding Accommodation

Junior boarders aged 7-10 live in a specially designed area in the recently rebuilt junior school, with their own house staff and recreational rooms. In the senior school (age range 11 to 18) each girl belongs to one of four houses, and housemistresses are responsible for the day to day welfare of the girls. Boarders aged 11 to 16 sleep in areas with girls of similar ages – younger girls in dormitories, older girls in private cubicles with study facilities.

Once in the sixth form, girls move to either 'Robinson' or 'Devonshire': purpose-built houses, with single study-bedrooms and excellent recreational facilities. Residential house staff look after these girls, who enjoy considerable freedom within a structured environment.





Activities

There is a challenging range of activities catering for all interests, from debating and public speaking to sporting and leisure pursuits. Taking full advantage of the lovely Peak District setting, the school has recently expanded its range of outdoor activities. All sixth formers take part in a course which includes abseiling, canoeing, climbing, horse-riding, orienteering, survival techniques and other similar pursuits. Over half the senior pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards Scheme, with outstanding success. Girls have the opportunity to join the Matlock Air Training Corps which meets during the week and organises weekend camps and many other events. The school also plays its part in the nationwide 'Young Enterprise' scheme; St. Elphin's business companies have won many awards in recent years.

There are regular visits to theatres, concerts, art galleries and exhibitions, as well as field trips. Tours abroad are arranged for cultural and sporting purposes.



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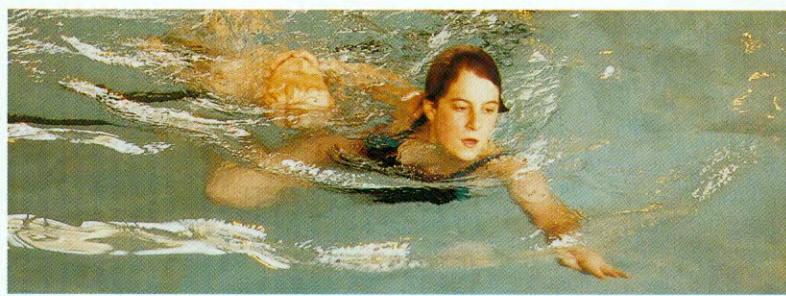
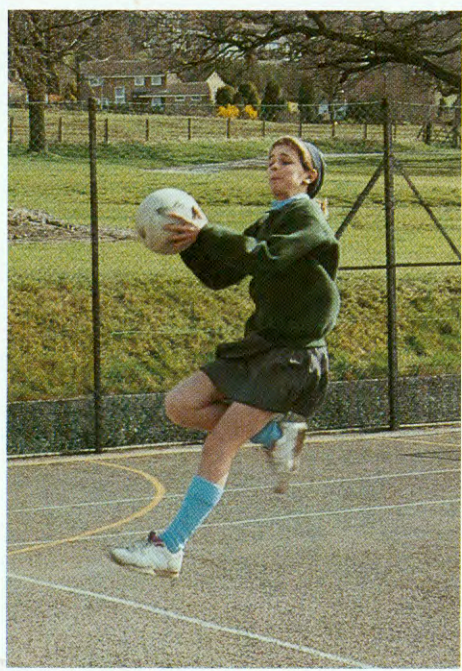
MERCURY EVANS

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Physical Education

With its gymnasium, extensive playing fields, tennis courts and large all-weather games area, St. Elphin's can offer a very wide range of sporting activities: athletics, badminton, basketball, cross-country, gymnastics, hockey, netball, rounders, tennis. Swimming and life-saving lessons for all girls are given throughout the year at the nearby Matlock Lido where outstanding levels are achieved. Girls represent the County in various sports and there is a full programme of matches against other schools.





Textiles, Art and Design

Housed in spacious studios occupying the whole of the first floor in one of the recently built teaching blocks, these popular departments are always a hive of activity, either for academic or recreational purposes.



Drama

The Speech and Drama Department regularly produces plays and 'musicals'; the annual house drama competition involves most girls in some form of stage-craft experience. In recent years 'A' Level Theatre Studies has also been introduced, with considerable success. More than half the pupils take private lessons in speech and drama, and the school is well represented at the annual Buxton Festival of Music and Drama.

Music

The music department runs an orchestra, wind and brass groups and five choirs. It presents a varied programme of concerts, including visiting artists. In recent years the choral society has toured in Holland and France and has sung in Westminster Abbey, Lichfield Cathedral and York Minster. Many girls learn several instruments and the house music competition, held annually, involves almost every girl in the senior school. The school owns a magnificent "Bösendorfer" grand piano, the gift of the Friends of St. Elphin's.



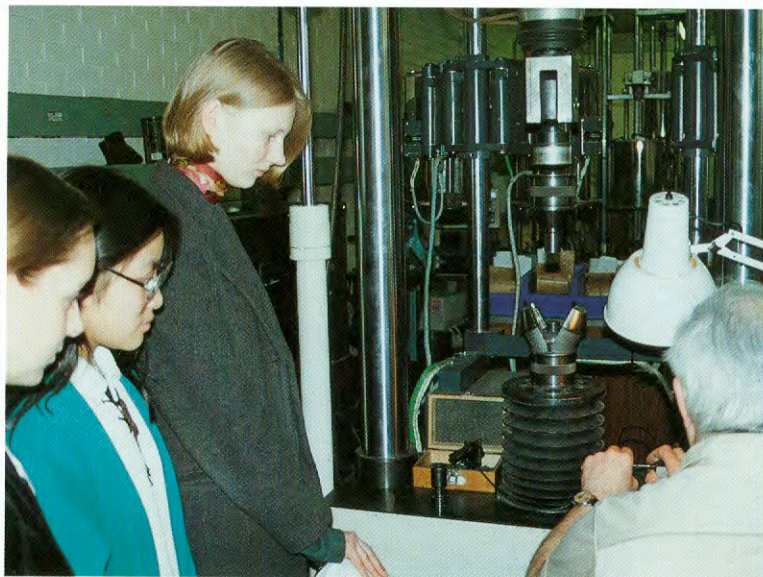
Caring for people. . .

Careers Guidance

Careers guidance begins for all girls in Year 9. A careers team of three trained advisers, including the deputy head, plans visits, lectures and discussions with girls on an individual basis. Many girls have 'work experience' with local firms once they have completed their GCSE examinations. The school is also a member of the Independent Schools Careers Organisation, which offers careers guidance to parents, staff and girls in member schools. At intervals, sixth formers take part in a two-day 'Challenge of Business Management' course with pupils from independent and state schools. In addition they all take a term's course in 'Understanding Industry'.

Pastoral Care

Each pupil has a form teacher as well as a house mistress to whom she may turn for help and guidance. Boarders also have a boarding house mistress. The deputy head is in overall charge of pastoral care. A resident nursing Sister is available at all times; the school doctor holds a surgery at school twice a week during term.



Links with the Community

Many of the activities already described bring pupils in close contact with the local community: for example, through the careers department, the Duke of Edinburgh's Scheme and also through the work of a strong social services committee, which raises large sums of money for local causes. Visitors are welcome to attend our chapel services and there are close links with local churches. Our pupils sometimes perform with the Darley Dale brass band and can join orchestras based in Chesterfield and Sheffield.

The Chapel

St. Elphin's was founded for the daughters of Anglican clergy. Since 1988 it has been in Association with the Midland division of the Woodard Corporation. The chapel therefore remains central to school life. Girls are encouraged to develop their Christian faith and life as fully as possible through private prayer, corporate worship and sound teaching. The resident Chaplain is responsible for the spiritual welfare of the school community. Services are held daily in the school chapel, and there is an annual confirmation service taken by the Chairman of the Governors, the Bishop of Warrington.



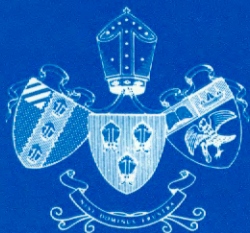
From the Headmaster . . .

I hope that reading a little about St. Elphin's will encourage you to come to visit us and find out more. Please write or telephone for an appointment. Your daughter(s) will be most welcome to come with you, and my staff, pupils and I look forward to meeting you.

Peter Pollard

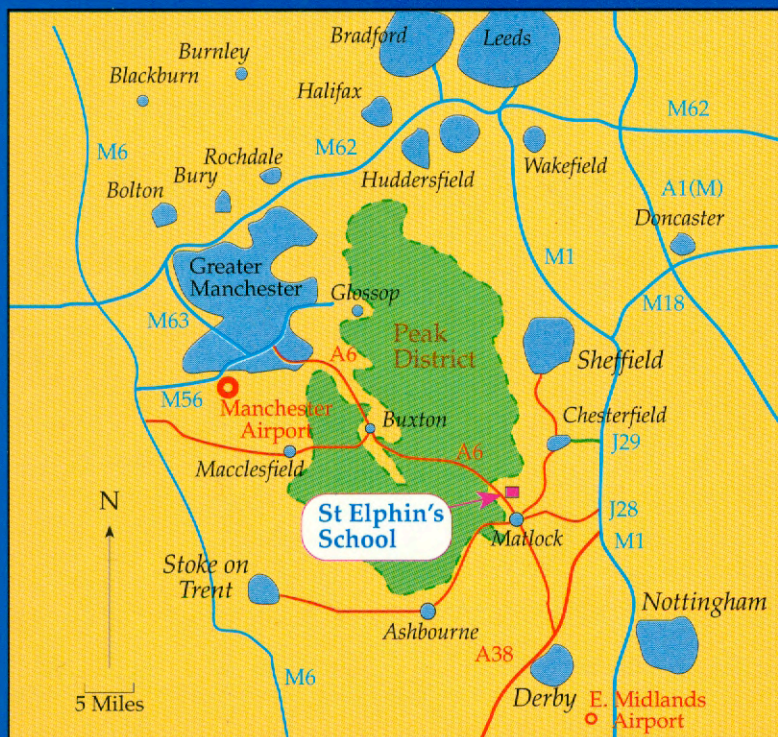
Peter Pollard
Headmaster





St. Elphin's School

Darley Dale



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