



St Elphin's School



Founded 1844

Welcome to St Elphin's — one of the oldest girls' public schools in the country. We were founded in 1844 by Horace Powys, Rector of St Elphin's Church, Warrington, who wanted women to be educated to make their mark on public life. 150 years later we aim to give young people both the chance to achieve the best possible academic qualifications and skills for adult life, as well as the confidence and self-assurance to use them for the good of the community and their own fulfilment.

With a school roll of about 250, and a staff-pupil ratio of 1:12, St Elphin's is a small enough family for all its pupils to feel at home, to know and to be known by everyone. Approximately one half of the girls in the senior school are full or weekly boarders who come from diverse backgrounds and countries. This rich mixture of nationalities enriches our community and gives pupils an insight into cultures and customs other than their own. Pupils form life-long friendships bridging several continents.

The school's grounds extend to some 36 acres and are set amidst the delightful countryside of the Derbyshire Dales on the borders of the Peak District National Park between Matlock and Bakewell. We are on the main A6 trunk road which gives easy access to three 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.

We believe that a single-sex education gives girls the best chance of high academic achievement, especially in mathematics and science. The experience of responsibility within the school gives the girls an opportunity to develop their leadership skills, so gaining in poise and self-assurance. While valuing the strong traditions we have inherited we also encourage our pupils to think and speak for themselves. Visitors often comment on the happy atmosphere and the friendliness, courtesy and pleasing self-confidence of our pupils.

Pupils can join us at any stage of their academic career from 2 years old to 18; details are in the General Information booklet. The Headmistress is always pleased to welcome parents and arrange for them to see round the school. If they wish their children may spend a trial day with us.



*~ academic excellence
provided by an enthusiastic
and experienced staff.*





FACILITIES AND BOARDING PROVISION



Boarding — boarding accommodation is suited to each age group. Pupils aged 10 to 13 live in four or five bedded dormitories in Hillview which has a large recreational area. 14 to 16 year-olds have private cubicles with wash basins and study facilities in Orchard House. Girls 16 to 18 live in the separate purpose-built houses of Robinson and Devonshire with single study-bedrooms and excellent facilities.



Facilities — St Elphin's has excellent facilities. Over the years a carefully planned programme of building and refurbishment has provided modern teaching blocks, well equipped laboratories, studios for Art, Textiles and Drama, Music, Business Studies/Computing centre, library, gymnasium, an all-weather sports area, Assembly Hall/dining room serving meals in a cafeteria style, and boarding accommodation of a high standard.

“ ~ I was immediately impressed by the warm and friendly atmosphere.”



Pastoral care — closely co-ordinated discipline and pastoral systems give security while ensuring as much individual freedom as possible. The resident Deputy Head is in over-all charge of a team of resident teaching and non-teaching housemistresses. The Headmistress is resident, as are also the Chaplain and the Nursing Sister. The school doctor holds a surgery in school twice a week and visits whenever necessary. There is a cottage hospital less than half a mile away. In addition each girl, day or boarding, has a form teacher to whom she may turn for help and guidance.

The school's catering staff provide excellent food. The wide variety of dishes at each meal caters for even the most difficult diets and appetites.



St Elphin's welcomes pupils of a wide range of talents and academic ability. Examination results are consistently excellent, placing the school among the best in the country. Small classes ensure individual attention and an enthusiastic staff enable all pupils to reach their potential.

The curriculum is carefully structured for each age-group, with fully integrated supporting activities so that each pupil makes full use of her time. In aiming to prepare our pupils for life in the 21st century in the UK and abroad we encourage language and communication skills — all pupils may study at least two modern languages and school exchanges and visits abroad are regularly organised. The core-skills of English, Mathematics and Science are important components of the curriculum — extra lessons if necessary are available in English and Mathematics. Competence in computing and information technology are seen as essential, and to this end the computing suite has recently been re-equipped with personal computers and the latest software.

Preparation and private study in the junior and middle school is supervised during the school day.

Special Learning Needs — St Elphin's has its own specialists in the field of Dyslexia, and all staff follow a code of practice sympathetic to the needs of pupils with learning problems. Girls needing special tuition are fully integrated into the school but are withdrawn for private lessons as required. As a result of our policy several of our pupils who were registered as dyslexic have gained university places.



A curriculum relevant to the 21st Century





Most of our sixth formers progress to an ever widening variety of degree courses at universities in the UK or abroad, with some girls gaining places at Oxford or Cambridge. The 'gap' year is used by some to extend their experience, especially abroad.

A full range of 'A' and 'AS' Level is available as well as the more vocational course of Advanced GNVQ Business. The key skills of Communication, Application of Number and Information Technology, as well as Modern Languages, are all provided for, as is a course of health and life-skills, often using the expertise of outside professionals. The 'A' or 'AS' General Studies examination is also offered.

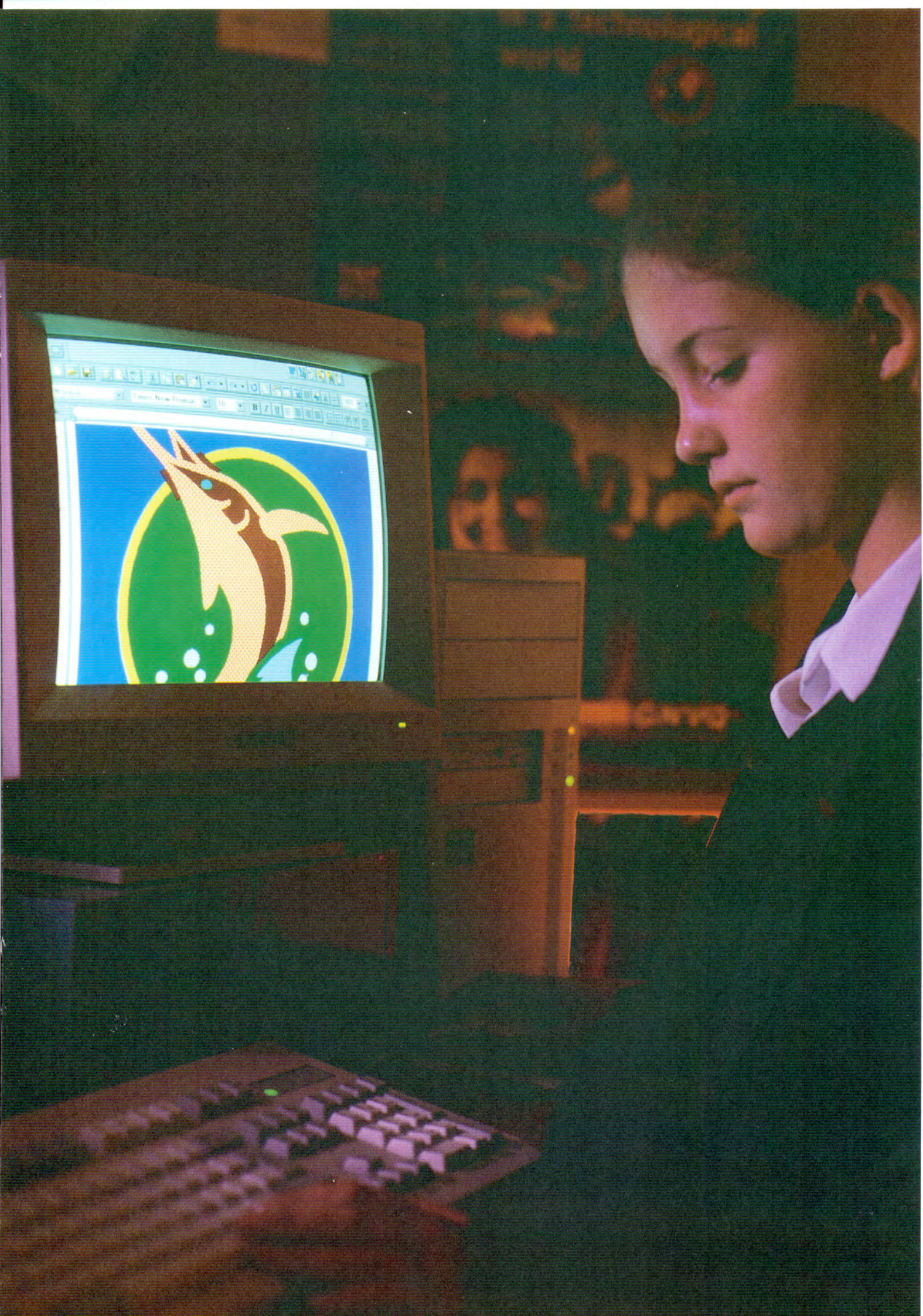
Sixth formers become prefects of the school and take on considerable responsibility for younger girls and a number of important activities. House Captains run the four Houses and the Head Girl presides over the School Council which liaises with and advises the Headmistress. In addition the sixth form enjoy many privileges; for example they may wear their own choice of clothes provided they follow a dress code, and day girls and boarders have a very attractive suite of rooms for study and relaxation in the main building.

Careers Guidance — begins for all girls in Year 9. A team of trained advisers plans visits, lectures and discussions with girls on an individual basis; most girls have "work experience" with local firms or abroad. The school is a member of the Independent Schools' Careers Organisation and benefits from access to the Derbyshire Careers Service. Sixth formers take part in a two-day Challenge of Business Management course and a term's course in "Understanding Industry".



“ ~ Sixth Formers are treated as adults and given real responsibilities.”







*An exciting programme
which even the faint-
hearted can enjoy*

With its gymnasium, extensive playing fields, tennis courts and large all-weather games area, St Elphin's offers a very wide range of sporting activities; hockey, netball, tennis, athletics, badminton, basketball, rounders, gymnastics, aerobics, self-defence training and trampolining. In addition there is a full programme of off-site sports for the sixth form which includes canoeing, sailing, abseiling and climbing. Tennis is taught by the school's own Lawn Tennis Association coach, pupils beginning at the age of 7.



Swimming — the swimming and life-saving programme runs throughout the school making use of the excellent local swimming pool on three mornings each week. Recently our sixth formers have gained more distinction awards for life-saving than any other school in the country, and most pupils gain their Swimming Teacher's Certificate before leaving the Upper Sixth.







“~ Creative, stimulating, imaginative — girls are really encouraged to develop their talents.”

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. Pupils progress to many varied careers in Fine Art, Textile Design and Manufacture.

Drama — the Speech and Drama Department regularly produces plays and musicals; the house drama competition involves most girls in some form of theatrical experience.

A Level Theatre Studies is taught with considerable success; more than half the pupils take private lessons in speech and drama, and the school is regularly highly placed at the annual Buxton Festival of Music and Drama.







"So much music happens here and to such a high standard."



Music at St Elphin's is encouraged through the award of several music scholarships throughout the age-groups. Pupils have the opportunity of performing in five choirs, string, wind and brass ensembles, and the full school orchestra. The school hosts master classes and visiting musicians. In recent years the Choral Society has toured Holland, Austria, France and Canada. Choral Evensong has been sung in many of the great Cathedrals including Westminster Abbey and Lincoln. Tuition is available to all girls in most orchestral instruments as well as piano, singing and organ. The various House music competitions and numerous concerts give girls the enjoyment and experience of performing.

Chapel — The Chapel is central to school life and is always accessible. We have been in association with the Woodard Corporation since 1988, and our Church of England tradition is reflected in daily prayer, regular celebration of the Eucharist and the observance of the Church Year. The Bishop of Warrington conducts annually the Confirmation service in the school chapel. The school sees itself as a resource of the wider church and seeks to join in local church life whenever possible. Pupils from other denominations and faiths are warmly welcomed.



Infant and Junior — Our Infant and Junior Departments benefit from a combination of traditional methods with the best of modern approaches. The National Curriculum is used as a guideline, but French, Science, Music, PE, Swimming, Drama, Technology and Computing are all given due importance. Class sizes are small, allowing for individual attention.

Our dyslexia specialist monitors the early development of each pupil, to ensure that possible learning problems are diagnosed at an early stage. Any child with learning problems receives extra support at all levels.



Experience of performance is gained at an early stage through the production of various musical events and plays. Regular educational visits and expeditions are planned at home and abroad. Clubs and classes for many types of activities are arranged in school and even the smallest child is encouraged to participate in local charity events, environmental concerns and community service.

Small classes allow for individual attention.

INFANT AND NURSERY



As part of a much bigger school, the Infant and Nursery Departments have many advantages. Familiarity with the staff and buildings makes for a trouble-free transfer from Nursery to Infant to Junior Departments. They can also enjoy many of the facilities including the gymnasium.

Pre and after school care is organised daily in term time. Parents can be confident that their children will always receive appropriate first-aid and medical supervision.

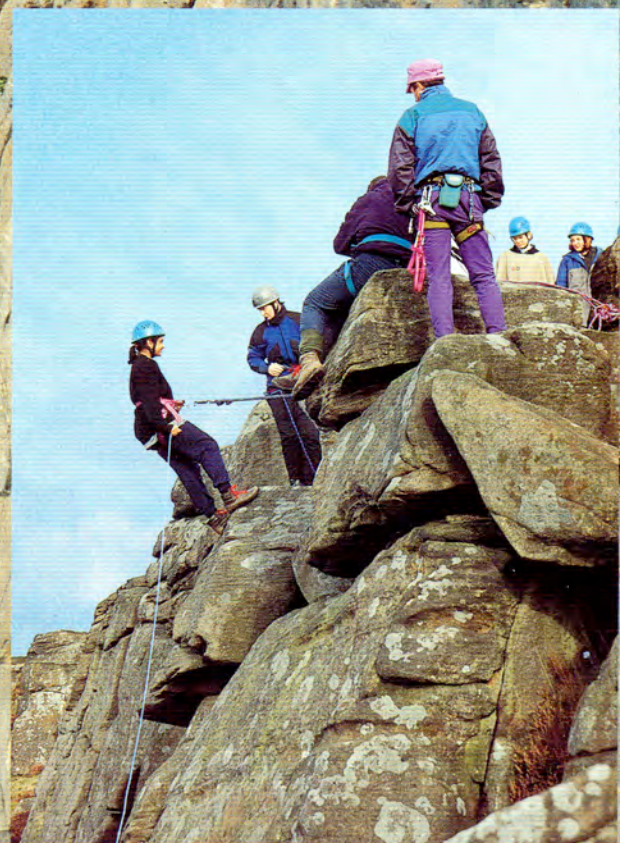
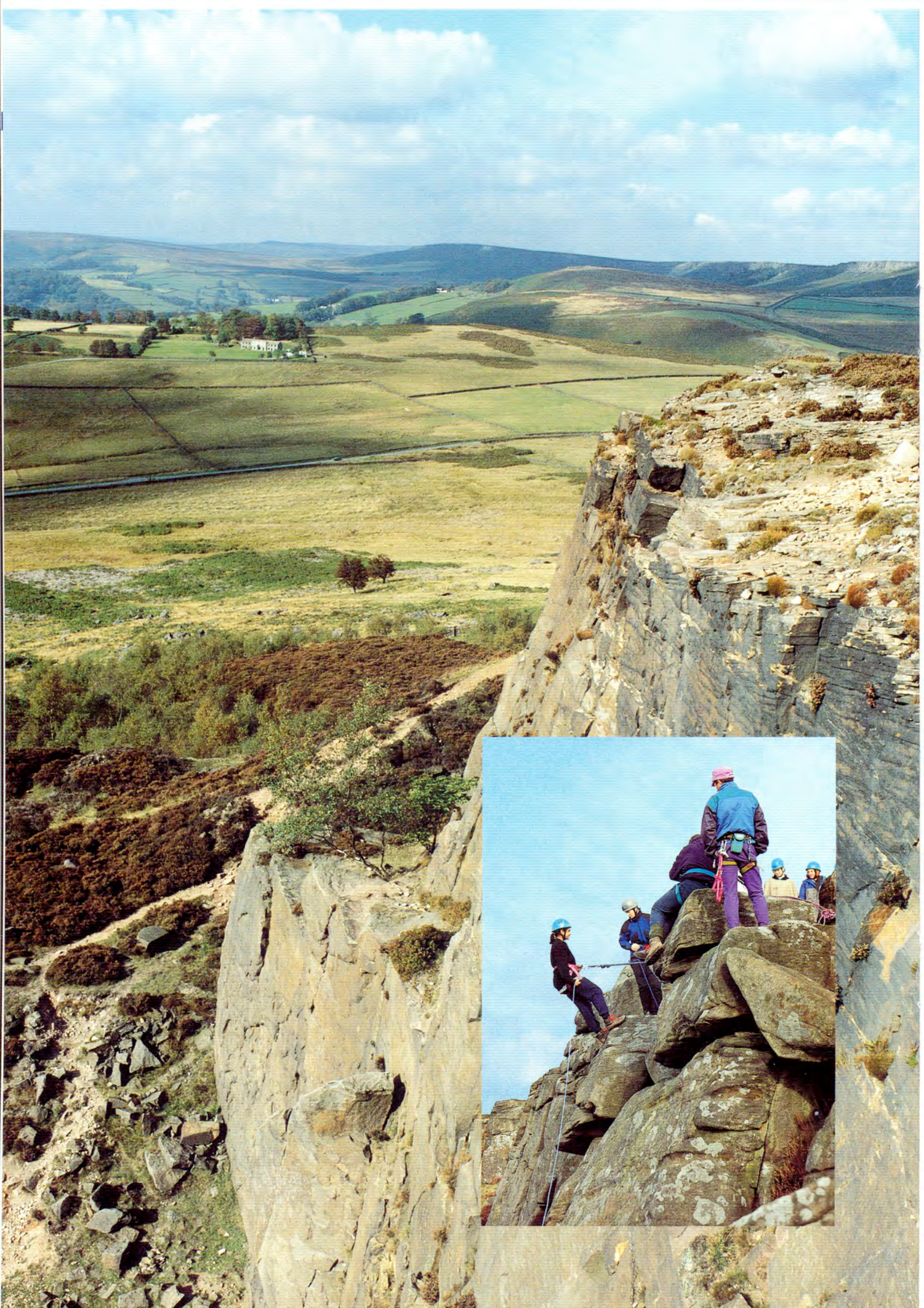


The Nursery Department is equipped to the highest standards with its own secure play area. Fully qualified staff structure the activities to provide a sound learning base for the more formal education of the Infant Department.

Boys as well as girls are welcome in the Nursery and Infant Department.

*Structured learning
combined with the
best possible care.*





ACTIVITIES

There is a challenging range of clubs and activities catering for all interests, from debating and public speaking, to sporting and leisure pursuits.

Taking full advantage of the Peak District setting all sixth formers take part in a course which includes abseiling, canoeing, climbing, sailing and windsurfing.

Over half the senior pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards Scheme with outstanding success.

Girls have the opportunity to join Matlock Air Training Corps. The Young Enterprise Scheme is run very successfully; St Elphin's "Business Companies" have received awards in recent years.

Large sums of money are raised for local, national and international causes by the Social Services committee, and girls are encouraged to give service to the local community.

There are regular visits to theatres, concerts, art galleries and exhibitions. Field trips and regular tours abroad are arranged for academic, cultural and sporting purposes.

" ~ the many leisure activities here give the individual a chance to develop her potential."



***Life-long friendships
world-wide***

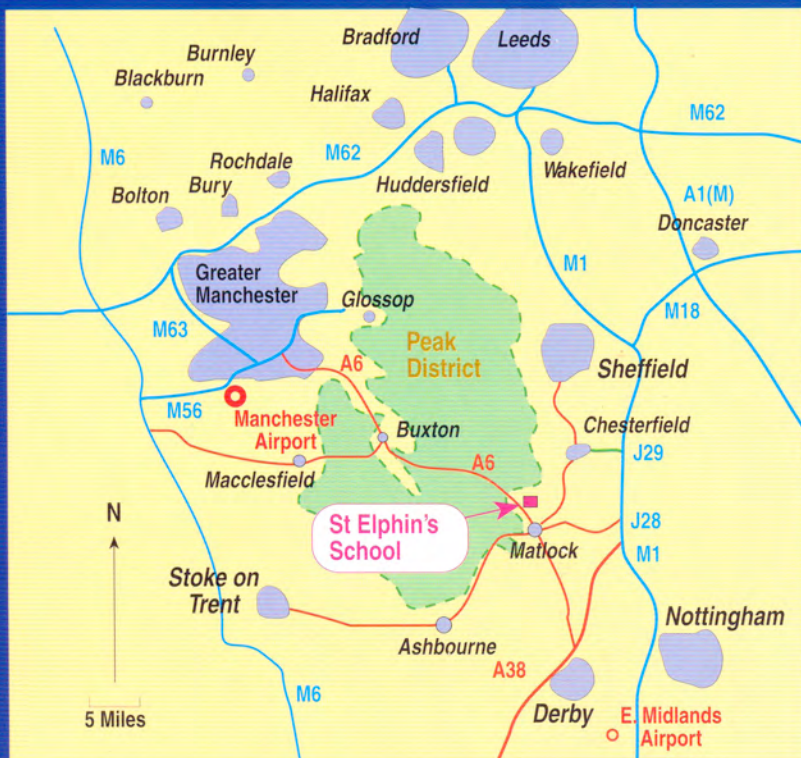
From the Headmistress:

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

Valerie E. Fisher

Valerie Fisher





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