

Emotions high as bishop visits

IT was an emotional moment as pupils performed a song they'd written to mark their school's closure.

Bishop Christopher visited Bishop Lovett Middle School in Ryde as it prepared to close its doors for the final time. And he saw the results of the school's music project.

In a ceremony to mark the school's closure, children sang their song *We're Still Here*, which had been written, filmed and produced by 40 pupils.

Arts group Ecclestone George provided equipment for the project and it was funded by a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund. The project was recorded onto DVD.

As part of the Isle of Wight Council's reorganisation of schools from a three-tier to a two-tier system, Bishop Lovett Middle School closed this summer and its premises taken over by Oakfield Primary School.

Parents attended the service to mark the closure at St John's Church, Ryde, and enjoyed singing, music and drama.

Retiring headteacher Ursula Hutchinson said: "It was fortunate that the project coincided with the closure of our school because it's raised the spirits of the children involved. It's a sad time but it's about looking forward and that's why the music project has been so valuable. I'm pleased there will be another school on the site. Bishop Lovett, although it won't be called that, is a place for children and I'm glad that tradition will live on."



Bishop Christopher with (above) pupils from Bishop Lovett Middle School and (left): Thomas Rowe, Rebecca Hudd and Holly McLean from Oakfield Primary School in Ryde

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The bishop visited Oakfield Primary in Great Preston Road, where three pupils gave him a tour and showed him projects children have been working on. The school will open its doors on the Bishop Lovett site this month.

Rebecca Hudd, aged 9, said: "I feel happy that he's come to have a look at our school before we leave. I'm looking forward to going to the new school because we're going to have a bigger space and we'll get to do cooking as well."

Headteacher Laura Fairhurst is looking forward to creating an outside learning space – for which £10,000 has been granted by the Awards for

All National Lottery scheme.

She said: "The potential for the children to enjoy and develop on such a beautiful site is exciting. It's going to be a bigger space with potential to let their imaginations loose."

Bishop Christopher said: "I was impressed by the talent of the pupils at Bishop Lovett School. They've clearly worked hard on the music project and will miss the school dearly.

"It was great to be given a tour of the former Oakfield School. As much as they will miss the site, I know they're also looking forward to the new beginning."

School's classroom and play area opened



Pupils Rebecca Green, Annabelle Willson, Issy Green, Grace Peace and Henry Morgan welcome the bishop

CHILDREN at Brighstone Primary School were delighted to welcome the bishop when he opened the school's new classroom and play area.

Bishop Christopher cut the ribbon to declare the new facilities open and was given a tour of the school.

Pupils and staff raised about £40,000 for the project and were also given a £10,000 Awards for All National Lottery Grant as well as money via the diocese.

Headteacher Amanda Johnston said: "It's a fabulous school and parents choose it because of the strong faith that permeates through it and the care of the children. It's going to be an enormous benefit for our children.

"We were delighted that Bishop Christopher attended. It's great for the children to meet someone we talk about in the flesh and it cements our relationship with the diocese.

"We've got a fabulous staff team and the children are fantastic and I love being the head here."

Youth groups who use the rooms after school and on weekends will also get to use the new facilities.

They hope to extend further in future and will be raising money with their annual stall at the Bestival music festival from September 8 to 11. This year they'll be selling funky underpants.

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