

## **My End of Year Reflection July 2024**

When I first started at Cherry Tree I had such a bad experience with other schools I couldn't handle hearing the word "school" without shaking and hyperventilating and a weird thing my parents had to say instead was "you're going to see Hugo" and even as silly as that may seem I felt safer, it's surprising how much one dog can make everything better so thanks for that Hugo.

After missing out on so much schoolwork, I sort of prepared myself to never be able to catch up and when I got sick no one ever really cared at my old school. I was so distant to the other students that they didn't feel like real people to me. But when I started Cherry Tree, I've always had people asking when I'd come back in and the teachers haven't ever stressed me out about missed out work because everyone is at different steps and it just doesn't matter here, we're all human.

I'm really grateful for the amount of support and care I've had since joining Cherry Tree and no one has ever treated me differently because of my disability in fact I think if it wasn't partly for Cherry Tree I wouldn't be able to feel safe in my wheelchair in public.

I think the highlight of my year has to be when we went to the zoo and I beat everyone at the pull up bar contest and we saw bats (I LOVE BATS).

After being through everything I have, I've learnt that there isn't anything embarrassing or shameful about being disabled or needing a disability aid. There's nothing "wrong" with me.

Thanks Cherry Tree for making the word "school" sound not so scary anymore.