

## **My End of Year Reflection**

I'm Kim and this is my end of year reflection. I am going to start this off by saying how thankful I am for this school and how grateful I am for the opportunities it has given me. The teachers here are so supportive and well trained and I don't think this school would be the same without this amazing staff. When I started Cherry Tree in 2023, I was definitely a lot more shy than I am now and I am a lot more comfortable being myself in this school. I had been to two different secondary schools which were mainstream, and they definitely didn't support my needs, and I never felt truly comfortable or at home there, but I definitely do here. At Cherry Tree we are one big family and we all support and accept each other no matter what. I believe that Cherry Tree is the best school in England. During my time at this school I have grown a lot, I have changed for the better and I've learnt to accept who I am and not let my issues or disabilities label or define me. I now accept that I am my own person no matter what anyone says and I should never feel pressured to put myself in a box or add a label. I have struggled with anxiety most of my life but here at Cherry Tree they have helped me to become more comfortable in my skin and my surroundings. My main issue was my social anxiety which had stopped me from going out and meeting new people and making friends, but since I started here I've been able to order my own food at restaurants and express myself better without being scared about being judged. I had always felt different to those around me but here at Cherry Tree were all unique and all have different stories and backgrounds, but we all accept each other and I think that's what has really helped me accept that no two people are the same and that I should never feel pressured to change myself to fit in. This year has been pretty tough for me and I've had lots going on, but the staff and pupils here never gave up on me, they were always there if I needed someone. I would like to say a SPECIAL thank you too Soo and Emm for helping with my transition to my 6<sup>th</sup> form/college I know it has been so hard and stressful, but they are putting in all their effort as I know they want to see me succeed and I feel inspired to be just like them. I'd also like to specially thank Monique and Connor who have put up with me this year with my qualifications, they have put so much time and effort into making sure I get them and I am so thankful that they never stopped believing in me. If I could stay in Cherry Tree forever I 1000000000% would, this school is the best place I've ever been. I enjoy coming to school and seeing all my kind peers and happy teachers. I enjoy learning here and am glad they have so many resources to offer me and the other pupils. If I could award this school an award for "best school in England" I absolutely would. This school deserves all the recognition possible for its incredible effort of helping the young people of Kent. In my old mainstream schools I absolutely hated math's and English but here at cherry tree they have become 2 of my favorite subjects. This school has a professional environment but were always having fun, there isn't a day that goes by where I don't laugh. Someone is always there to support you when you need it. they make learning fun whilst keeping it educational and entertaining, there is never a day where I'm bored here. I have expanded my creative abilities in art with Soo pushing me to use colours and be crazy, not to stick to one way or one thing but to learn different ways of expressing myself. I also did some drumming with Connor which I absolutely loved, I love how much freedom I have at school to connect with the people around me. If I had to use 4 words to describe my experience at cherry tree it would be: crazy, an adventure, fun and relieving. Crazy because of how free we all feel to be ourselves, an adventure because no two days are the same something unexpected always happens. Fun because I'm always enjoying my time here and relieving because I feel relieved to know there are places like this available for those who need it and that there's staff and adults who are prepared to try their hardest to help kids. All the staff here make me happy and excited to come into school which

little me never thought would be possible, if I could go back in time and tell 10 year old me what life is like now my younger self probably would've slapped me and said I was lying but its true, even though I have lots going on in my life my school is one place I know I will always be welcomed in. It's a place where I have made mistakes, shed tears, laughed, played, made friends and have made memories I know I'm going to cherish for the rest of my life. I have done so many good things and met so many good people through this school, it has completely changed my life. I'm deeply going to miss this school once I leave but I know it's not goodbye, just see you later.