Our Council has six key priorities, and the first of them is a promise to do all we can to give every child in St Helens the best possible start in life. Investing in education facilities is a key part of that, so last Friday it was brilliant to visit the brand new Ashurst Primary School in Blackbrook which we've delivered with more than £7m investment.

Work has just been completed on the new school building, with children and staff moving in after the Easter holidays.

The headteacher Lisa Houghton, staff and governors work hard to create a warm and successful culture at the school, and they are thrilled with what we've been able to deliver together.

It's a superb building, with large modern classrooms, library space, sensory rooms, outdoor areas and more.

For delivering the project, my thanks go to Cllr Nova Charlton, council staff and the construction company Kier.

It's also credit to Blackbrook ward councillors Anthony Burns, Paul McQuade and Linda Maloney, and St Helens North MP Conor McGinn, who have all fought for this and supported the project and school every step of the way.

It was great to see the children so happy and comfortable in their fantastic new surroundings and I have no doubt they and the school will thrive and go from strength to strength.

I know that concern about school places is a common concern whenever new homes are talked about or built, but the fact is that we never run out of places because the Council invests, where necessary, in extensions, improvements, and new facilities. And more than 94% of parents get their first choice Primary school for their children in St Helens, which is more than the national average.

As we were looking round Ashurst Primary last week we saw Year 6 pupils practising for their SATs. Year 6 pupils everywhere are doing the exams this week, and it's a stressful time for them and their families. I want to wish them all the very best of luck, and I would also like to thank school staff – particularly Year 6 teachers and learning assistants – for their hard work to help children prepare for the tests.

We should all be proud of our schools and the amazing children and young people who are in them.

Best wishes to all Star readers.