

Issue 18 Summer 2024

DesignEd

A Central Region Schools Trust Publication



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A note from GUY SHEARS

I am delighted to welcome you to the Summer edition of our Trust's magazine, DesignEd, drawing together examples of the collective work we do to support social justice through exceptional schools.

First and foremost, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to all the staff members who have devoted their hearts and minds to their work throughout the year. Their unwavering commitment, passion, and relentless efforts continue to enrich the lives of our young people, and we are profoundly grateful for all in our community who contribute to this. At the point of writing, all of our schools are improving, many from an already very high bar of excellence.

This DesignEd has a particular emphasis on one of the most important elements of our trust-wide people strategy to ensure 'exceptional learners'. The taught curriculum is vital to the development of the knowledge and skills learners need to live successful lives. The enhancement of this through enrichment is hugely important in the communities we serve, and the development of our ATTRIBUTES OF CHARACTER (resilient, confident, empathetic and reflective learners) is a vital part of delivering our mission. We monitor closely the quality of uptake and

offer of each of our schools' enrichment programmes and have a considerable number of cross-trust programmes and events that enhance the school-based programmes, but also build our collective community. The central planks of our offer are:

- The CENTRAL enrichment guarantee (see page 10)
- Central FUTURES (the world beyond school including careers education) from early years to Sixth Form
- Pupil/student leadership and agency programmes
- Excellence in personal development

There are many examples showcased within this edition, and I want to highlight just two in their intent and impact.

A highlight of the power of pupil agency this year has been the entirely student-led charity activities, across all schools and the central office, raising over £10,000 for Birmingham Children's Hospital. The Trust Sixth Form Student Ambassador Team led each school pupil leadership charity teams to deliver this. The agency shown by our pupil and student leaders here is phenomenal.

Another rich pupil agency project is the Year 7 sustainable/ethical business project we have devised with Morgan Stanley. Over 40 senior MS staff, travelling mainly from London, but indeed from all over the world, have supported groups of year 7 pupils in all of our schools to develop and pitch their business plans to a Dragon's Den. I had the privilege to be a 'dragon' in the Ipsley and Church Hill combined event. I was joined by two very senior colleagues from MS, along with the excellent project leads at each school, Shirly Jilks and Amy Crowe.

We listened to amazing business proposals ranging from Bee Safe social housing to address homelessness to Sea Saver, a plastic rescue initiative for the oceans. I was struck by the creativity shown by all the groups, the confidence in delivery, and the deep collective empathy each of the projects had clearly drawn upon in order to arrive at the business designs.

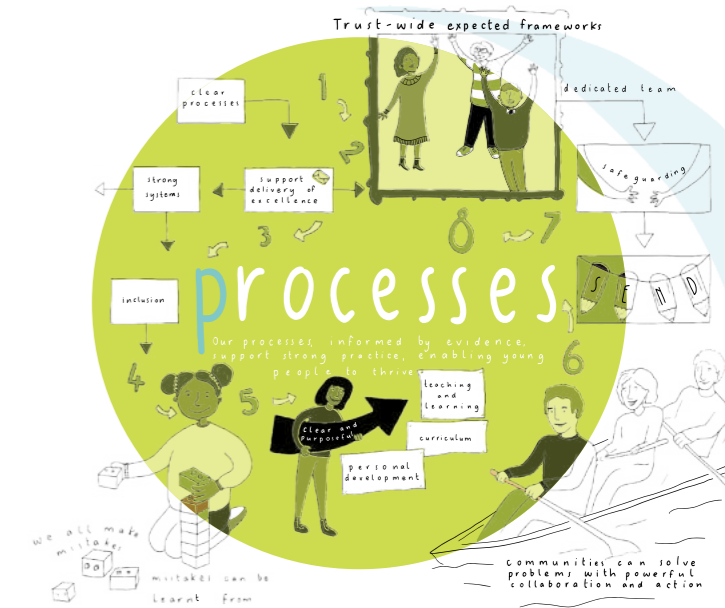
We cannot do the work we do so successfully in our communities without strong partnerships. The Morgan Stanley Project, now in its third year, is an example of one that is having profound impact on our young people. A word of thanks to all the people in our rich partnerships - this is a key part of developing our distinctive culture through PLACES (communities and partnerships).

As we approach the end of the academic year, we would like to recognise the remarkable resilience and hard work shown by our young people during their exams. They have invested countless hours into their studies, and we are confident that their dedication will be reflected in the upcoming results, which will give them, we hope, the passport to the next phase of their future. Their determination and commitment are truly inspiring. We are all incredibly proud of each and every one of them. Our staff, as ever, have 'gone the extra mile' as we know we need to as expert professionals working in areas of relative challenge - thank you to each and every one of them, too.

As a trust we can look back on another highly successful year. I wish all of our community a restful and enjoyable summer, and take time to reflect on the power of education in supporting social justice.



Guy Shears
Executive Principal (CEO)



MEET THE TEAM

The Central Team

Guy Shears

Executive Principal (CEO)

Penny Harrison

Trust Finance Director (CFO)

Andrew Martin

Chief Operating Consultant

Robin Shakespeare

Operations Consultant

Samantha McMonagle

Executive School Improvement Leader

Harinder Sidhu

Business Improvement Partner

Jennie Homer

Head of Governance & Corporate Services

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Bryan Tait

Lead Estates Hub Manager

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Trust Assistant Principal (School Improvement)
CENTRAL Lead Professional Learning, Research
& Development

Teresa Wilson

Trust Lead for ITT & Early Careers (Tech Central)

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Executive Principal (CEO)

Penny Harrison

Trust Finance Director (CFO)

Andrew Martin

Chief Operating Consultant

Samantha McMonagle

Executive School Improvement Leader

Ian Mellor

Executive Principal

Angela Crawley

Trust Primary Executive Principal

Stephen Brownlow

Executive Principal

Principals

Bethany Harris

Head of Churhc Hill Middle School

Zoe Gilmour

Principal of Abbeywood First School

Dave Knox

Principal of Holyhead School

Matthew Rash

Head of Arrow Vale High School

Angela Crawley

Trust Primary Executive Principal

Sarah Allen

Principal of Arrow Valley First School

Stephen Brownlow

Executive Principal of Gospel Oak School

Angela Saul

Principal of Ipsley CE Middle School

Jane Lloyd

Principal of Lickhill Primary School

Ian Mellor

Executive Principal of Arrow Vale High School
& Waseley Hills High School

Ben Irving

Principal of Oldbury Park Primary School

Sarah Callanan

Principal of St Stephen's CE First School

Lorna Weatherby

Principal of Sutton Park Primary School

Lynn Kelly

Principal of Oak Hill First School

Tom Preston

Head of Waseley Hills High School

MEET THE TEAM

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Jas Edwards

Trust Lead for English

Jesse Mohr & Jenny Lewis

Trust Leads for Science

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Trust Lead for History

Sheetal Sommel

Trust Lead for ICT/Computing

Jenna Brown

Trust Lead for Modern Foreign Languages

Ed Lee

Trust Lead for Drama

Alice Pearson & Kate Billingham

Trust Leads for Religious Education

Josh Prentice

Trust Lead for Physical Education

Hannah Weynberg & Maryam Khan

Trust Leads for Geography

Dale Holt & Moira O'Hare

Trust Leads for Product Design

Dawn Salter

Trust Lead for Food Technology

Stacey Geal

Trust Lead for Art

David Hunt & Chloe Burke

Trust Leads for Music

Chairs of LAGBs

Richard Davies

Arrow Vale High School

Nicola Robinson

Arrow Valley First School

Joanne Goodman

Gospel Oak School

Richard Davies

Abbeywood First School
& Church Hill Middle School

Sajid Hussain

Holyhead School

Matthew Setchell

Ipsley CE Middle School

Nick Reader

Lickhill Primary School

Chairs of LAGBs (cont.)

Kirstin Bluck

Oldbury Park Primary School

Vicky Jackman

St Stephen's CE First School

Katherine Maynereid

Sutton Park Primary School

Chris Passey

Waseley Hills High School

Tony James

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Angela Crawley

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Samantha McMonagle & Matthew Purslow

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Niall Brennan & Michael Williams

Trust Leads for Attendance

Samantha McMonagle

Trust Lead for Curriculum and Pedagogy

Samantha McMonagle

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Trust Leads for PSHE/RSE

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Francesca Stanley & Daniel Wright

Trust Leads for Personal Development

Gemma Loveridge

Trust Lead for Sixth Form

Matthew Purslow, Kelly McLeod & Jane Lloyd

Trust Leads for Mental Health & Well-Being

Teresa Wilson

Trust Lead for ITT & Early Careers (Tech Central)

THE IMPORTANCE & POWER OF ENRICHMENT IN CRST SCHOOLS

Providing enrichment in school is a necessary component for ensuring a well-rounded education. Social connectedness is as important as the focus on mental health and well-being within schools. Studies have found that healthy authentic relationships are key to happiness and health. We want our pupils to benefit from participation; to feel successful in school -as a contributor not just as a 'receiver'. Pupils need to feel some success in schools in order to feel meaningful participation which is why pupils need to feel they can participate and contribute rather than passively receive- particularly if the sense of any success is limited. The ability to participate, feel valued as a member of, and feel connected to a wider social environment is crucial to a sense of meaningful participation in school life. Enrichment opportunities enable children to look outwards too and connect with/learn from others. Enrichment in schools provides opportunities to connect, learn and have different experiences.

ENRICHMENT IS IMPORTANT IN SCHOOLS BECAUSE IT:

- 1 Provides opportunities for children to try new and varied activities that may not strictly fit into the curriculum.
- 2 Develops resilience, confidence and motivation.
- 3 Encourages curiosity and further learning.
- 4 Reduces anxiety.
- 5 Increases social skills.
- 6 Helps students gain different experiences to usual school day/classes.
- 7 Enhances confidence in personal abilities.

Enrichment and clubs benefit students mentally, socially and physically. They make school more like a second home, a place where there is room for work and for play. Most importantly, they help us to develop the whole child.

Enrichment clubs allow our students to grow and thrive. Every time a student steps out of their comfort zone and tries something new, they may experience an initial struggle but can also see the real hands-on benefit of perseverance rather than being told about it – and can connect to others in the process. Social skills- the ability to connect, empathise and articulate thoughts, ideas and feelings are key within our curriculum work and the focuses for our PD work across the Trust.

The cross-trust work on Personal Development and Enrichment will also ensure opportunities across the Trust continue to be developed and flourish such as RSA4, 8, Morgan Stanley Projects, cross Trust sports days and Arts project collaboration. In 2024/25 we will align key student leadership committees within all student councils- from first school councils to councils within sixth forms- so that aligned project work can be supported and will be led by the Central 6th student ambassadors. All schools will have committees for Eco, Charity, Civic, Sports and Diversity going forwards, building on the success of the Charity committee work this year raising money for Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Our CRST Enrichment guarantee will ensure there is a minimum pledge of what all pupils at a CRST school can expect to experience during their time in a school. The enrichment guarantee is published here and all schools have committed to ensuring this is in place for 2024/25. This DesignEd is testimony to all the wonderful work on enrichment and opportunities for children which is currently occurring within CRST- we will endeavour to continue developing this work to inspire and support our young people across the trust.

Sam McMonagle
Executive Lead for School Improvement at CRST





OUR CURRICULUM IS UNDERPINNED BY

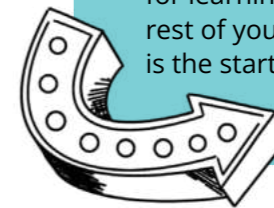
KASE PRINCIPLES

- K** is for Knowledge – a knowledge-based curriculum developing subject confidence, growing *expertise* and *fluency* in the language of a subject.
- A** is for the Attributes we endeavour to nurture and develop – *resilience, confidence, reflection and empathy*.
- S** is for Skills – developing subject skills and vital *communication/literacy* skills including a focus on *oracy* as well as skills of *problem-solving* and *collaboration*.
- E** is for Experiences – ensuring you can access *engaging* experiences within and beyond the classroom.

The Enrichment Guarantee offers opportunities to turn powerful thinking into practical action through pupil leadership.

As part of the Enrichment Guarantee, we will ensure that you can access a high quality and thoughtful PSHE and RSHE curriculum and a strong futures/ careers education. We will teach you about British Values and active responsible citizenship through an inclusive school experience.

Every young life is unique. None of us knows the limits of what we might achieve. We want you to leave school with an appetite for learning about all aspects of life, for the rest of your life. Our Enrichment Guarantee is the start of your lifelong learning journey.



WE GUARANTEE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENRICH YOUR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE THROUGH:

- Taking part in student leadership activities (student leadership).
- Experiencing a live performance (culture).
- Taking part in a sport/ physical activity and watch a professional sporting activity (sport).
- Creating a piece of art or performing art, including music and poetry (performing arts).
- Taking part in meaningful central futures and careers work (Central futures/ transition).
- Serving your local community by volunteering or celebrating the heritage and culture (community).
- Visiting a museum, art gallery, exhibit (culture).
- Attending a residential (residential).
- Spending time in an environment where you can appreciate nature and work towards preserving it (environment).
- Hearing from external speakers/ work with expert professionals (experience)
- Taking part in a range of in school clubs and activities (in school club).
- Engaging in activities with other pupils from across our central regions school trust (Trust).

CRST ENRICHMENT GUARANTEE

Being part of Central Region Schools Trust means that you will have access to a wealth of enrichment and personal development opportunities.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION
ABOUT OUR ENRICHMENT
GUARANTEE AND EVENTS
PLEASE VISIT:**

<https://centralregionschoolstrust.co.uk/>

or  follow @CRSTEvents on Twitter

DUKE OF EDINBURGH *Gold Award Celebration*

The Duke of Edinburgh award scheme is an important component of the personal development provision and many of our students have been working hard on their awards. This year the Trust secondaries are on track to achieve 107 Bronze and 42 Silver awards, this is a fantastic effort so congratulations to all involved! Not only does partaking in the Duke of Edinburgh award expose students to new environments and experiences; it also encourages the development of character attributes such as resilience and confidence alongside skills such as problem-solving and collaboration. These are important elements of our underpinning KASE principles.

The Duke of Edinburgh award is much more than just a camping expedition- throughout each stage of the award, and for extended periods, participants focus on developing a skill, improving in a sport and volunteering in their local communities. Arrow Vale Secondary school recently received their Social Value Certificate as recognition of the amazing 2379 hours of volunteering their students have completed this year whilst completing their awards.

Holyhead school has been running the award for 10 years and to date their students have achieved 419 Bronze and 80 Silver awards, the gold award however has proved elusive as it is such a considerable undertaking. Not only are the sections completed over a longer period of 18 months, there are also extended expeditions that take place in remote areas and also a residential element not seen in the lower level of awards.

I am however proud to announce that this year Nina Kaur, Riah Mall, Gia Khokhar, and Jasmeen Saini completed their gold awards and I had the pleasure of joining them at Buckingham Palace to celebrate their achievements alongside their families and other gold awardees from across the country.

On Monday 13th May 2024, these exceptional young women travelled to London to celebrate their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards in a prestigious event attended by The Duke of Edinburgh himself. The celebration was nothing short of spectacular. It was set across the beautiful gardens of Buckingham Palace and featured talks by inspiring celebrity guests and music from different military bands. A highlight was a talk by Tim Peake who spent 185 days aboard the International Space Station and whilst there completed the first ever space walk by a British astronaut and ran the London marathon on a treadmill.

During the Duke of Edinburgh's speech he congratulated the award winners and acknowledged the challenging journey they undertook to achieve this honour. His words encouraged all the recipients to 'walk a little taller,' in recognition of their accomplishment.

"I can't believe that I got to go to Buckingham Palace! It was a great honour and something I'll never forget" *Gia Khokhar*

For Nina, Riah, Gia, and Jasmeen, this day was not just a personal triumph but also a proud moment for their families and their school. Their success is a testament to their commitment and resilience, qualities that will undoubtedly serve them well in their future endeavours.

Dan Wright
DofE Manager & Trust Director of Personal Development



"The expedition was the toughest thing I have ever done and I'm not going to lie there were some tears, but at the end of it there was such a sense of accomplishment and I was so proud of how we were able to support each other through it." *Nina Kaur.*

CHARITY WEEK

Our charity weeks continued this term for our primary and middle schools raising money for Birmingham Children's Hospital, our trust charity of the year!

Student councils and leadership teams, from across our 9 primary and middle schools, came together to plan a second week of exciting activities to raise money for our chosen charity; hoping to build on the incredible £2982 raised by our 4 secondary schools before Christmas.

Students from across KS1, 2 and 3 met with our Trust Sixth Form Lead to discuss possible activities and events that they could organise within their respective schools to raise as much money as possible. Students demonstrated fantastic leadership behaviours as well as a great deal of maturity when considering the implications and limitations of their concepts and ideas and developed a fantastic sense of ownership in their chosen events.

All 9 schools hosted an array of events including wristband and homemade bracelet sales, discos, whole school carnivals, cake sales, guess the number of sweets in a jar and even gunge the teacher! Staff, students and their communities raised a brilliant amount for BCH throughout the week and together they raised an incredible £6750! We would like to thank all students and their families for their generous donations.

Together, students from across our 13 trust schools have now raised an incredible £10,000 for Birmingham Children's Hospital and the Sixth Form Leadership team are working with representatives from the hospital to identify a project that can be fully funded by the fantastic amount raised. Selected students and staff will be visiting the hospital before the end of the academic year to present our final donation, tour the hospital and meet some patients.

It has been a pleasure to not only raise such an incredible amount of money for such a fantastic cause but to also work with such a wide array of students from all key stages across our trust, they really are something special and should be so very proud of all they have achieved.

Gemma Loveridge
Trust Sixth Form Lead



MORGAN STANLEY

It has been another fantastic year for CRST and the growing partnership with the Morgan Stanley group. Waseley Hills, Ipsley, Church Hill, Holyhead and Gospel Oak have all welcomed the Morgan Stanley team with anticipation and excitement for what lay ahead for all the students and staff involved.

Right from the initial meeting and launch event through the development phase of the project and leading up to the final event the staff and students have worked hard to ensure their concepts were explored and they were ready for the Dragons.

The CRST ELT teamed up with the Morgan Stanley executives, joining forces to form the panel for the pitch presentations. The challenging question and answer sessions followed to discuss the concepts and rationale behind the sustainable enterprise ideas, which kept the young entrepreneurs on their toes.

They weren't fazed or caught out and they made themselves and their schools proud as they fed back to the panel to defend their plans. This year some schools were able to utilise student leaders from Y8 and 9 who have taken part in the project to mentor the Y7's and pass on what they had learnt.

All our Y7 student leaders were fantastic and communicated their ideas with confidence and commitment. What an experience! We can't wait for next year's project.



SOCIAL ACTION - RSA4 & RSA8

It has been a busy time for our Social Action teams in both Y4 and Y8 these last few months. From the launch events back in March, through the planning phases and up to the exciting sharing days the Student Leaders have been working hard to develop their ideas around their social action projects in order to evoke thought and create change.

The passion of our students about things that matter to them has been at the heart of all the projects, looking at traffic and speed awareness around school sites, anti-bullying campaigns, bringing life to new spaces to support vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils through to working on updating school policies and process to reflect the needs of the current students. All projects will have a legacy and will continue into the future, which is fantastic.

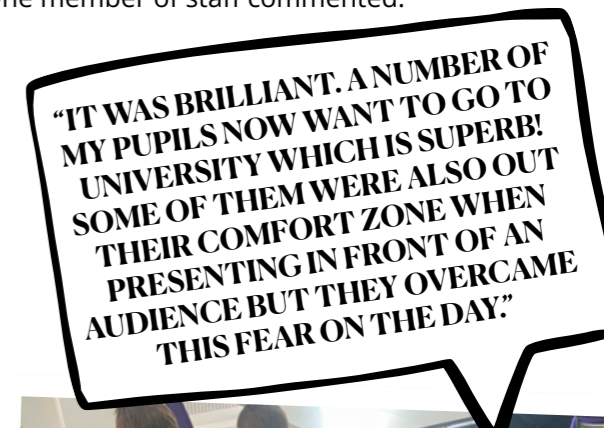
CRST have enjoyed working in partnership with Newman University during the project and they welcomed some of the CRST Y4 and Y8 student leaders onto campus on Thursday 20th and Tuesday 25th June for the pitch presentations to be shared. The students enjoyed refreshments and networking with other schools, a tour of the campus and finally presenting their ideas to the panel.

The staff and students were fortunate to be hosted by Dreadlock Alien, a performance poet who led fun activities based around the spoken word. His experience and stories were captivating and staff and students were impressed with the skills they picked up along the way.

All the students received a certificate of commitment and a commemorative pin badge for them to wear with pride and remind them of their pledge for change.

The team that hosted us at Newman were so impressed not only with the passion of our students and the content of the social action projects but with the way our pupils conducted themselves and represented our individual schools and our Trust. They should be very proud of themselves and so grateful to our staff for their commitment to our young people to ensure we are upholding our enrichment guarantee and offering such important experiences.

One member of staff commented:



WORLD BOOK DAY

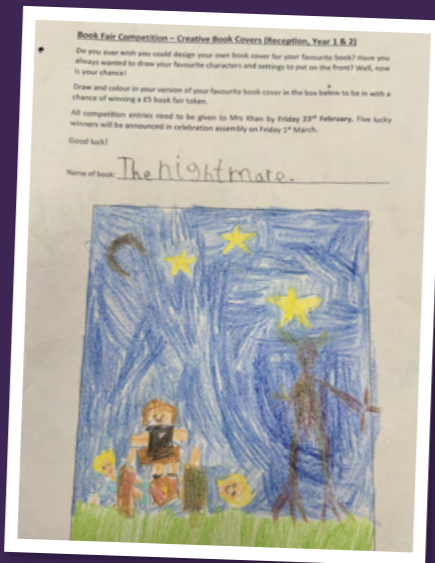
COMPETITION WINNERS

Drum roll.....as promised, they are here.... the long awaited winners of the cross trust World Book Day competition. All the pupils in the trust were offered the opportunity to enter the two competitions either to come up with a creative book cover or to write a gripping blurb for their chosen book. There were so many school entries and an excellent field of finalists, which made the ELT job extremely difficult.

All the entries deserve praise and rewards but, the lucky, well deserved winners submissions can be seen and enjoyed by all here, in the Summer edition of the DesignEd. We hope the winners have enjoyed spending their Amazon vouchers and have maybe even invested in their next book.



Tighe & The Hellhounds



The Nightmare

Tighe & The Hellhounds
Anais from Arrow Vale

The Nightmare
Alicia from Abbey Wood

My Favourite Star
Tiffany from Gospel Oak

If You're Reading This, It's Too Late
Lilly from Churchill

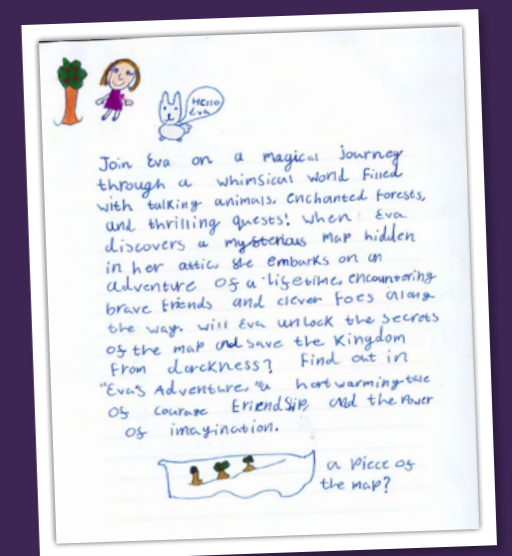
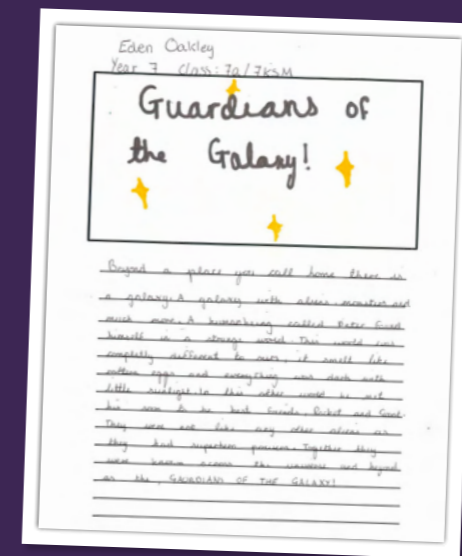


WORLD BOOK DAY

COMPETITION WINNERS

Many of the schools celebrated World Book Day with lots of wonderful, exciting activities and opportunities to celebrate and promote the love of reading! We had staff and students design classroom and office doors in the theme of their favourite books, baking competitions, pupils turning wooden spoons into characters, students arriving as their favourite characters as well as a lot of staff entering into the spirit and dressed to impress embodying an array of fictional characters from favourite fictional fancies.

The trusts passion and drive for the love of reading doesn't stop after World Book day as it is an ever present feature in the daily life of our schools. Keeping the 'book buzz' alive is at the heart of Central Region Schools Trust and one we enjoy all year long!



In the ruthless underworld of the Russian mafia, emotions are for the weak, and trust is a luxury. Growing up as the heir to the family empire, I was taught that vulnerability was not an option. At just thirteen years old, my world shattered when my own father murdered my mother to keep me in line. But the betrayal came from my own brother, who plotted against me. Faced with the choice between family and survival, I made a decision that changed me forever. Now, in a world where danger lurks around every corner, where alliances shift like shadows, I was playing a dangerous game where one wrong move could be my last. In a game where trust is a currency I can't afford to spend, I must become the monster they fear to ensure my own survival. Welcome to the ruthless world of Russian mafia, where weakness is not an option and betrayal is always just a step away.

The Maid and the Adventure
Eva from Oakhill

Guardians of the Galaxy
Eden from Ipsey

Eva's Adventure
Phoebe from St. Stephens

A Russian Mafia Story
Samranjit from Holly Head

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

Some students from our Middle and Secondary phase were lucky enough to be invited to take part in a Youth Engagement project at Abbey Stadium, offering them the opportunity to take part in activities and experiences that they may not have access to in their own community. The boys took part in skateboarding, five aside football and boot camp style activities, with the extended opportunity for them to continue their involvement in the activity beyond the event.

They also attended an Anti-Violence presentation delivered by a parent who had experienced the loss of a child due to knife crime. The students returned to school saying it was the best thing they had ever gone to and would definitely be taking the organisers up on the offer of continuing with some of the activities. One student walked away with a £20 Nike voucher, a good day was had by all!



LISTENING TO THE REAL LIFE STORY OF THE BOY WHO WAS KILLED, TOLD BY HIS MOM MADE ME THINK TWICE ABOUT WHO I HANG ABOUT WITH AND WHAT COULD ACTUALLY HAPPEN, I'LL NEVER FORGET IT

THE SPEECH WAS LIFE CHANGING, IT CHANGED THE WAY I THOUGHT ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA AND MADE ME THINK ABOUT THE CHOICES IN FRIENDS AND THAT PEOPLE CAN REALLY GET KILLED IF KNIVES ARE IN THE PICTURE



I LIKED THE GYM WORK, THE BIKE AND THE FOOTBALL AND I AM NOW LOOKING AT GETTING A GYM MEMBERSHIP WHICH WILL MAKE ME FIT AND KEEP ME OFF SOCIAL MEDIA



CRST ATHLETICS GAMES



July 21st saw the inaugural CRST Athletics Games held at the Abbey Stadium in Redditch. Over 150 Y7 & Y10 students from Arrow Vale, Church Hill, Gospel Oak, Holyhead, Ipsley and Waseley Hills took part in various track and field events.

The day saw multiple communities pull together in showing respect and sportsmanship for each other, alongside having that competitive spirit, and excellence, to gain one of the coveted gold, silver or bronze medals which were on offer.

During the day, each school waved their flags and banners that had been created to cheer on their teammates proudly, no matter the result, even spurring on those who needed that extra little encouragement along the way.

Once all the accumulated points that had been won during the day had been added up, Waseley Hills found themselves victorious in the Y7 competition and Holyhead likewise for the Y10 competition. Both schools now get their names etched in on their shields to make history and be the face of the Trust for Athletics until next year.

The event hosted a VIP Guest (Dom Tripp - England Touch Rugby Captain) who gave an inspiring speech to all of the student athletes on perseverance, excellence and wanting to always be better. Dom then presented the medals and celebrated everyone's success.

Everyone who took part, be that the Athletes, Staff or Sixth Form Students, all played an integral part during the day making it a fantastic event to remember and build up excitement for what next year could bring.



Building **OUR** **DISTINCTIVE** Culture

Planning a new school building was a great opportunity for us at CRST to rethink how our educational spaces support and enhance the educational provision for all our pupils and support our distinctive culture.

We at CRST are clear that our culture is delivered through shared endeavour, professional high expectations, warmth, inclusivity, positivity, and kindness. The challenge is how we manifest a set of physical spaces which allow us to achieve our aim.

The interlinked aspects of our distinctive culture, People, Places and Process combine to allow us to deliver the highest of educational standards. We know how much the physical environment shapes and supports our distinctive culture. It is a key feature of our mission to support social justice through exceptional schools.

Of course, our new build at Waseley needed to take consideration of water supply, health and safety, security, fire, heating, lighting, air quality and construction materials. Not to mention the hours spent working out where the plugs would go!

But it also had to do more - it had to deliver a fantastic, safe, inspiring learning environment.

The challenge was: could we design our distinctive culture into the building fabric?

Working with our development partners, Tilbury Douglas, and our architect partners, Corstorphine and Wright, we have attempted to embed our culture into the physical spaces. We repeatedly asked ourselves questions to prompt us to go further with the design process, rather than simply making sure we had enough rooms and offices.

- How do we deliver the awe and wonder that will inspire generations of Waseley Hill and wider CRST pupils and staff?

- How do we spark those with a passion (and inspire those with yet untapped potential passion) in sport, literature, the arts, design, computing, geography, science, maths etc... - all subjects?
- How do we demonstrate our emphasis on the importance of the Creative and Performing Arts, as a Trust founded by the RSA, through our classroom allocation and location?
- How do we create a true community school that is open for use in the evenings and weekends, which supports the aims and objectives of the Waseley community?
- How do we involve our feeder-schools, neighbours, and wider community in the process, so they feel part of this incredible opportunity?
- How do we show our commitment to the environment through achieving carbon neutrality?
- Where do we locate our inclusive support spaces, so they are integral and truly welcoming to the school?
- How do we reduce teacher workload through exceptional, well-resourced spaces?
- How can we manage the flow of students to create calm and welcoming spaces to corridors?
- How do we plan and build a school without disturbing educational continuity over the next 3 years?
- How do we best utilise the incredible setting next to the Waseley Hills Country Park?
- How do we finish the spaces with decoration and signage to create warm, inclusive, inspiring spaces?
- How do we maximise the use of each of the spaces so they deliver multi-functionality that can be combined to create truly impressive, dramatic venues?
- How does the environment celebrate our culture and our student's achievements?

We believe that through the 18-month design process and now that we are at the stage of the steel frame being installed in block one, we have gone a long way in answering these questions.

We look forward to you visiting Waseley, once the build is finished, so you can judge for yourselves how successful we have been in building our distinctive culture.

Ian Mellor
Executive Principal



ENABLING DIGITAL FUTURES

COLLABORATIVE PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the ability to harness technology is no longer a luxury but a necessity. At Central Region Schools Trust, we recognise that the future of education lies in our collective ability to adapt, innovate, and empower our students with the digital skills they need to succeed in and beyond the classroom. Our commitment to enabling digital futures is deeply rooted in our Trust's distinctive culture and core values. While safe, secure, and reliable technology provides a vital foundation, the true magic happens when we use technology to cultivate an environment where digital skills seamlessly integrate with learning.

BUILDING A ROBUST DIGITAL FOUNDATION

In recent years, our central IT services team has enhanced our digital infrastructure to ensure a unified and future-ready learning environment. Key investments in hardware and network infrastructure have been made across the trust to ensure all schools have a robust digital foundation to fully benefit from technology in the classroom. Our most recent highlight is the migration and alignment of our primary schools to a server-less environment, which enhances efficiency, improves resource accessibility, ensures security, and delivers long-term financial savings. This transition provides teachers and students with reliable, efficient technology helping drive effective and engaging learning.

This strong foundation is essential for integrating digital skills into everyday learning. As we move forward, we remain committed to keeping our schools at the forefront of digital excellence. This includes continued support, training, and investment into our network infrastructure, classroom audio-visual equipment, and end-user devices to help ensure our teachers and students have the tools required to drive digital learning and innovation in our classrooms.

FUTURE INNOVATIONS: EXPLORING AI IN EDUCATION

One of our more exciting endeavours is the exploration and integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into our educational framework. Central Region Schools Trust's digital learning group has been actively exploring safe and secure methods to leverage AI for teaching, learning, and operational efficiency. AI will revolutionise personalised learning, providing tailored educational experiences that meet the individual needs of each student, significantly impacting outcomes. It will also become a valuable tool for teachers by automating tasks, allowing more time for student engagement. With some of our systems already incorporating AI, we will see rapid advancements in this area shortly.

AI integration marks a significant leap in using technology to enrich learning environments. The power of us working in collaboration on this journey will enable us to create enriched learning environment where every student can thrive in the digital age.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Central Region Schools Trust is dedicated to paving the way for digital futures through collaborative efforts that empower both students and educators. By building a robust digital foundation, exploring AI innovations, and fostering a culture of excellence, the trust is poised to lead educational transformation and equip students with the skills they need to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and technologically driven world.

SUPPORTING LEADERS *to lead in a world of* COMPLEXITY

It is evident that the world is becoming more volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. There is no playbook to equip leaders to respond to complex change so they can lead in this tricky environment. What we do know, however, is that leaders benefit from spaces to reflect and learn together and this supports them to collaborate and lead change within and across their settings.

CRST is a pioneering MAT with a strong sense of purpose. We were commissioned to work with your Central Team Leaders, supporting them to develop 'new capabilities' to unlock their own potential and the potential of others so they can respond to and lead change. Central teams can sometimes feel separate to the educational mission of their MAT. It has been a joy to work with this team and help them connect with their own sense of purpose and recognise, celebrate and grow the contribution they make to the education of students across all your schools. Our aims included:

- To explore what it means to unlock potential of self and others and how to do this.
- To develop a deeper connection to the mission of CRST and the colleagues within it.
- To grow in confidence in your role, operate from a deeper sense of purpose and learn how to collaborate skilfully to lead change and improvement in your settings.
- To support your teams and build collective capacity across your MAT.

Some of the feedback we have had speaks to the commitment to learning and development in this team and the Trust: 'Taking a step back has allowed me the change to reflect... I am being pushed beyond my comfort zone which is a challenge I welcome... The opportunity to engage with peers has been highly valuable.'

We have been integrating some leadership development methodology that you can access on this site: www.togethernesspractice.org. This framework is designed by the university, in partnership with international NGO Ashoka. It contains guidance in how we explore the capacities and conditions that can unlock potential. This process is not just for leaders of course, and you may be interested in how this framework can support you and your students' development.

We all need the opportunity to think about how we respond to a world of complex change, and integrate this into our roles so we can be our best and make a contribution we are proud of at a school and system level. CRST are modelling system leadership by working with us to offer the New Capabilities Programme to other MAT Central teams in the region and we hope this will be the first of many partnership projects that help us create capacity to unlock potential, together.

Shaun McInerney and Tracey France
School Effectiveness Team, University of Worcester

LEARN MORE

Central Region Schools Trust has worked closely with the University of Worcester to co-design this programme, as part of our People strategy. You can read more about the approaches underpinning this initiative on the next page.

NEW CAPABILITIES

For a **NEW WORLD**

A COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP JOURNEY FOR THE CENTRAL TEAM TO UNLOCK INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE POTENTIAL

The new world that we see emerging requires deeper forms of collaboration to meet an accelerated pace of change. For leaders there is a double imperative for being more intentional about leadership development (1) to unlock their own potential and the potential of their teams to lead improvement; and (2) to be able to lead strategic improvement in times of increasing complexity that, ultimately enables young people to thrive in school, in work and in life. In order to do this, leaders need to develop new capabilities to lead change, collaborate and develop and lead others in service of a wider sense of purpose that allows the wider system to become more responsive, relevant and resilient as it improves outcomes for young people.

Leaders within Multi Academy Trusts face a rapidly changing and uncertain environment. The group of 'Central Team' leaders e.g. Director of Finance, IT, Data, Estates, Head of Governance, Head of HR, Chief Operating Officer etc. have leadership development needs that sit aside from professional learning in schools.

It was through discussions with CRST Senior Leaders that we launched the New Capabilities project with CRST Senior Operational Team in November 2023. The programme was designed to support their development as leaders, so they can unlock the potential of their teams as they lead change to support the strategic direction of their MAT, and improve the life chances of children and young people within it.

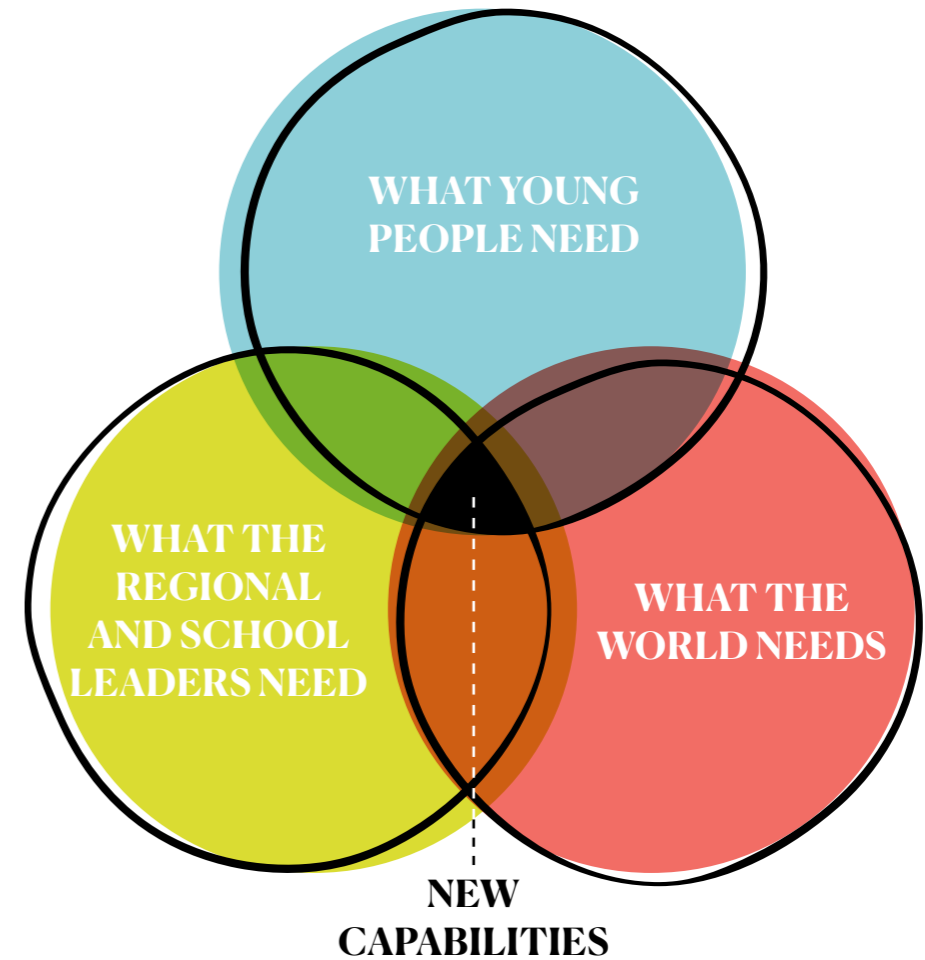
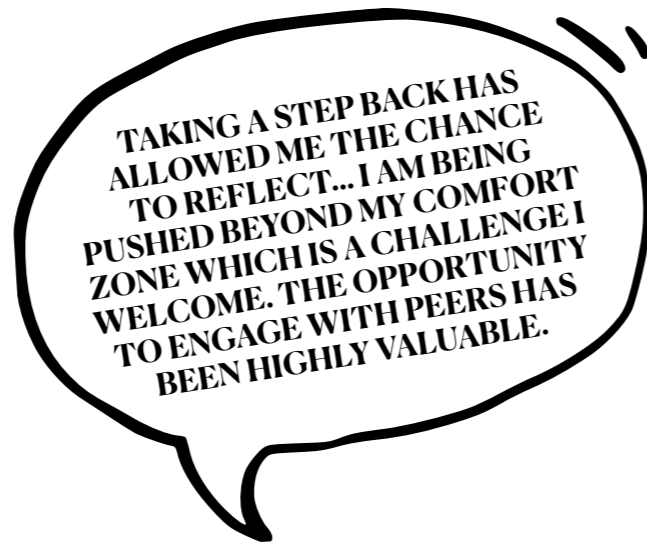
PROGRAMME APPROACH

The New Capabilities Programme takes a developmental approach that helps leaders pause and make sense of their context; to collaborate and build trust and to get the best from themselves and others. The Programme is designed to open up

new perspectives and help leaders operate from new levels of awareness of self, school and system so they can deepen the contribution they make.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

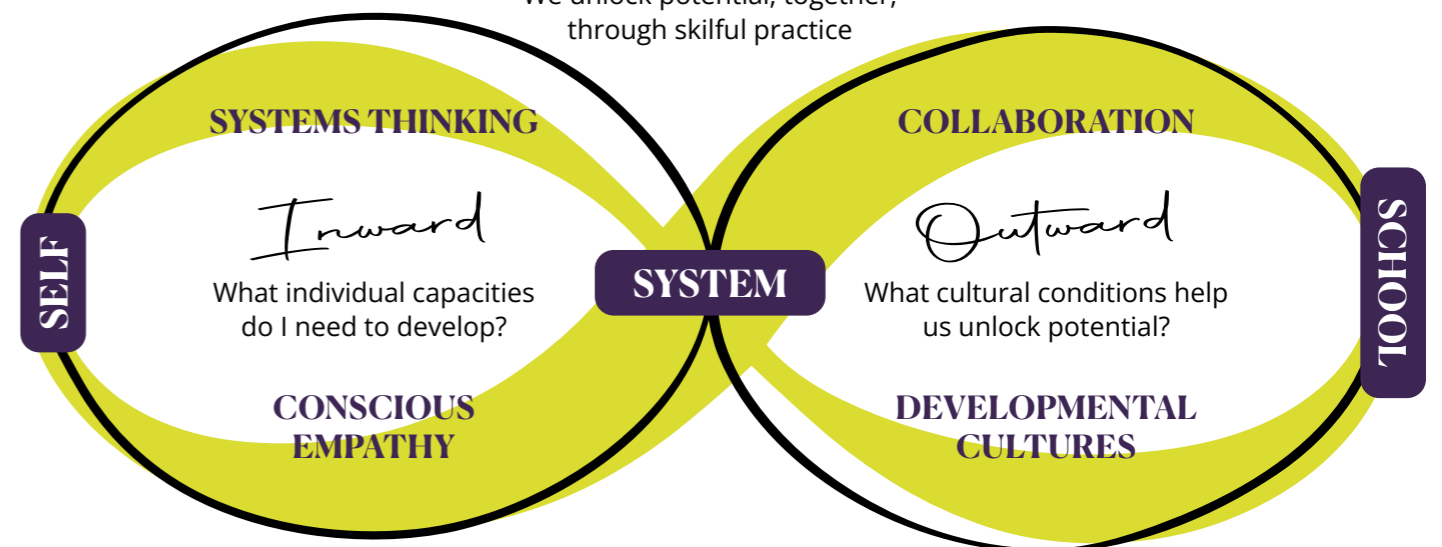
- To explore what it means to unlock potential of self and others and how to do this.
- To develop a deeper connection to the mission of CRST and the colleagues within it.
- To grow in confidence in your role, operate from a deeper sense of purpose and learn how to collaborate skilfully to lead change and improvement in your settings
- To support your teams and build collective capacity across your MAT.



Unlocking our individual and collective potential so we can make our best contribution to the communities we serve.

Forward

We unlock potential, together, through skilful practice



READING: QUALITY & FLUENCY

By Danielle Duignan

Reading has been high profile in the world of education for a number of years. The most recent documentation outlining the importance of developing high quality, effective reading provision is The Reading Framework, updated in July 2023 by the Department for Education. This document noted that schools must be giving priority to accommodate necessary support for all children, ensuring that staff have a secure understanding of the approaches for teaching reading and fluency effectively. Of course, not all struggling readers will have decoding as their issue.

Many pupils, especially those who are EAL, may be able to decode sufficiently well but are still unable to comprehend what they have read. This theme is addressed in the Reading Framework update, with an emphasis on fluency as bridging the gap between decoding and comprehension:

ADULTS NEED TO GIVE THESE PUPILS A CONSIDERABLE AND CONTINUING INVESTMENT OF TIME...THEY WOULD BENEFIT FROM EXTRA TIME IN A SMALL GROUP EVERY DAY TO DEVELOP THEIR FLUENCY.

The Reading Framework, July 2023, P. 70



So how do we achieve this? There are several approaches to developing and teaching fluency, but the most consistently proven approach is re-reading.

THIS IS ALSO TRUE FOR OLDER PUPILS WHO NEED SUPPORT... RE-READING A TEXT, THEREFORE, GRADUALLY INCREASES THE NUMBER OF WORDS IN IT THAT THEY CAN READ 'AT A GLANCE'

The Reading Framework, July 2023, P. 61

It is therefore crucial to consider the opportunities we are, or can, provide for our pupils to re-read texts. Is time for re-reading planned in to reading lessons? Are those pupils who fall into the lowest 20% being targeted through interventions? Is modelling of the importance of re-reading being delivered so that there is a clear understanding of why we encourage this? Ultimately, if pupils cannot see a purpose to this or know how to do this successfully, it becomes ineffective and does not provide the motivation for reading which is needed. Not only does re-reading provide pupils with a sense of familiarity, but it allows them to hear new vocabulary again, committing it to their long-term memory as well as providing deeper opportunities to connect with characters and experiences, perhaps in a way they had not done previously.

The focus of the document also moves to leaders' consideration of staff knowledge of fluency and developing the understanding that fluency is more than just 'reading at speed'. Fluency and automaticity are vital so that rather than spending the majority of their time decoding and blending, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of what they are reading. This in turn, reduces cognitive load, which ensures that pupils can read beyond the words and decipher the key messages and themes within the text itself.

The document, '5 minutes on Reading (Fluency Focus)' created by Shotton Hall Research School, which has previously been shared across schools within the Trust, provides an excellent oversight into what

fluency is and outlines misconceptions as well as a key range of fluency strategies which can be rolled out to support the development of reading in all schools. It is important to remember that fluency acts as a bridge between decoding and comprehension. It is vital that the bridge is robust in order for pupils to discover the meaning of the text and the purpose for them as a reader. If the foundations are not secure, there are limitations for all and cracks begin to appear.

This year, there have been many positive strides made across CRST schools and Reading has remained high profile. In the Autumn Term, NGRT data showed that the Mean Standard Age Score (SAS) was 99.9, just shy of National average of 100. Spring data shows an increase in the SAS to 101.4 which showcases the effort of all staff working to support and develop pupils' reading despite their starting points. Evidence from Ofsted reports and culture reviews also support the view that CRST are ensuring the best possible provision for reading for all and that all school leaders have a shared view of the importance of this and the link between reading and academic success.

As we move to a new academic year, it is key that reading remains high profile so that the work done to date is not in vain. The Reading Conference, planned for later this half term, will have a focus on outcomes of school audits created by reading leads. The main area which has been brought to the forefront is based on interventions. Reading leads will have the opportunity to hear about the successes of particular interventions and will have time to evaluate their current provision, analysing the effectiveness of those already in place. This will be a crucial piece of work which will ensure that pupils are being provided with the most effective support in order to ensure progress.

The focus on reading provision goes beyond the years which the pupils are in school. It sets them up for success and provides them with the key skills and tools they need to navigate life successfully, ensuring that the Trust vision of ensuring social justice for all is delivered effectively.



CENTRAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

“PEOPLE MATTER; AT THE CENTRAL REGION SCHOOLS TRUST, WE BELIEVE THAT EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT MUST BE AT THE HEART OF OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITIES. COLLABORATION ACROSS OUR TRUST TO IMPROVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR ALL PUPILS IN OUR CARE IS KEY TO OUR MISSION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE.”

Our subject-based co-design & cross-phase strategic conferences have recently brought our talented and expert professionals together throughout the summer term to support continued collaboration across all schools within the trust. We have welcomed input from industry experts and renowned consultants including John Tomsett, Wayne Harris, Marc Rowland, the NHS, Brook safeguarding, the Association for Physical Education, creative workshops which have developed skills in ceramics and textiles, the Gloucestershire and Worcestershire maths development hub and the Anna Freud Foundation in conjunction with the UK Trauma Council.



We have run an extensive programme of CPLR&D activity through this academic year including our evolving Expert Practitioner Programme and our inaugural Pastoral Leadership initiative. We are proud of the extensive provision, all of which is now available for 2024-25, and can be found in the CPLR&D brochure, which has been shared with CPD leads across all our schools. Over 250 colleagues have been through our programmes this academic year, with the CRST continuing its work with a wide range of partners which include Worcester University, Haybridge Teaching School, BCU, Inclusive Attendance, the EEF and subject/curriculum hubs across our region.

A further 240 colleagues have joined us at our summer conferences and the power of the collaboration has been evident in our core pursuit of social justice through exceptional schools. Central to our CPLR&D provision is the 'experience' for our young people. Through our continued commitment to supporting colleagues and accessing the highest quality training, the CRST seeks to guarantee student agency, develop resilient, confident, and empathetic learners as well as affording our young people the very best in life experiences and opportunity.

Matthew Purslow
Trust Lead for Central Professional Learning, Research & Development



SCHOOL UPDATES

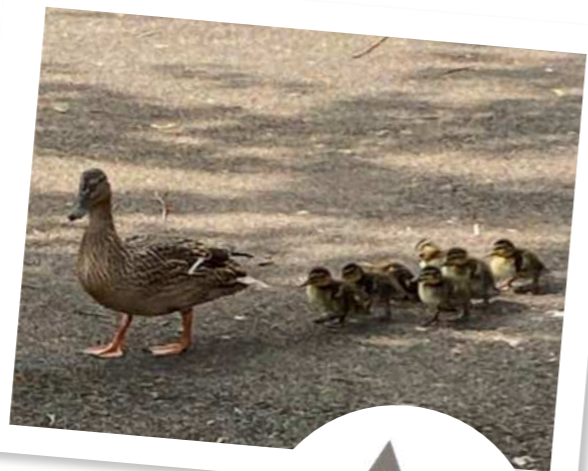
DUCK TALES FROM ARROW VALE

Just before Easter, a duck decided to move onto Arrow Vale's school grounds to lay her eggs. Unfortunately, she chose the busiest area in the main quad!

Upon taking professional advice, the area was quickly taped off, to keep her safe, as we were unable to move the duck and eggs until they had hatched.

Amazingly, despite the noise and crowds of students, during the latter part of May, seven little ducklings emerged from their eggs. As can be seen from the photo, momma duck quickly moved her little ducklings from the school grounds to the local pond at Matchborough Centre, Redditch.

This event sparked many conversations and learning about eggs and fertilisation, as many of our students found the visitors fascinating to watch and study.



COLLABORATION AND MINDFULNESS THROUGH ART

Lickhill, Sutton Park and Oldbury Park are participating in a collaborative art day this Summer Term.

All Year 3 children have been busy prepping for the day by painting pebbles ready to develop mandala designs. Mandalas are geometric designs which have a mindfulness focus. Through the Trust children mixing in their Year 3 groups, they will be creating whole group mandala patterns on the playground, long group mandala painting, mono-printing designs and paired pebble mandalas. The aim is for an enrichment activity which joins the children socially together through art while focusing on well-being and fun!



ARROW VALLEY FIRST SCHOOL

We love to play! Badgers and Hedgehogs (Key Stage 1) work incredibly hard in class but they really adore playtimes. The OAA equipment is hauled out of the sheds – a sea of wooden boards and cubes, plastic crates and huge blue barrels. This is when the teamwork starts!

Imaginations are engaged, theories are tested, experiments begin with social and emotional skills being paramount. The intense engagement of all our children during this time is a sight to see, busily developing their vocabulary and ability to negotiate with their friends while being solution focused to create their imagined adventure... But most of all we love to play!

GOSPEL OAK SCHOOL



Gospel Oak School was thrilled to welcome back Morgan Stanley for the third year to deliver their "Social Enterprise Challenge" to our Year 7 students. Students have been developing skills through lessons with Morgan Stanley, challenging their perceptions of entrepreneurship.

The lessons culminated in a Dragons' Den-style presentation, where students pitched their social enterprise ideas to Morgan Stanley Executive Directors and school leaders. The students researched local social issues and proposed solutions such as tackling loneliness, job opportunities, and environmental issues. Morgan Stanley employees provided guidance and expertise throughout the live session.



OAK HILL

At Oak Hill, we recognise the importance of positive mental health and wellbeing for all our pupils to lead a happy, healthy and productive life. It is important for them to have a voice and influence how to improve the wellbeing of their peers.

This term the Well Being Ambassadors have focused on "Spreading kindness" by encouraging acts of kindness, specifically by complimenting each other. Working alongside lunchtime supervisors, they have organised and delivered well being initiatives such as mindfulness movements and breathing techniques.

Wellbeing Ambassadors provided feedback on what's working well and have highlighted gaps in our whole-school approaches to wellbeing, creating their own action plan for the next stage of development.

ST. STEPHENS COFE

St Stephen's likes to get out and about and try new things!



Cadbury World visit as Local History Project bringing history to life. How lucky are we!



Our Charity Week raised a whopping £700. The week was a Trust initiative to raise money for Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Our Thrive children will be attending Lego Discovery Centre and Alpaca Farm. We will visit Cotswold Farm Park and Habberley Trail to get them mingling with nature! We have our wonderful Eid Celebration afternoon, and our Circus Skills Day! Our choir and drumming club will be attending Trinity Pyramid Summer Concert and will be performing alongside other local pyramid schools.



WASELEY HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

Waseley Hills conducted a groundbreaking ceremony on the 11th April to celebrate new beginnings. We were delighted to welcome Tilbury Douglas, students, staff and members of our wider community to observe the breaking of the ground to start the new build process in style.

Special guests included Student Parliament of our feeder primaries hosted by WH Student Council. Our education around oracy was seen in action as we witnessed our student councillors voluntarily lobby the DfE directly for more funding!



ARROW VALE

Arrow Vale Secondary School was honoured to welcome Mindu Hornick, a Holocaust survivor, to speak to our Historians on Friday, 28th June. Her visit provided a unique and impactful learning experience for students, emphasising the importance of understanding and remembering the Holocaust through firsthand testimony.

Mindu Hornick shared her harrowing experiences as a survivor of Auschwitz-Birkenau, one of the most notorious Nazi concentration and extermination camps. She recounted her journey from her childhood in Czechoslovakia, through the horrors of the Holocaust, to her eventual liberation and life afterward. Her testimony brought to light the brutal realities of the Holocaust, including the loss of family, the struggle for survival, and the enduring impact of these experiences on her life.

Mindu Hornick's visit is part of Arrow Vale's commitment to Holocaust education, which is an essential component of the school's history curriculum. Learning about the Holocaust is crucial not only for understanding the past but also for recognizing the importance of tolerance and human rights today- by hearing directly from survivors like Mindu, our students gained a deeper, more personal connection to historical events that lessons, textbooks and the internet cannot provide, helping to cultivate a sense of responsibility in students to stand against intolerance and injustice in all forms.

The school remains dedicated to continuing this vital work, ensuring that students not only learn about the past but also understand its relevance to their lives today- which can also be seen in units such as 'Riots & Unrest' in Y9, the 'Cold War' at GCSE and the 'British Empire' at A-Level, all of which have huge modern relevance to understanding modern society. The visit by Mindu Hornick is a testament to the power of education in shaping informed, compassionate, and socially responsible individuals.



HOUSE RELAUNCH AT WASELEY HILLS!

Our student council and Sixth Form leadership team have been working with the Senior Leadership Team to re-launch the four houses that sit at the heart of the school.

The houses allow our students to come together across year groups, support one another and develop a great sense of pride in a variety of achievements including academic, sporting, and extra-curricular. The student council explored a wide range of possible themes for the new houses and used student voice amongst their peers to create a shortlist, this was then put to a whole school vote where the winning house names were chosen. The student council then worked with the Sixth Form House Captains to develop mascot animals for each house which led to the production of our fantastic new house logos.

Our four new houses are Air, Earth, Fire and Water and students in these houses are

known as our 'Air Eagles', 'Earth Bears', 'Fire Dragons' and 'Water Sharks'. Each house is led by one of our Sixth Form House Captains and a member of our Senior Leadership Team.

Students have been participating in a range of interhouse competitions over the last term to earn house points for their house, these competitions have included Chess, Art, PE, Short Story, Baking and an academic challenge in lessons. It has been fantastic to see so many students entering and competing in these challenges and coming together in their house communities.

The interhouse competitions will come to a head in our Sportsfest event at the end of the year where the winning house will be crowned and presented with the coveted house cup! In addition, students with the most house points in each year group and each house will win additional prizes including amazon vouchers, medals, and certificates.

We look forward to next year when we will work with our student council to develop more interhouse competitions and amazing rewards trips!



THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL 'EXPERIENCES'

As educators and teachers, we are in the business of creating memories that stay with our pupils long after they have left us and moved on to other settings. Regardless of what subject teachers specialise in there are several common factors that coalesce and underpin the positive outcomes for pupils, both individually and as a collective. Here at Ipsley C of E Middle School, across both key stage 2 and 3 we have worked hard to provide not only a curriculum that is rich and exciting but also one where there are planned experiences outside of the classroom or Lab.

Some are planned to enhance the learning of topics, for example we took 30 pupils to see live hands-on demonstration from UK scientists actively working on rocket design for the UK space Agency. Space is a topic universally loved by pupils of all ages, including our head teacher!

The visiting planetarium experience for KS2 also brought them closer to the cosmos and all its wonders. Other events allow pupils to experience science in action, especially STEM related workshops. Recently, our Year 7 pupils spent the day creating and designing motorised planes, where they went through the design process, constructed their planes and flew them in competition with other groups - who flew the furthest for the least cost. Several Year 5 and 6 pupils took part in the Worcestershire Primary Stem Challenge in which they had to make a model suitable for recycling various materials. Two children were selected as our overall winners and they represented Ipsley at the Final at Kidderminster College, in June.

Last month we have taken both Year 6 and Year 8 pupils to the Big Bang Fair at the NEC. The aim here was to let our pupils see the best of British science, technology, engineering, and maths so that they can see an end point to the reason why we study science at school. For some the outcome was a deeper discussion of where science can support their future working lives.

As part of our Living Things and their habitats topic in Year 5 we watched 45 caterpillars go through metamorphosis and the children thoroughly enjoyed releasing them.

Some experiences are truly aspirational. We recently took 30 KS3 pupils to Cambridge University for a KS3 physics workshop at the Cavendish Laboratory –

where the atom was split for the first time. I wanted our pupils to see where education could lead them to. For our pupils this, in my opinion, is so important. If we are truly ambitious for our pupil's life chances and equality of opportunity then they need to experience a place as unique as Cambridge and see it as a place, not just for the wealthy and super intelligent but a place where they too could aspire to be.

Science is uniquely placed to offer a wealth of cultural experiences that not only bring their curriculum to life but also provide the opportunity for our pupils to see a life beyond the school desk!



SO, WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR OUR PUPILS?

Educational visits/experiences create:

- Improved confidence and self-belief
- Promote independence
- Allow for the personal experience of new place, culture, and people
- Team building
- Improved social skills
- Health and fitness benefits
- Stress reduction
- The internal motivation to be ambitious and courageous in their learning.



SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE!

In April 2024, Sutton Park Primary School was awarded the 'School of Excellence Award' by Thrive, an organisation that aims to equip education professionals to bolster the social and emotional growth of children and young people.

The award, the organisation's highest accolade, is granted to schools that demonstrate exceptional commitment to implementing the 'Thrive Approach'. The scheme underpins the understanding of young people's behaviour, encourages positive relationships, removes barriers to learning and fosters better attendance, behaviour, and achievement.

Our focus is identifying pupils who need additional support with their social and emotional development, and since implementing the Thrive Approach, staff have reported a reduction in incidents related to children not being able to regulate their emotions. The children are able to better articulate their emotions and how these in turn effect their learning.

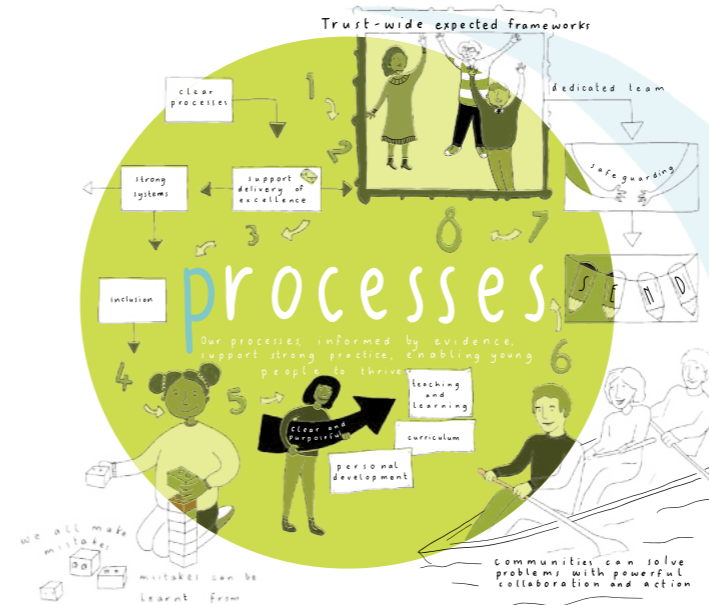
Implementing the scheme in school has supported pupils to achieve successful outcomes aligned to the underpinning principles of our curriculum: Knowledge, Skills, Attributes and Experiences (KASE), encouraging pupils to communicate and talk about their knowledge, thinking and learning.

Danielle Duignan, SENDCo and teacher, said: "It is an honour to be recognised for all of the hard work our school community has done. The school is a totally different place to where we started 8 years ago when we began our Thrive journey.

It has been amazing to see the changes in the children and how effective the approach has been. The school culture is deeply rooted in care and empathy, all of which is a result of the understanding that all behaviour is the communication of unmet needs." She added: "I would say without question, it has been the most effective CPD I have ever had and the one which has made the most difference to the lives of the children and families in our community."



CENTRAL UPDATES



FINANCE

CRST Leaders, supported by our Central Services: Finance Team, have been and forecasting projections to ensure financial sustainability via appropriate equity of resourcing. The purpose is to provide the infrastructure so support social justice through exceptional schools for all our pupils.

The structure of the Central Services: Finance Team reflect the subtleties of financial sustainability. We recognise this in two areas: Financial Accounts and Management Accounts.

Financial Accounts, incorporating financial technicians, payroll and procurement, provide an accurate historical record of CRST's financial performance and current position. The Financial Accounts team ensure adherence to standardised principles like International Financial & Reporting Standards (IFRS), the Education & Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA's) Academies Trust Handbook (ATH), as well as CRST's Scheme of Delegation, ensuring compliance, reporting accuracy and comparability.

Management Accounts hold the Financial Planning and Analysis (FP&A) responsibility and via qualified and experienced accountants support our budget holders and Principals to navigate this area as accurately as possible. They support decision-making, planning, and cost control and local level as well as consolidated Trust level. The team offers detailed, forward-looking information, such as budgets, forecasts, and variance analyses, tailored to the needs of CRST. Management Accounts emphasise operational efficiency and strategic planning.

HR

The HR Team continue to work to help ensure compliance with legislation, as well as promote and support the wellbeing of all employees. For Example:

Developing the wider use of ongoing audits of each school's Single Central Record to ensure we comply with latest requirements and this record, a key document used by Ofsted, is accurate and up-to-date.

Running Weekly Bite Size Training Sessions for line managers to support the wellbeing of employees. Topics so far have included Return to Work and Wellbeing Meetings. The sessions are being recorded for future use and more are planned for the Autumn Term.

ESTATES

Handsam is an exciting new project that the Estates Hub Managers are launching in September 2024 in readiness for the new Academic Year. The is a multi faceted portal which covers all Health and Safety guidance, advice and regulations which will be rolled out Trust wide. This will give not just Estates staff, but curriculum based teaching staff access to update to date risk assessments, model policies and guidance in their specific areas.

The system will also send out weekly alerts with any updates which will include DFE guidance. The system will also allow the Estates teams to monitor the various compliance checks that are required to be undertaken on a regular basis . This will then enable the Estates Hub Managers to collate and present Trust wide data which will enable the schools to priority and action key Estates related matters from one centralised system.

GOVERNANCE

At CRST we are incredibly proud of our Member, Trustee and Governor volunteers who bring a wealth of knowledge and skills to their governance roles. The time to reflect on our People, Places and Processes, at the near closing of another academic year, has revealed an increase in collaboration, participation and commitment from our voluntary governance team.

Valuable time has been given to meeting attendance, bespoke training, link role briefings, Chairs forums, panel support and monitoring to name but a few of the roles carried out by our amazing volunteers; and there is now a 122 strong team of governance volunteers who have committed in excess of a staggering 2000 voluntary hours this year in supporting the Trust's mission of supporting social justice through exceptional schools!

THANK YOU ALL!



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