

Issue 14 Spring 2023

DesignEd



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Meet The Team

The Central Team

- Guy Shears**
Executive Principal (CEO)
- Penny Harrison**
Trust Finance Director (CFO)
- Stephen Brownlow**
Chief Operating Officer
- Sarah Bates**
Trust Executive Principal – Primary
- Samantha McMonagle**
Executive School Improvement Leader
- Harinder Sidhu**
Business Improvement Partner
- Amandeep Singh**
Head of Estates
- Jennie Homer**
Head of Governance & Corporate Services
- Maryam Dyson**
Head of Finance (Interim)
- Edward Cooper**
Head of IT
- Nicola White**
Head of HR
- Chelsea Cafolla**
PA to the Executive Principal (CEO) & Office Manager

Trust Board

- Eric Griffiths**
Chair of Trustees
- Trustees
- Elizabeth Keates**
- Orla MacSherry**
- John Howard**
- Nicholas Clifford**
- Joanna Townshend**
- Emtiyaz Chowdhury**
- Gareth Bower**
- Dominic Bradley**
- Nicole Riley**

Executive Leadership Team

- Guy Shears**
Executive Principal (CEO)
- Penny Harrison**
Trust Finance Director (CFO)
- Stephen Brownlow**
Chief Operating Officer
- Sarah Bates**
Trust Executive Principal – Primary
- Samantha McMonagle**
Executive School Improvement Leader
- Ian Mellor**
Executive Principal
- Angela Crawley**
Executive Principal
- Ross Trafford**
Executive Principal

Principals

- Rachel Whiting**
Principal of Abbeywood First School and Church Hill Middle School
- Ian Mellor**
Executive Principal of Arrow Vale High School and Waseley Hills High School
- Sarah Allen**
Principal of Arrow Valley First School
- Ross Trafford**
Executive Principal of Holyhead School and Gospel Oak School
- Angela Saul**
Principal of Ipsley CE Middle School
- Jane Lloyd**
Principal of Lickhill Primary School
- Lee Card**
Principal of Oldbury Park Primary School
- Sarah Callanan**
Principal of St Stephen's CE First School
- Angela Crawley**
Executive Principal of Sutton Park Primary School and Oldbury Park Primary School
- Damian Belshaw**
Principal of Waseley Hills High School

Co-Design Leaders

- Tom Preston and John Barratt**
Trust Leads for Maths
- Rebecca Doughty and Clare Sidaway**
Trust Leads for English
- Hattie Hayhurst and Dan Wilson**
Trust Leads for Science
- Alison Bailey-Green & Hannah Tinsley**
Trust Leads for History
- Hannah Owen & Amy Terry**
Trust Lead for Geography
- Matthew Purslow**
Trust Lead for Modern Foreign Languages
- Ed Lee**
Trust Lead for Drama
- Lauren Clarke**
Trust Leads for Religious Education
- Luke Paskin & Josh Prentice**
Trust Lead for Physical Education
- Angela Saul & Francesca McCullough**
Trust Leads for PSHE/RSE
- Sheetal Sommel & Peter Garnett**
Trust Lead for ICT/Computing
- Dale Holt & Matthew Purslow**
Trust Lead for DT
- Stacey Geal**
Trust Lead for Art
- Francesca McCullough**
Trust Leads for Personal Development
- David Hunt**
Trust Lead for Music
- Dawn Salter**
Trust Lead for Food Technology

Teach Central Leaders

- Matthew Purslow**
Trust Assistant Principal (School Improvement) CENTRAL Lead Professional Learning, Research & Development
- Teresa Wilson**
Trust Lead for ITT & Early Careers

Chairs of LAGBs

- Richard Davies**
Abbeywood First School & Church Hill Middle School
- Stephen Jackson**
Arrow Vale School
- Nicola Robinson**
Arrow Valley First School
- Joanne Goodman**
Gospel Oak School
- Jeanette Beckett**
Holyhead School
- Matthew Setchell**
Ipsley CE Middle School
- Vicki Campbell**
Lickhill Primary School
- Kirstin Bluck**
Oldbury Park Primary School
- Vicky Jackman**
St Stephens CE First School
- Katherine Maynereid**
Sutton Park Primary School
- Tom Forty**
Waseley Hills High School

Strategic Groups

- Samantha McMonagle**
Trust Lead for Disadvantaged and Vulnerable (including Pupil Premium) Strategy
- Claire Round**
Trust Director of SEND
- Samantha McMonagle and Sarah Bates**
Trust Leads for Reading
- Scott Crane**
Trust Lead for Safeguarding
- Niall Brennan**
Trust Lead for Remote/Digital
- Matt Rash**
Trust Lead for Behaviour and Attendance
- Samantha McMonagle**
Trust Lead for Curriculum and Pedagogy
- Samantha McMonagle and Matthew Purslow**
Trust Leads for Co-Design

A note from Guy Shears

Dear Colleagues,

It is my great pleasure to introduce to you our latest edition of DesignEd. As ever many articles focus on trust-wide views and events. There are also school-based articles to showcase the extraordinary things our schools are doing with the children and community they directly serve. They highlight the incredible work that we do collaboratively for our pupils/students, as well as how we learn together as staff to be the best we can be for them.

You will find included a 'blog' about the work we have all been doing to promote Our Distinctive Culture through People, Places and Process, which of course was formally launched at the ICC 10 Year Anniversary Conference back in November. Since then, leaders have been engaged in a peer-review process, which we have designed building upon the RSA peer reviews we set-up. We have worked with John Tomsett*, to pilot how to best conduct these peer reviews, and so far 5 of the reviews have taken place. These have highlighted the common threads of excellence that emerge from looking at our schools through this lens. They have, of course, highlighted contrasting outcomes, both in terms of individual school strengths, as well as individual areas that need greater focus.

With us nearly half way through this trust-wide peer-review process, which is evolving as we learn from each review, leaders are now drawing these together to report to our trust board. From this, we will fine-

tune the process to maximise learnings from the review. This will help us fine-tune and develop our strategies for instance, recruitment of great people, curriculum development, estates strategy and so on. If we do this well, we will be much better placed to support social justice through exceptional schools.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to our staff and governors, and of course the young people, families and communities we serve as one large CENTRAL community. Governor and staff passion for education and the unwavering commitment to our pupils/students is truly inspiring, and I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such a talented and passionate team.

As I write, the Magnolia trees are budding, the days are beginning to lengthen, and Spring is upon us. Optimism, in the face of many challenges, remains the strong feel throughout our schools. I hope the Easter holidays provide all of us a break to relax and re-charge.



Guy Shears
Executive Principal (CEO)



*Author of 'This much I know about love over fear...creating a culture for truly great teaching'

Strategic Plans

Mission...

Supporting Social Justice Through Exceptional Schools

Need more advice?

Please see our website ([Central Region Schools Trust - Founded by the RSA](#)) for further details of our support and services offer for:

Strategic Leadership • School Improvement
Finance, Payroll and Procurement
Opportunities for Pupils/Students • Human Resources • Governance • IT • Estates • Data

Vision...

As a trust founded by The Royal Society of Arts, our exceptional schools work together to create learning that is inspirational for all: igniting imagination and enabling creativity and curiosity which results in the highest achievement. People are valued and happy, developing their knowledge, attributes, skills and networks for success and fulfilment.

In our empowered communities, everything is possible and aspirations are high.

Values...

The ethics and drivers of CENTRAL

Integrity

Integrity in everything we do, in our leadership and practice, in our approach and in the ways we build the character of our children.




Community

Building empowered communities and networks where everything is possible and aspirations are high.




Excellence

Excellence in leadership, teaching and learning, resulting in excellent outcomes for every child.



Creativity

Creativity is fostered to encourage powerful thinking into practical action.



Respect

Respect for others is intrinsic in all our behaviours and ensures we embrace all strands of inclusion.



Strategic Plan	Sub-Objectives
SO1 - Developing EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS	<p>SO 1.1 To provide a rich and broad knowledge and skills based curriculum so that learners know, understand and have strong skills in a wide range of subject areas</p> <p>SO 1.2 To develop the attributes of character through excellent personal development, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrichment Guarantee (1.2.1)• Central Futures (World beyond school) (1.2.2)• Pupil Leadership - To recognise the essential features of leadership and personal agency. (1.2.3)• The development of healthy and safe habits for life (1.2.4)<ul style="list-style-type: none">- wellbeing: active health/nutrition/mental health. (1.2.4.1)- PSHE and SRE (1.2.4.2) <p>SO 1.3 To achieve excellent standards for ALL learners (including excellent academic outcomes and attendance)</p>
SO2 - Recruiting, developing and retaining EXPERT PROFESSIONALS	<p>SO 2.1 Recruiting Expert People</p> <p>SO 2.2 Developing and retaining expert professionals by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting at the individual level (Let's Talk People), including staff well-being (2.2.1)• Supporting at the School and Trust level (2.2.2)• Supporting at the professional level through CPLR+D (Central Professional Learning, Research and Development (2.2.3)• Developing new teachers through our school direct provision TEACH CENTRAL (2.2.4) <p>SO 2.3 Developing and retaining expert professionals by utilising CPLR+D (Central Professional Learning, Research and Development):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Succession identification, mapping and planning through Let's Talk People framework and toolkit (including performance management) (2.2.1)• From school to trust-wide, development programmes to ensure (2.2.2):<ul style="list-style-type: none">- teacher pedagogy development- teacher subject knowledge development- teacher leadership development- operation/support staff development• Development and promotion of a strong employee offer for recruitment, retention and well-being (2.2.3)• Developing new teachers through our school direct provision TEACH CENTRAL (2.2.4) <p>SO 2.4 Developing expert Governors</p> <p>SO 2.5 Staff expertise in delivery of the disadvantaged and vulnerable (including pupil premium and SEND) strategy</p>
SO3 - Achieving EXCELLENCE OF operational INFRASTRUCTURE; operating efficient and effective SYSTEMS; AND maintaining and improving PLACES	<p>SO 3.1 To develop excellence in strategic curriculum led financial planning</p> <p>SO 3.2 To develop excellence in learning environment provision</p> <p>SO 3.3 To ensure a robust, effective, school improvement model</p> <p>SO 3.4 To develop strong operational systems and infrastructure for school improvement in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finance (3.4.1)• Governance (3.4.2)• ICT (3.4.3)• Data (3.4.4)• Human Resources (3.4.5)• Estates (3.4.6)• Health and Safety (3.4.7)• Risk Management (3.4.8) <p>SO 3.5 To deliver a sustainable growth strategy</p>
SO4 - Building EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES AND developing LASTING PARTNERSHIPS to support the development of social justice	<p>SO 4.1 To develop strong parent partnership</p> <p>SO 4.2 To develop strong new and existing significant community partnerships through a community integration plan (with a strategy for each school) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key partnership mapping and tracked engagement (4.2.1)• Required formal business link(s) for secondary settings (4.2.2)• Local community usage strategy to support targeted community members usage (4.2.3)• Active strategy to employ local community where possible (including governance) (4.2.4) <p>SO 4.3 To develop strong partnerships with the RSA and Diocese</p> <p>SO 4.4 To ensure CENTRAL is a system leadership organisation</p>

What Labour can learn from visiting trusts like ours

Recently, we hosted Labour party shadow education minister, Bridget Phillipson at Oldbury Park Primary School in Worcester to discuss the work we have been doing to tackle the attainment gap within our communities.

The meeting was a really positive opportunity to share our work. As a trust dedicated to our core purpose of driving social mobility, we believe that, no matter what the make-up of the political landscape of the day happens to be, education policy should be resolute in raising aspiration and ensuring strong outcomes for all students. At the heart of any party's educational policy should be a commitment to ensuring one's background and personal circumstances never acts as a barrier for a young person to reach their full potential.

In that spirit, there are a number of key takeaways we hope Labour's education team gained from their visit, not least that on-the-ground insights should help to shape future policy decisions.

Support for disadvantaged students

One of the leading ways to achieve social mobility is to provide exceptional education and tailored support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds by ensuring support and funding is directed where it is needed most.

A central component of our own disadvantaged strategy is the provision of targeted academic support. This includes introducing a specific focus on reading across our trust-identifying pupils who are falling behind their peers in literacy skills early and helping them to catch up.

In introducing any type of support programmes, schools, trusts, and policy makers need to understand that every child is different and that a one-size-fits-all approach will not work. This is why strong and flexible plans for supporting disadvantaged students need to be introduced at every level.

The subsequent impact of going above and beyond for these pupils is unquantifiable, and we hope a true commitment to ensuring this level of support is replicated in the formulation of education policy moving forward.

Investing in the school workforce

What should underpin all education policy is a commitment to investing in the recruitment, training and retention of high-quality teachers and support staff. To make the most difference for every student, the best teachers and staff need to be in every classroom and every school.

Within our trust, this is manifest through our focus on creating individualised continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities that enable our staff to continue to boost and refine their own skill-sets.

This comes through nurturing effective teacher talent through investment in widespread CPD opportunities and outspoken support for the importance of the profession in its influence on raising the aspirations of local communities by shaping future minds.

Non-academic barriers

Clear commitment to dismantling non-academic barriers. This includes a focus on attendance, behaviour and social and emotional learning support. These barriers tend to disproportionately affect disadvantaged students and so present more of a challenge for some schools than others.

Ignoring or de-prioritising these factors will impact outcomes. All students need to be in class on time and in the right frame of mind to learn well. Really focusing on detailed pupil premium plans tailored to each pupil's individual context is crucial, as is ensuring these plans can adequately respond to how these factors impact each student's ability to engage in their lessons.

Of course, plans are meaningless without effective implementation and measurable impact. However, when making decisions about the future of education and about how to assess the success of schools in supporting students, there should be a strong consideration of their efforts to tackle these outside factors.

As schools and trusts across the country continue to face historic challenges such as the recruitment and retention crisis and the cost-of-living crisis, we encourage decision makers from all parties to ensure the success of young people stays at the forefront of education policy so that no child is able to fall through gaps.

Indeed, it would be better if there were fewer gaps for them to fall through. And the more policy makers visit schools, the fewer gaps there will be in their understanding of what that will take.

*Guy Shears,
Executive Principal (CEO)*



Bringing culture to life through people, places and processes

A positive, flourishing culture is integral to the success of schools. Our core mission at Central, as a trust founded by the RSA, is to promote opportunity and support social justice through developing exceptional schools. Consequently, we have looked at our Central cultural norms and how our schools through their day to day working promote equity and ensure all pupils flourish. We have developed 'Our Distinctive Culture' through three 'P's, People, Places and Processes in order to define the tangible from what can be notoriously intangible. By fostering a supportive and aspirational environment we showcase to our students, staff and the wider community we value them and are committed to doing what it takes to support them to achieve.

To work, culture needs to be part of the fabric of how schools are run and experienced each day. In practice, this means ensuring all aspects of school life are working to support students in overcoming any barriers they may face and ensuring they are armed with the skills and knowledge to succeed.

For us, we knew we wanted to create a culture that reflected our core mission. We consulted with all stakeholders, including our founding organisation, the RSA, working with a cultural development expert from outside of education. We arrived at a clear definition of what has become our distinctive culture. To drive this, we put three core elements at the heart of our approach: People, Places and Processes.

Investing in your People

The leading priority of any culture strategy should be a commitment to people. For us, this includes prioritising staff development in order to nurture an environment where every student feels cared for and supported to succeed.

We are acutely aware our culture must support our staff to feel appreciated and inspired in their career. Our CPD courses and training opportunities enable them to continue developing professionally so we support people to become experts. Commitment to

expert delivery of curriculum and pastoral care are equally paramount, and investment to secure this is high across our settings.

We have shared language around behaviours which strengthen culture so we can problem-solve together and role model to young people professionalism, acting with integrity and empathy.

For our students, we focus on developing their whole self. We invest widely in wellbeing support for our young people, so they know our staff care about ensuring they are flourishing both inside and outside of the classroom. Programmes that support all, such as strong thrive practice in our primary settings, as well as bespoke and sometimes individual support packages for young people, are heavily invested in from early years through to sixth form settings. Our students need to know we have the highest expectations for them both academically and in their behaviour.

This also includes passionately ensuring all our students, regardless of background or circumstance, are accessing the same opportunities. For example, our staff work to transform SEND provision by ensuring they are accessing mainstream provision where possible and offering bespoke support to enable them to get the most out of our ambitious curriculum. Our schools are also committed to instilling aspiration into students from disadvantaged backgrounds by creating targeted support plans and investing funds where it is needed most.

Creating Places that reflect our culture

We are committed to investing in creating learning spaces fit for the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum and staff workspaces that allow a school's culture to grow. Our people know how much the physical environment shapes and supports our distinctive culture to ensure the correct conditions for growth for all students. Leaders discuss whether our classrooms have 'curriculum integrity.'

By this, we mean our environments must ensure our students feel valued, must inspire them and must provide the right resources for them to thrive in their learning. Basing requirements upon curriculum need and research enables allocation of funding to support integrity of environment.

We also recently worked with the Department for Education (DfE) to secure funding for a new building for the most recent school to join our Trust, Waseley Hills High School, Rubery. This much-needed investment will transform the learning and working experience in the school thanks to a state-of-the-art building and new facilities that will place them in the best possible environment, as opposed to what they had when they joined us which wasn't fit for purpose. We have recently also secured the same for Arrow Vale High School, Redditch.

In creating these positive environments, we are also committed to sustainability. For example, at trust level, procurement processes have sustainability and environmental impact as strong criteria in driving purchasing and contract decisions. At student level

we are determined to lead by example by having a positive impact on the environment, and in turn our communities, to ensure students feel agency to do the same. Our Years 4 and 8 leadership programmes are specifically designed to train leaders to lead community action programmes, both in school and beyond the gate.

Finally, in recognition of the distinct communities we serve, our schools also pro-actively encourage and celebrate diversity. This is then reflected in our curriculum and our wider policies to create an environment where all our students feel supported, accepted and empowered to learn. We aim to celebrate the achievements and aspirations of all students in communal areas.

Clear and purposeful Processes both inside and outside the classroom

Finally, we are committed to creating clear processes that enable our schools and leaders to focus on what



is most important: student learning. Our schools are supported with otherwise time-consuming processes for areas such as safeguarding, SEND and recruitment, by the centralisation of standard processes and then tailoring them to the context of each community. We continue to strive to ensure each process is informed by evidence and supported by best practice so we are constantly pushing ourselves to deliver the greatest educational experience for our students.

By standardising these processes as a Trust, we are able to ensure they are reflective of our wider culture and helping power our mission of supporting social justice. From powerful thinking into practical action the vision was derived through years of wide stakeholder consultation and was launched at our trust-wide conference.

When it comes to thinking about how the rhetoric of 'People, Places, Processes' are manifested daily in schools we have decided to conduct peer reviews across all settings. We have developed criteria against

the People, Places, Processes headings for the review teams to use and capture evidence and thoughts. We have also spoken to our pupils and staff and make a conscious effort to observe various aspects of the school day to ensure the manifestations of this culture is coming to fruition.

We are still at the foothills of this process, and it is both challenging and illuminating, however we are determined to implement a distinctive, rich and cohesive culture to ensure we are achieving our mission and lifting up our communities.

***Guy Shears,
Executive Principal (CEO)***



Welcome to Lickhill Primary School

On the 1st January 2023, not only did we welcome in the New Year, but we also welcomed a new Primary School to our Trust – Lickhill Primary School, Stourport-on-Severn. After developing a relationship with CENTRAL during the Covid lockdowns, Lickhill took the decision to join the Trust and become our third Primary School.

We are very excited about Lickhill joining CENTRAL bringing with them an experienced staff and over 200 wonderful pupils from nursery to year 6. This brings our third Primary School to CENTRAL located in the Worcestershire area.

Lickhill's clear vision fits perfectly with the values of our Trust, 'Successful, confident individuals. Responsible, effective contributors. Children come to our school to be happy and successful. At Lickhill we strive to develop confident, self-assured, positive young people who love to learn, to contribute and to achieve.'

Headteacher Jane Lloyd said, "Lickhill firmly believe in the arts as a driving force for inclusion, mindfulness

and for developing talents which allow pupils to express themselves in a unique way."

Even before joining CENTRAL, Lickhill influenced the design of our Primary curriculum by introducing Guy Shears and Sam Macgonagle to CUSP (Curriculum with Unity Schools Partnership). This curriculum has provided the foundations for our Primary curriculum throughout the Trust.

Lickhill have been successfully working with us for over a year now, they have already contributed widely to our reading strategy, curriculum development and the use of pupil book study to develop pupil voice. They feel that joining the Trust has already provided many development opportunities for their staff, who previously felt isolated in a stand-alone SAT.

We look forward to developing our relationship further as we get to know the school, staff, Governors and pupils well. A huge welcome Lickhill Primary School from all of us at CENTRAL.

Wonderful Word Day

Every other year, Lickhill Primary celebrate the world of words and vocabulary with their "Wonderful Word Day". Everyone is invited to dress up as a word and visually show us the meaning with their colourful and highly creative, eye-catching costumes. The word is given its definition and some go further to show us it's word class as well! Each time we celebrate, we are stunned by the imagination and attention to detail taken by the pupils and it was again a joy to see this year. We learn new words and their definitions, have great fun in word-related activities and join together in an assembly and word parade so that all the children and staff can appreciate the diverse and exceptional costumes together.

This year there were many children whose choice of word and enthusiasm for the challenge has left staff speechless. For example, it isn't always the complexity of the word, but the meaning that word has for an individual. (A child who has completed 2 and a half years of treatment for leukaemia chose HERO as her word and dressed as a nurse!) Others who rarely participate in dress-up days put much time and energy into creating their word visually and their enthusiasm was contagious.

We have been developing our vocabulary and etymology knowledge for several years now, which is now embedded in our curriculum offer. The children are building their understanding of how words are built up and their roots. This celebration of words supports all our curriculum areas, but also develops the love of books and exploring layers of meaning. In our class novel time and throughout staff are deepening the learning experiences and exploring a range of vocab, which knocks on to develop their writing and understanding of their reading.

Our families have yet again outdone themselves in exploring wonderful words and engaging in the conversations at home. Staff too have the challenge to find a word which even Mrs McLeod doesn't know! This is extremely difficult to do!!

Here are a selection of the staff and pupil's offerings on the day...



The Joys of Reading

At CENTRAL we place reading at the centre of our curriculum. We know that young children who enjoy reading independently will have had the door opened to new discoveries and wide interests, to knowledge, creativity, and confidence. Reading is the critical route to other subjects as well as a provider of wider opportunities for giving more and getting more from life and work.

Research shows that those children living in the poorest families and the most deprived communities have a far greater chance of leaving primary school unable to read effectively (four out of ten children on free school meals are not able to read well by the age of 11). For any of these children, entering secondary school without the ability to read well can engender a crippling lack of confidence and confusion. This in turn can lead to humiliation and despair at precisely the moment when raised aspirations and the enjoyment of achievement should be creating a positive future for every child. Children living in poverty are less likely to be able to read well at school than their classmates – and this has the potential to be devastating for their future lives.

Reading is the key to unlocking every child's full potential and opens up a world of possibilities. A good education is of course about much more than just reading. But being able to read well is the foundation on which so much else depends: children first 'learn to read' and then they 'read to learn'.

In England, struggling to read is more closely linked to low pay and the risk of being unemployed than in any

other developed country, including the USA. Reading and poverty are directly linked. This is not fair. At CENTRAL our mission for supporting social justice through exceptional schools drives our work.

The trust have focussed on developing a reading strategy that starts with our youngest pupils. We have invested in high quality resources and training to enable our Early Years and Key Stage 1 staff to deliver excellent phonic teaching. With this start at the age of 4; we are equipping our pupils with the very best opportunity to develop into enthusiastic and fluent readers. We have made it our mission to ensure all pupils are given the very best opportunity to become successful, lifelong readers.

Research shows that reading for pleasure can promote better health and wellbeing, aids in building social connections and relationships with others and is associated with a range of factors that help increase the chances of social mobility. At CENTRAL we take every opportunity to rejoice in reading activities which encourage our pupils to think about books, talk about books and share their experiences of books.

World Book Day on 2nd March was an opportunity to celebrate the joys of reading across our schools. From classes of Harry Potters to staff dressed in their favourite book characters, from 'Snuggle Up with a Book' pyjama wearing sessions to a school dressed as a word. It was a fun-filled day promoting the joys of reading.



World Book Day 2023



Waseley Hills New Build

The planned full rebuild of Waseley Hills High School is progressing well. Our contractor partners, Tilbury Douglas, are preparing to submit our planning application in late March, following a successful review of the plans by the Department of Education.

At the beginning of March we held two pre-planning application events, one for staff and one for the local residents and community. At these events, the plans for the buildings and the phases of construction, along with associated timelines were shared. Tilbury Douglas explained the process and were on hand to answer all questions. The events were overwhelmingly positive with lots of really constructive feedback from staff, local residents and the wider community.

If all goes well work is planned to start this summer. Our contractors Tilbury Douglas are very keen to engage with the local community during this project and leave a sustainable legacy. If you or anyone you know is involved in a local community project that you feel our contractors could support with their expertise or materials, please contact Charlotte.Davies@tilburydouglas.co.uk

I am sure you will agree, this is a very exciting time for all of the Waseley Hills and the Central Region Schools Trust community.



Arrow Vale New Build

We are incredibly excited to announce that Arrow Vale has been accepted onto the Department of Education's Schools Rebuilding Programme.

The school rebuilding programme (SRP) carries out major rebuilding and refurbishment projects at school and sixth-form college buildings across England, with buildings prioritised according to their condition.

There are currently 400 projects in the programme, announced in 2021 and 2022, as below:

- The first set of 50 schools, announced in February 2021
- The second set of 50 schools, announced in July 2021

- The third set of 61 schools, announced in July 2022
- The fourth set of 239 schools, announced in December 2022

Arrow Vale has been identified for a complete rebuild and our engagement meetings with the Department of Education have very recently begun.

We are currently awaiting confirmation of which delivery group we have been allocated to (which determines when the build will start).

Timescales for delivery of each school identified will differ, dependent on the condition of the school and contractor availability.

New Websites are Coming!

Our websites are an essential tool for showcasing our schools and communicating with visitors. We are in the process of renewing all websites across the trust and have been working with an education focused design agency to support this project. All websites will feature a baseline trust theme and be mobile-friendly, accessible, and easy to navigate. Below are some screenshots from some of our initial designs:



Central Support and Services Offer

At Central Region Schools Trust we are proud of the support and services offer we provide for schools in our family to help them realise our mission of supporting social justice through exceptional schools. As we have grown, we have been able to develop a useful range of structures and services to best support the needs of our schools and which enable leaders to focus on leading their school communities.

Our support and services offer supports our strategic objectives (SO):



Developing exceptional learners which is achieved through:

Our aim is to deliver strong services from the centre that enable school leaders and staff to focus their energy where it will make the most difference to the lives of the pupils/students we serve and to realise benefits in terms of economies of scale. We strongly believe that each member of staff in a school is also indirectly responsible for every one of the 6500+ children in our care as a Trust. Where we have particular expertise then each of us commits to sharing our resources, skills and knowledge across the Trust. In this way, all of our schools benefit from mutual support in service provision, curriculum delivery and school improvement.

There are many avenues of support for schools from the central teams in Central, which are outlined in this document. For staff, this is an opportunity to support and contribute widely to a collective expertise but also have the benefit of wider progression, opportunities and project work. In terms of resourcing, the Trust continuously evaluates how resources can be pooled and contribute to an effective solution that delivers synergy back to schools. Examples of this are Trust procured contracts or licences, but also staff for example, a specialist Head of HR. A shared Trust strategy that supports our vision and mission ensures all contribute to a collective aspiration.



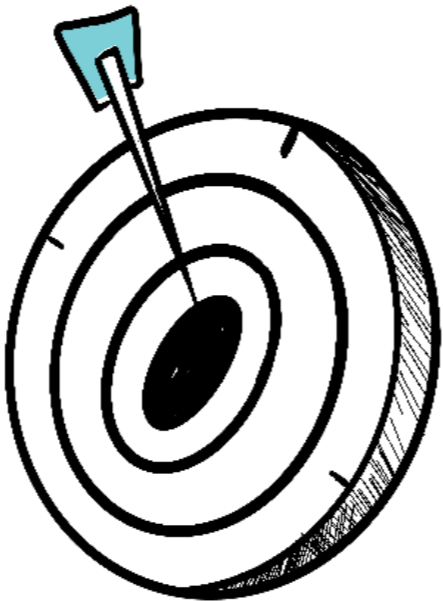
Recruiting, developing and retaining expert professionals;



Achieving excellence of operational infrastructure; operating efficient and effective systems; and maintaining and improving places; and



Building empowered communities and developing lasting partnerships to support the development of social justice



Our school improvement model is very much based on our value of community. Resource is allocated where it is most needed to mitigate risk and generate excellence through co-design. Our improvement frameworks have been collaboratively designed and enable local autonomy of delivery within the boundaries laid out in our frameworks. As such, leaders of safeguarding, pupil premium, reading etc are able to support each other so that all can be the best they can be. Focussed staff development models including 'let's talk people' that complements the range of Central Professional Learning, Research and Development (CPLR&D) programmes opportunities that run through all levels starting at a comprehensive ITT provision and leading all the way through subject leadership training and including National Professional Qualifications. All this is managed by Teach Central, our own ambitious CPLRD and ITT provision that maintains a reputation including great links with the higher edification sector.

By sharing strategies that have been proven to work in one setting, all benefit from considering whether they may work in a different setting in the trust. Leaders new to role can expect high quality development as part of induction so that they become experienced at speed through the shared experience of the other designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) in the Trust. Through co-design, this sharing is not left to chance, but is very much an expectation of every one of us to deliver the best for the thousands of children in our care.

As a Trust founded by the Royal Society of Arts (RSA), we have a lasting relationship with the RSA and are founder members of the RSA Education Network. This relationship gives access to a multi-national fellowship

and an internationally recognised organisation aligned to our own mission and values.

Our mission and values are forged from the relationship we have benefited from through our original founders, with the vast majority of our Trustees being fellows of the RSA. We continue to recruit fellows to our governance committees which supports us in holding true to our values.

One of the strongest benefits of our ongoing partnership with the RSA, and the collaborative programmes for pupils/students, such as RSA leadership and pupil/student agency programmes, and a whole host of cross school and trust-wide activities, competitions and events. These bring a richness to the experience of our pupils/students, developing their knowledge, attributes of character and skills through amazing experiences, which of course is why we have come together as schools, so that we can ensure these are as good as we can possibly make them.



RSA8 A Social Action Project

On Tuesday 14th March 2023 Waseley Hills hosted the Launch event for the RSA8 project. This is a project which promotes student leadership and works to help prepare young people for the world beyond school. It offers the opportunity for our Y8 students to be proactive and develop into active citizens within their communities.

It was a busy morning packed with activities driven by a shared passion for social action. Our Y8 students from five of our trust schools came together to listen to the journey of a local councillor Alex Aitken who was inspirational in the stories he told and the experiences he shared with the CENTRAL students. Following some light refreshments, the RSA8 members were keen to get to work and whilst beginning the session contemplating what community meant to them and how their school was unique they were able to move on to thinking about how they would approach the social action project moving forward.

Prior to the event the students had led some discussions in their own schools via school council and the theme for the project was decided by them, "Celebrate difference, challenge prejudice" This evoked passionate discussions and creative ideas about what each of the projects would look like. Each school began to think about their vision, aims and outcomes and how they would drive their project through change. Lots of exciting ideas were brought to the table and we can't wait to see how they all progress. The students of Waseley, Ipsley, Holyhead, Gospel Oak and Church Hill have been invited to Arrow Vale on Tuesday 28th March, where the Sixth Form leaders will host 'Talk the Talk' company in leading an all day workshop about building confidence, communication and presentations skills. This will come in useful as they work towards their presentation that they will deliver at Worcester University in July as part of their University away day experience. Exciting times ahead!



A Haven of Play and Learning

Arrow Valley First School

Stepping through the door to start in the Early Years for the first time can be very daunting. But at Arrow Valley it feels like a home away from home. From the outset, children's independence and confidence are nurtured.



A sense of belonging is created, with photographs of the children already in place that have been shared by parents ahead of their child starting school. Poster size images of the children engaged in play adorn the walls, absorbing children in conversation. Children find a sense of security and well-being in the setting, which is more like an extension of their home, than a school. The inclusion of cosy corners, with cushions, blankets and twinkling lights give children the space to rest, look at a book or quietly chat with a friend.

In the last few years, we have all become much more aware of the importance that nature plays in our lives and for our well-being. Elements of nature are threaded throughout the setting, giving children the opportunity to connect to the natural world.

Open-ended resources support children to become adventurous, curious and creative thinkers and doers. Giving children real objects impacts on the children's learning and gives value to the children's play.

The calm and peaceful environment that has been created at Arrow Valley reflects the schools' aspirations for the children to be safe, happy and healthy: a haven of play and learning.



A Ski Trip to Italy

Gospel Oak School

Eagerly anticipated, prestigious, and such an exciting trip – a week of firsts for many of our Gospel Oak School students! On the early hours of the 25th February, we set off for Bormio, Italy with a very excited group of 85 students.

The enthusiasm and resilience that our pupils showed over the week exemplified what it really means to be a Gospel Oak Student.

Ski fit began at 8am the following morning, staff were full on caffeine and students eager to get their gear on to hit the slopes. The sun was shining, and they were lucky with plenty of snow, so the week ahead was looking very positive. After a brief ski test, the pupils were split into several ability groups and off they went. In every group, there were some spectacular – and very funny – falls, life-long skills learnt, and friends made. From learning how to get on a chairlift for the first time, to trying jumps, everyone learnt something and, at some point, tried something new!

The weather remained kind to them for the entire trip, albeit unseasonably warm, resulting in some terrible goggle tan lines for Miss Nagle! After a long day on the slopes with 5 hours of skiing, the evenings were made up of some time to rest, some great food, and an après ski programme including a disco, karaoke, tobogganing, arcades and a chill zone.

I am so proud of all of our students and it is heart warming to get such lovely feedback from hotel staff, airport staff and plane passengers about how our students conducted themselves.

A key comment that will stick with me for some time is from a Year 11 student: "This trip is the best end to my school experience. I am so glad that I got to attend this, and I have now made lifelong memories." Another commented "just look at this view, it is beautiful. I will never get to experience something like this for a very long time"



Our Pupil Agency

Sutton Park Primary School

At Sutton Park we have always been keen to hear what our children have to say. This has, however, really started to evolve and influence more change in recent years.

Pupil voice is now key to our curriculum planning using Pupil Book Study, where through the children's articulation of their learning we can find out what knowledge has stuck and inspired them. It changes our delivery and takes into account how our children learn best so we can meet learning needs.

Our School Council continue to be the collective voice of our classes – they choose our events and charities, generating ideas for future change and support for our community.

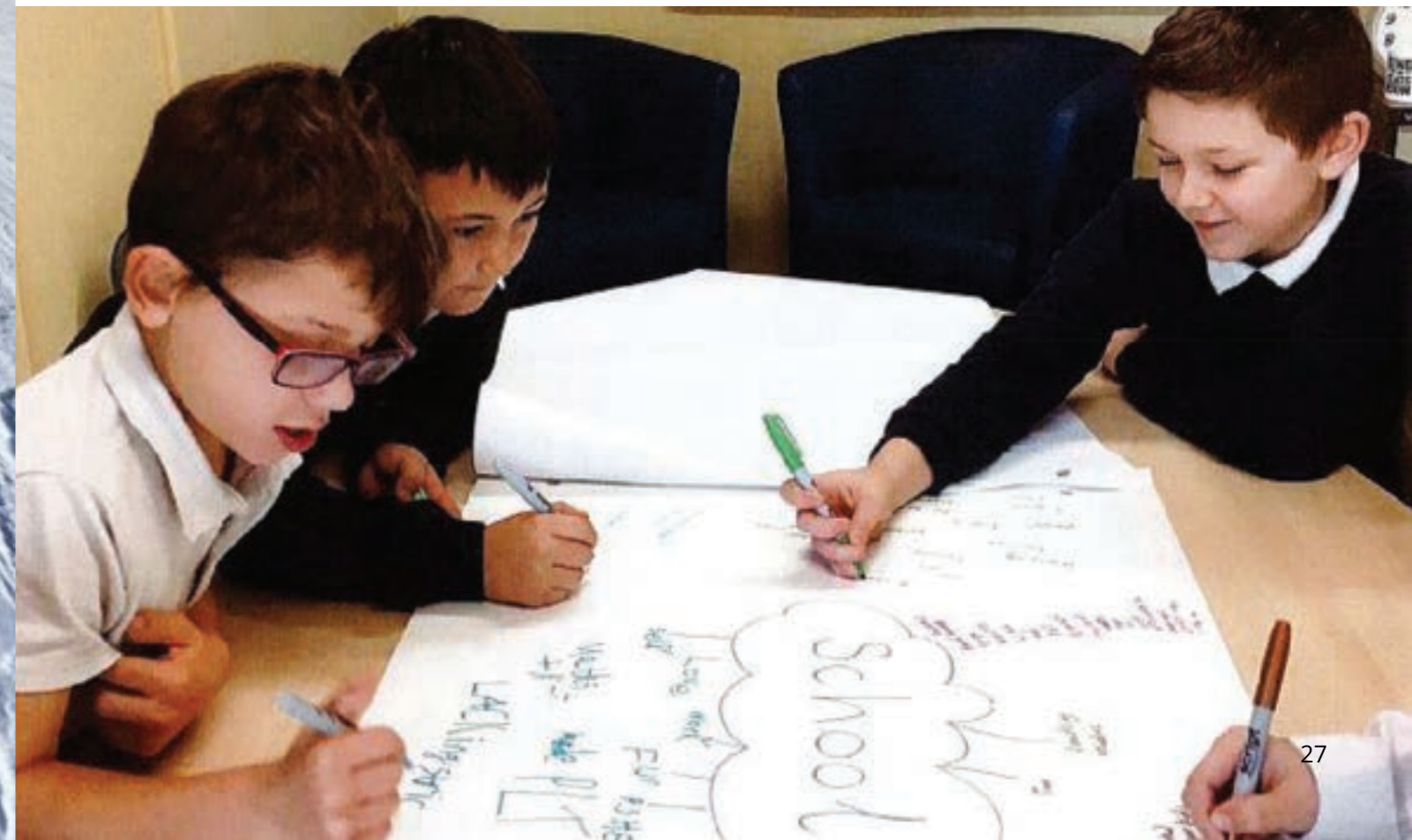
Through RSA4 each year, our Year 4 class make a difference of their choosing. This social action project shows them that they are instrumental to change and that their ideas have merit and can change things for the better.

There are Anti Bullying Champions who support our staff with the ensuring that unkind behaviour

is not tolerated. They use their training to become 'upstanders' who have authentic standing amongst their peers and have proved to make a real difference.

The Sutton Park Pupil Leadership Team, which includes the Head Boy and Girl, meet regularly to discuss key issues for the school. One very clear example of their agency for change is that they recommended from their School Self Evaluation 21/22 (SEF) that we needed to do more to counteract our school's lack of diversity and multi-culture. They want to better understand their world and the rich nature of diversity beyond their community. As a result of their recommendation, diversity is written large in our School Improvement Plan 22/23 and we have embarked on our journey to be awarded 'The Diversity Mark.'

The more work we do to improve vocabulary and oracy, the better our children become at articulating what they want and need to become the best versions of themselves. It is vital that we take the time to listen and act upon what they say – they are the future!



Spelling Bee!

Holyhead School

At Holyhead, we place great significance on both literacy and oracy. Our school calendar features an annual whole school Spelling Bee event, which serves as an effective tool to engage students. The competition is for all year groups which starts during Form time, progressing to the finals where students compete to be overall year group winner.

Despite encountering challenging words that are tied to the curriculum, students persisted in their efforts to spell them correctly. We are proud to have had 21 students reach the finals - a remarkable accomplishment!

The event was highly successful, and our students were fully immersed, motivated and eager to participate again next year.

Congratulations to the Spelling Bee Final Winners

- Year 7 winner: Angelo
- Year 8 winner: Alberto
- Year 9 winner: Mohammed
- Year 10 winner: Alyssa
- Year 11 winner: Aroosa
- Year 12 winner: Taaranjot
- Year 13 winner: Zahura



"The Holyhead School Spelling Bee was a marvellous experience. It was a beautifully organized evening and I am so grateful I had the opportunity to be a finalist. The energy was lively and the participants were enthusiastic rather than nervous. I may not have won first place in the Spelling Bee but Spelling Bee won first place in my eyes."

Tanish, Year 12

"The Spelling Bee was a sight to behold! I loved every minute! It filled me with absolute joy to see our students so articulate, so confident and so focussed. It's always magical when the whole school community comes together in celebration. Well done to all participants and organisers!"

Ross Trafford, Executive Principal



"From a small school event, to a large, noteworthy occasion. The Spelling Bee of 2023, a new and improved version where learning is celebrated! As the winner of Year 10, the nerve wracking contest was certainly one to remember. The atmosphere was formal, yet exhilarating. Standing on a stage, in front of parents, teachers, governors and classmates, the pressure and focus is on whether you get the word right and whether the trophy could be yours. Overall, I found the Spelling Bee to be something to remember, and I congratulate those brave enough to speak, and those who won!"

Alyssa, Year 10

KS3 Careers Day 2023

Ipsley C of E Middle School

KS3 pupils had the most fabulous opportunity of meeting a wide range of businesses from several employment sectors on their Careers Day on Friday 10th February 2023. Pupils met an archaeologist who shared his exciting experiences of recovering items from the ground in a whole host of countries including Egypt where he had a close encounter with a scorpion. His protective gloves saved the day!

Representatives from two construction firms came to talk to the pupils: Stepnell and Prime PLC. Both companies shared the vast array of projects that they have been involved with including building schools with slides as stairs! Imagine! Prime PLC set the pupils a construction task using spaghetti and marshmallows!

Regarding food, Ipsley's own catering firm, Aspens, came to talk to the pupils about all aspects of their job. In this session pupils were able to sample chocolate brownies and consider what the secret, healthy ingredient might be! You will never guess what it was!

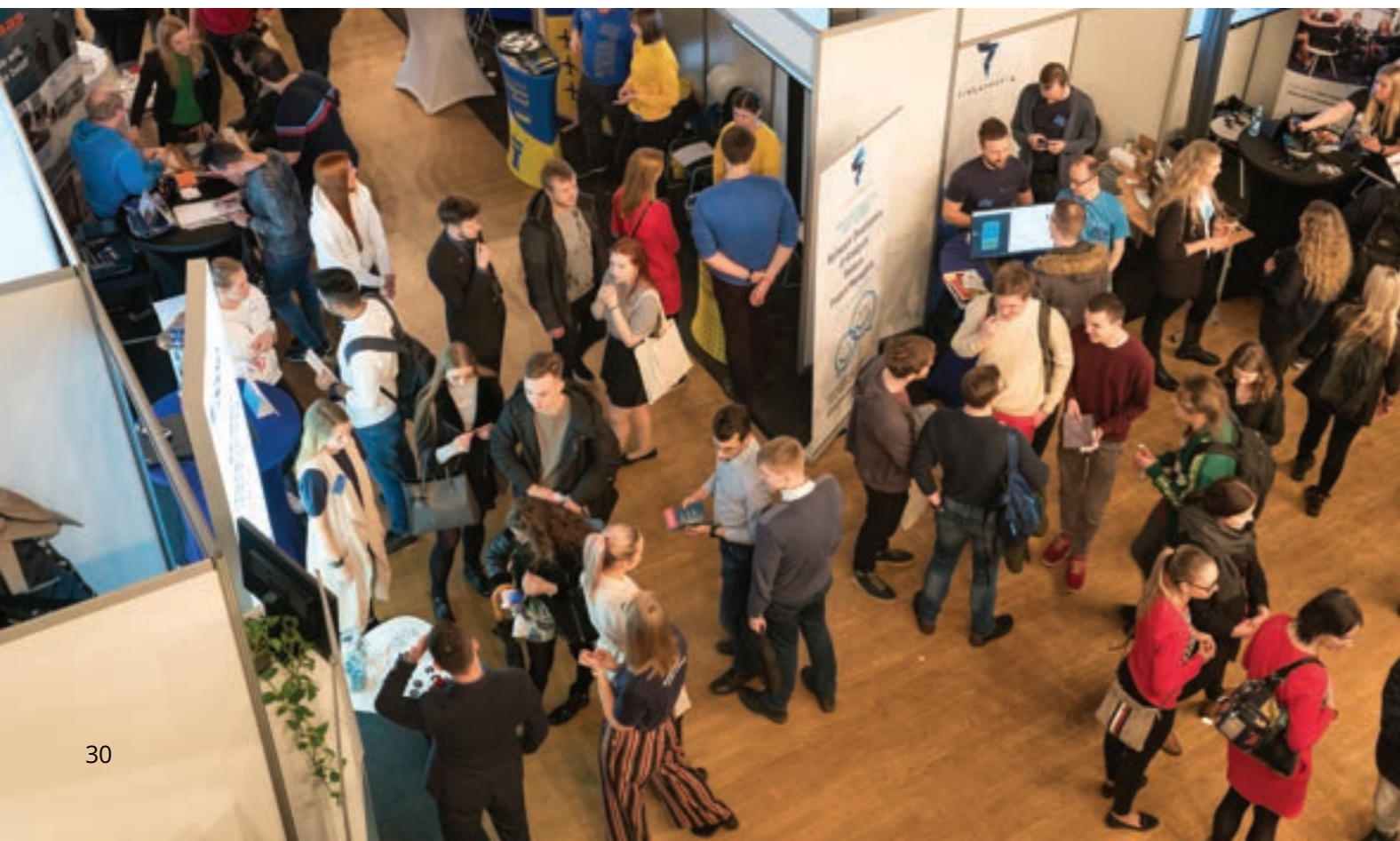
Representatives from Howmet Aerospace came to our Careers Day. Pupils learnt all about design and

construction of space and aircraft and how important this job will be in the future. For the scientists at Ipsley, there was an exciting opportunity to meet a virologist who shared with the pupils her education pathway and the projects that she had been involved in. Additionally, pupils were able to work with Severn Trent where they found out about water treatment and what to and, most importantly, what not to put down the toilet or down the sink! Pupils participated in a game show!

Year 7 pupils were able to meet swimming instructors from an organisation called 'Scholfin'. Not only did they learn about being sports and swimming coaches, but they also learnt about water safety- a vital life skill. Pupils learned all about Oakland International, a local haulage firm who has well established links with our school.

The day concluded with an informative assembly for Year 8 on apprenticeships taken by Kerry from Worcestershire Apprenticeships.

We want to pass on our massive thanks to all the employers who gave up their days for the benefit of our wonderful pupils! Thank you!



Team Ipsley Community Café for Winyates and Matchbrough

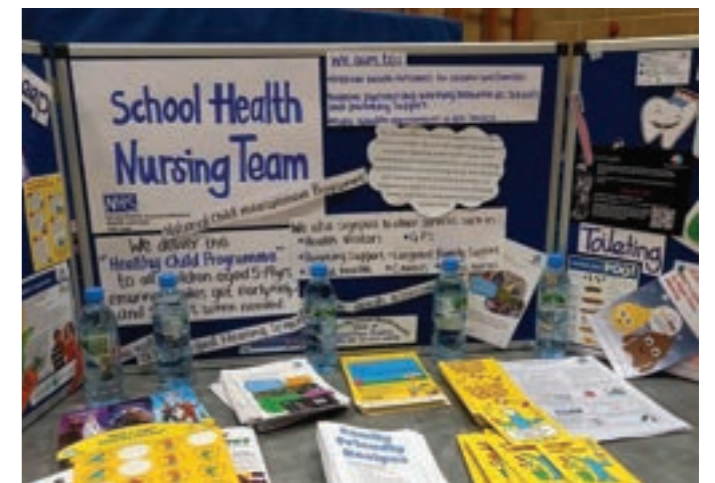
Ipsley C of E Middle School

The world has certainly changed in the last few years, and we know that the news, locally and nationally, is persistently peppered with stories of budget cuts, increasing demand on services and the sad closure of local networks, charities and support organisations for families. At Ipsley, we heard the voices of our local community; they wanted to know how to keep their families happy, healthy and safe. So, we set ourselves a mission: bring together the support, clubs and opportunities available across our local area to meet as many families as we could reach at the first Winyates and Matchborough Community Café, hosted by Team Ipsley.

On Monday, 20th January 2023, over twenty different organisations hosted a stall at our Café. From the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team to anti-social behaviour teams, and from mental health and family support teams to the local food bank, our call was heard loud and clear by the range of organisations that seek to support the families of Redditch. Clubs, activity leaders and the local library attended to talk about activities that young people can participate in outside of school, while SEN experts and REACH CIC, our local charity and community hub, discussed support for parents in these challenging times. It was heart warming to see so many people coming together with such a strong sense of shared purpose: how could we make sure this event made tangible and powerful difference to families across our local area?



The staff of Ipsley also gave up their time to support the event in their droves, with many taking on the roles of chefs serving slices of free pizza, kindly supplied by Tesco and Morrisons, and drinks to families in attendance. Some led our activities table, chatting with children and getting crafty together. Our local first schools also promoted the event, helping us to extend our reach beyond the families of Ipsley into our wider community. Though it may have been a wintry January evening, the event was filled with the warmth of a community working closely together to support each other.



Across the evening, almost 200 families attended the event- it was an incredible turnout, busy from the moments the gates opened until the final few minutes. Parents were leaving with leaflets filled with information, contact details for the support available to them across Redditch, free goodies such as keyrings, stickers and stationery, and a few lucky attendees even walked away with slow cookers and home-made smoothies! Since the event, we have been delighted to read some of the positive comments shared with us, and many more organisations have been in touch to share their thanks. One family commented, "The whole evening was brilliant – we didn't want to leave!" Another asked, "When is the next event? It was a great community idea and everything was fantastic." We are pleased to announce that this event is now officially the first of many Winyates and Matchborough Community Cafés, hosted by Team Ipsley – it's time to begin planning for the summer!

Scan here to register your interest!

Winyates & Matchborough Community Cafe

When and where is this happening?

Monday 30th January 2023

3:20PM to 6:00PM

Ipsley C of E Middle School, Winyates, Redditch, B98 0UB

For Sat Nav: B98 0JA

Why are we doing this event?

Team Ipsley are hosting a Winyates and Matchborough Community Cafe, bringing together the local area to learn more about opportunities, support and activities available for families.

We want to help. Please come and chat to us! Families with children from all schools welcome!

What do we have to offer?

- Local clubs & activities information
- Children's mental health specialists
- SEN & Safeguarding specialists
- Ipsley's uniform swap shop
- Your Ideas and P&E Sports
- Local community support (REACH)
- Health signposting / School nurse
- Youth workers
- Peter Martin (youth engagement / clubs)
- Safer neighbourhood team / PCSO's
- Online Safety / IT Support

How to contact us?

01527 525725 | www.ipsleyschool.org.uk | @IpsleySchool | office@ipsleyacademy.co.uk

Thrive in the forest!

St Stephens CofE First School

We use our Forest School sessions to help our pupils Thrive! It is a great way to support pupils' mental health and wellbeing by being in the outdoors, in the fresh air and getting lots of exercise. It gives the children the opportunity to develop their fine and gross motor skills which will, in turn, have a positive impact on the fine and gross motor skills required in the classroom. It gives the pupils the opportunity to develop their friendships, role play, take responsibility for themselves and others, and to show respect to others and the environment. It gives pupils who find success in the classroom difficult, an opportunity to shine in another way.

By the end of Key Stage 1 we expect the children to be 'secure' in the area of 'Power and Identity'. When our learning is secure at Power and Identity, we feel good about who we are and it is important to us that others recognise our uniqueness. We are aware of gender differences and have fun exploring roles, finding out about and trying new ways of being or doing things. We use our imagination to enhance our experiences and enjoy being in the real world too. We are up for taking on new responsibilities and can sometimes lead and sometimes follow. Empathic and responsive, we are aware of our impact on others and can communicate our experiences of how others impact us.

We communicate all of this through behaviours such as having a positive sense of self; expressing an individual identity, adapting appropriately to different roles, environments and relationships; understanding consequences; taking responsibility for our own behaviour; being able to lead others; being able to

follow others; sharing and taking turns.

Our Forest School sessions provide opportunities for pupils to work towards this end of Key Stage expectation.

Nature is a sensory treasure chest of textures, colours, sounds and movement. It is a great place to test physical capabilities and bodily limitations. It's the ideal experimental play space, where one can endlessly explore, observe and be creative. It's all about having fun, trying new things, and sometimes getting dirty and messy. There is no limit to the joys of simply playing in the countryside, for example, observing the sounds of birds in the woods, the buzzing and flitting of insects, launching sycamore seed helicopters, kicking through mounds of leaves and having leaf fights, collecting and identifying and climbing trees.

We can use our Forest School sessions to support our learning in Science by observing seasonal changes and weather patterns, and exploring the forest using our senses.

In PSHE we need to learn about keeping safe and managing risk. Our Forest School sessions provide a great opportunity to explore this.





Exciting Experiences at Waseley Hills

Waseley Hills High School

STEM Day

On Friday 17th March, we were fortunate enough to offer 50 Year 9 students the opportunity to take part in an exciting STEM day with an external provider. Students were tasked with breaking codes and creating codes using attributes of teamwork and critical thinking.

The day was a fantastic opportunity for students to have an insight into the various STEM industries and careers available to them and to immerse themselves within this challenging and engaging experience.

Students spoke highly of the event:

'I loved code-breaking! It was great to have such different experiences and the leaders were really clear in explaining tasks and then letting us try them for ourselves. The smaller tasks built up to a main

task and this was a chance for us to put the previous demonstrations into practice. I also found learning about codes used during WWII really interesting. It made me think about careers in Engineering which I'd never considered before.' - Sophie

'The STEM day had a great level of depth. The main task was challenging: we had to work together to break a code and this required us to divide responsibilities and work together. It was a good teambuilding exercise! I'm now thinking about possible careers in the Engineering sector, especially something to do with decryption.' - Dylan

We look forward to our next STEM endeavours at Waseley Hills and are immensely proud of our Year 9 students for representing the school so brilliantly.



Morgan Stanley Event

We were delighted to welcome Morgan Stanley to school on Friday to work with our Year 7 pupils. This has been a fantastic opportunity for student leadership and a chance to build leadership qualities which we know are crucial for our learners.

The session was run in a similar style to 'Dragon's Den', with teams given the time to meet and introduce themselves. The students have been tasked with the job of planning and developing a company which is environmentally friendly and benefits society. Our students benefited from expert advice as each group was equipped with a Morgan Stanley volunteer to guide and support.

Students will now continue to develop the ideas around their company alongside designing the corporate image and information. We have already heard of some excellent company names including the 'Tremendous Timbers' and 'Sally the Sea Sweeper!'. The final session will provide students with the opportunity to 'Present to the Investors' which will include our School Leadership Team and Morgan Stanley Volunteers.

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It is wonderful to hear students speak so enthusiastically about the project with some of our learners commenting:

'It is hard work thinking but it is fun and I am looking forward to presenting our company.' - Kayah.

'It is a fun experience working with students who I do not usually work with. This has helped me develop my communication skills and my confidence.' - Katie

'It is fun and exciting to think that we could start a company and it is exciting to know that we can help with climate change in the future.' - Travis

We are extremely proud of the ideas that our students have already shared and their investment in the environment. We are eager to listen to the group pitches and to award students for their excellent ideas and work.





Following an exciting six months for Jacob Young, Y8, we are excited to share his experience of filming as a supporting artist for a new drama series coming soon to the BBC. Spending some engaging, long days on set, working alongside some very talented people he got to see the behind the scenes process as well as strutting his stuff in front of the camera. Jacob and his family had the pleasure of attending the Premiere evening, an exclusive screening of Phoenix Rise on Tuesday 14th March 2023.

It sounded like such a wonderful evening, where Jacob rocked the red carpet, rubbing shoulders with the main actors. It must have been exciting for Jacob

and his family to watch the first two episodes and we can't wait to see it on the big screen! You can catch the series on BBC iPlayer. Jacob has already been invited back as a cast member to take part in the follow\up series.

We wish Jacob luck as he embarks on his stage project as he treads the boards in West Side Story this coming Spring!

We are all very proud of him and his journey so far!



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