

Issue 1 | Winter 2021

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A Central Region Schools Trust publication

Abbeywood & Church Hill



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Values shared**

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new library**

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As the year comes to an end it is always a time for reflection. In the ongoing trials of Covid-19, it is challenging to find the space to do this, but perhaps never more important to do so.

There have been remarkable individual and school achievements in the midst of the pandemic, some of which are celebrated within this magazine. There have, of course been terrible challenges and losses. It is humbling and reassuring to see how our trust-wide community continue to pull together in the interests of the young people and families we serve. I suppose it is with the backdrop of those challenges that I will focus briefly on just one of these many positives, the strengthening of our trust through growth.

By the end of the year we will have grown by 3 schools. We were, as you know, chosen by the DfE to sponsor Roman Way First School in Redditch, which the community chose to rename as Arrow Valley upon joining the Trust in January. Since then, we have also attracted two secondary schools to join us. Their trustees have assessed our values, culture, and amongst other things our strong track record of school improvement, governance, finance and business operations.

Firstly, of the two secondary schools, Waseley Hills High School in Rubery joined us in November. Through our due diligence work and lobbying, we have secured a full rebuild for 2024. This will support the transformation of school.

Secondly, I am delighted to announce that Holyhead School in Handsworth, Birmingham, subject to the signature of the Secretary of State, will be joining the Trust at midnight as the New Year arrives. We have worked closely with Holyhead over the last 8 years, since it joined the RSA family. Together, as founder members of the new RSA Education Network, we will continue in our revised, strong partnership with our founder, the Royal Society of Arts, driving existing and new projects, we now have over 6000 young pupils/students in our Trust. The collective power, knowledge and expertise of our nine hundred colleagues means that we are better placed than ever to do this.

The work, behind the scenes, to secure each single school joining the trust, is genuinely monumental. By succeeding, we are able to extend our drive for excellence not only in these new schools, but of course in all of our schools. Ross Trafford, Principal at Holyhead, with Helen Tanner, Principal at Gospel Oak, will work closely together, as an example of a strengthened collaboration, to develop the Birmingham and Black Country Hub within our Trust.

There is cause for optimism in amongst the ongoing challenges, and much to get excited about. However, as the holiday approaches, there has never been more need for everyone to have a very good rest. May I wish all of our communities a peaceful Christmas, and let us hope the New Year brings good things for all.



Guy Shears

Executive Principal (CEO)

The Central Team

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Trust Finance Director (CFO)

Samantha McMonagle

Trust School Improvement Lead

Michaela Moore

Chief Operating Officer

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Michaela Moore

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Executive Principal (Arrow Vale)

Nicola Beech

Executive Principal (Redditch Middle and First)

Angela Crawley

Executive Principal (Sutton Park)

Ross Trafford (in attendance)

Holyhead School (Principal)

Principals

Ian Mellor

Arrow Vale RSA Academy

Deena Frost (Head of School)

Abbeywood First School RSA Academy

Cherie Lewis (Head of School)

Church Hill Middle School RSA Academy

Angela Saul

Ipsley CE RSA Academy

Helen Tanner

Gospel Oak School

Angela Crawley

Sutton Park Primary RSA Academy

Sarah Callanan

St Stephen's CE RSA Academy

Lee Card

Oldbury Park RSA Academy

Sarah Allen

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Trust Lead for Maths

Rebecca Doughty

Trust Lead for English

Hattie Hayhurst and Dan Wilson

Trust Lead for Science

Tim Bonner

Trust Lead for History

Amy Terry

Trust Lead for Geography

Sarah Noble

Trust Lead for Modern Foreign Languages

Ed Lee

Trust Lead for Drama

Tracey Darby

Trust Lead for Religious Education

Luke Pascin

Trust Lead for PE

Claire Round

Trust Lead for SEN

David Hunt

Trust Music Lead

Jen Molloy

Trust ICT/Computing Lead

Owen Morgan

Trust Lead for DT

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Ipsley CE RSA Academy

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Gospel Oak School

Katherine Maynereid

Sutton Park Primary RSA Academy

Paul Johnson

Oldbury Park Primary RSA Academy

Vicky Jackman

St. Stephen's CE RSA Academy

Kayleigh Mapstone

Arrow Valley First School

Carole Gallant

Waseley Hills High School



‘OUR VISION AND VALUES’

WRITTEN BY **GUY SHEARS**
EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL (CEO)

Amidst an extraordinary 18 months, we have been working hard behind the scenes to make some important and exciting updates to continue steering Central Region Schools Trust, so that we continue to go from strength to strength.

As you may be aware, our Trust's new name 'Central Region Schools Trust' came into place in September 2021, and while we may have had a couple of different names since we were first founded by the RSA, we have remained committed to our core mission of driving social justice through exceptional schools, for every pupil within our family of schools. Our revised relationship with the RSA, where it is now confirmed that we will be founder members of the new RSA Education Network, and our partnership work continues to drive existing projects, with several exciting new initiatives in the pipeline.

Initially, we wanted to focus on building a strong foundation, where our network of schools worked collaboratively to share best practice, problem solve and challenge one another to continue growing and exceeding. Throughout our first years and with every new milestone reached, we knew we had to keep aspiring to do even better for each of our pupils and staff members.

With nine years behind us, we have worked with a wide range of stakeholders to focus on the next stage of our Trust's journey and have revised our strategic plan in order to drive our collective success, which has included refreshing the vision and values to reflect the trust now.

As our vision and values act as a promise to every pupil, staff member and parent, we want them to best reflect what is happening in our schools each day to prioritise pupil progression and social justice. We are delighted to share it here with you now.



The mission, vision and values document above sets out the clear priorities for the Trust and each of our individual schools, throughout this next stage. Our vision will be achieved by embedding our values of integrity, excellence, creativity, community, and respect into all that we do. From inside the classroom, to every decision made at Trust level, each and every one of our actions will be underpinned by these values.

We want each trustee and governor, staff member, parent, and pupil to be continuously aware and informed on what we are doing across the Trust to support social justice. This termly magazine and subsequent updates are a great way for us to demonstrate how these words have been turned into actions over the first term. From exciting opportunities to get involved in the local community and initiatives designed to drive excellence, our values feed into each part of our pupils' day.

All future decisions across the Trust, such as those on expansion and resource allocation, will be made with these values in mind and in ways that support our vision. They mean a renewed commitment from our staff to continue pushing each of our pupils to strive for excellence and assurance that we will continue to feed these values into our curriculum.

Finally, as part of our next chapter we want to continue sharing our wide breadth of expertise, that we have gained as we have matured, with other schools and trusts to support the improvement of education across the country. We will continue to be generous, as an organisation aiming to act upon the system, with the RSA partnership, as well as a system leadership organisation within the system. We will share our knowledge, expertise, strategies and resources with other schools so that children wider than our trust can benefit from the innovation our staff generate.

As a trust we believe in the power of collaboration, not competition, recognising we work for the public purse for the benefit of the children in this country. We want to contribute effectively to the national debate on education and advocate for using it as a vehicle of social justice, for which the new RSA Education network will support us in doing so. This wider goal will help our schools continue to work together to be even better, as we learn from other success stories, while sharing with others how our practices have led to higher achievement.

BUILDING A LOVE OF READING



WRITTEN BY **NIC BEECH**
EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL, REDDITCH MIDDLE AND FIRST

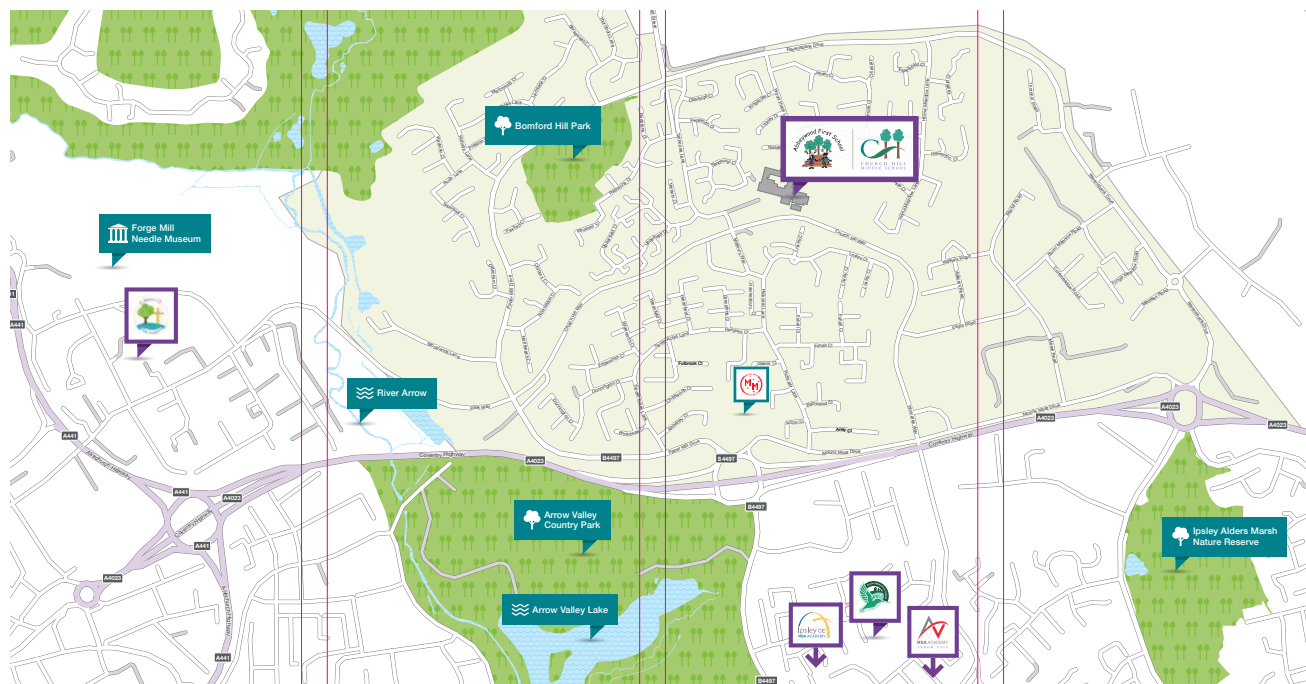
On Thursday 25th November the official opening of the new Church Hill library and their shared front entrance with Abbeywood took place.

The building project has been funded by Worcestershire County Council, to support a one-year bulge in local pupil numbers which has seen Central Region Schools Trust take an additional sixty pupils into Year 5 across Church Hill Middle School and Ipsley CE RSA Academy. The Trust also contributed to the new building as part of their commitment to bringing together the school communities of Church Hill Middle School and Abbeywood First School.

The project has been developed in the space that previously sat between the two schools. ***"We have worked to bring the school communities of Abbeywood and Church Hill closer together since they joined our family of schools. This wonderful building sits at the heart of the shared site and enables even deeper connections between the two."*** - Guy Shears, Executive Principal (CEO)

Most of the new building is taken up by a library that was designed specifically to appeal to the age range of pupils at the middle school. The Trust recently launched its Reading Strategy across all of our schools, reflecting its importance as part of an exceptional education. Reading is a vital part of personal development, as well as supporting academic success, and we want all pupils to enjoy reading. It is important that schools foster a love of reading through access to great books and spaces where children and young people want to sit and read, this was a key part of our decision making when planning the new building.





The window coverings of the library feature a bespoke map of the local area, highlighting the importance of the relationship between the schools and their community. Meanwhile, the former library space is being redesigned to create additional, more flexible learning spaces within the main school building.

At the opening, the ribbon was cut by County Councillor Jo Monk. Visitors from the Trust and Worcestershire County Council were able to take a look around the new space and enjoyed performances of poetry and book readings from Church Hill pupils. The rest of the pupils in Abbeywood and Church Hill also celebrated the opening with a series of events based on 'The Wonderful World of Books'. These included Year 6 pupils working with the poet Tomos Roberts, who performed his poem *Alive with Poppies* at the recent Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall.

Despite Church Hill offering many more places for the current Year 5, the school was still able to fill all places. *"It has been wonderful to see how well the extra two classes in Year 5 have settled in and made our school even more vibrant,"* commented Cherie Lewis, Head of School. *"We still pride ourselves on being a small, friendly school, even with our increased number of pupils as the popularity of the school*

has grown."

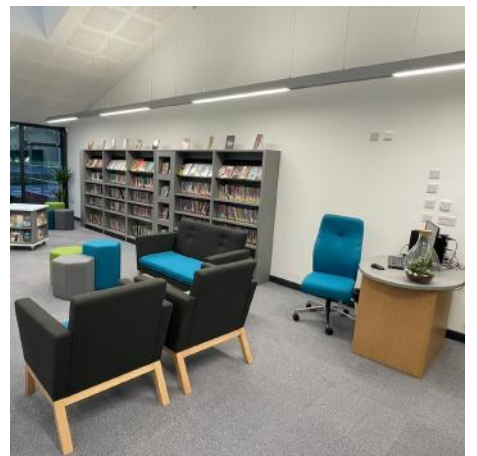
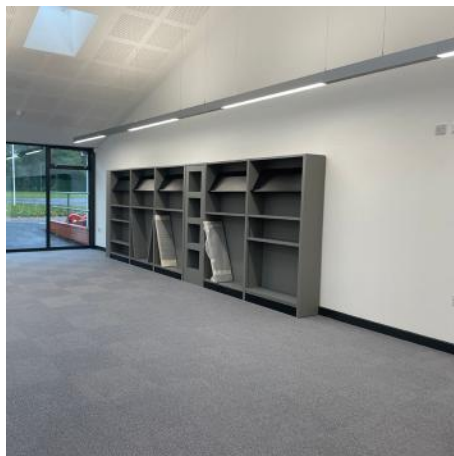
Councillor Marcus Hart, Cabinet Member for Education at Worcestershire County Council said: *"Ensuring our students have access to resources to promote and support reading is key to a good education. The County Council are committed to improving facilities and provision across the County to ensure students are able to go on and achieve their full potential; the new Church Hill Middle School library in Redditch is another example of that. We are pleased to have worked closely with the Central Region Schools Trust to deliver this project."*

Although there were some stressful and noisy times during the construction of the new building, there is no doubt that it was worth it. Pupils are enjoying their weekly library lessons and making good use of the facilities at social times.



"I LOVE THE NEW LIBRARY! IT FEELS REALLY GROWN UP, AND WE CAN RELAX IN HERE,"

- YEAR 7 PUPIL.



Would you like to contribute to the Governance of this Trust and to shape the future of the next generation?



We believe the key to
improving school performance
is effective governance.

Volunteering as a School Governor
is a great opportunity that enhances
performance and employability. Most
of all, you will have the satisfaction
of making a real difference to
children's lives and helping them
to realise their potential.

If you would like to find out more
Please get in touch with us;

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**Central Region
Schools Trust**

Founded by the RSA

CHURCH HILL AWAITS

WRITTEN BY *MATTHEW PURSLOW*
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER, TRUST LEAD CPL&RD



YR6 Poetry Competition Congratulations to Emily, Chloe, & Erin on your winning entries

Books signed by
Tomos Roberts, author
of *The Great Realisation*
& *The World Awaits*

In November 2021, as part of our work around the school value of 'Compassion', Church Hill decided to theme their breakout day around the poetry of Tomos Roberts, and most specifically his story entitled 'The World Awaits', a touching tale of how each day is a valuable and cherished time within which we can all address the positivity in the world. For every lost moment in not making a positive impact on the world, the balance in the world's equilibrium becomes slightly disconnected, so the moral of this story demonstrates that whatever act of kindness that we can do throughout each day, no matter how small, or what we may consider insignificant, can, and does, have such an important impact on those around us and on creating a world of positivity and by doing so, thus we create the 'Plus Effect'. The whole school focused on the story and then created their own 'plus symbol' about how they make a difference every day, with the school's art club then installing a wonderful and inclusive display for the whole school to enjoy, and for visitors and the school community to reflect on how the world is only made better by those positive acts of compassion and friendship.

As a result of this work, through social media, we drew the attention of the author and poet himself, who kindly offered his time to deliver a lesson to our Year 6 pupils as part of our 'Wonderful World of Books Day' on the 25th November. Tom Roberts read his world famous story 'The Great Realisation' to our pupils and then answered a range of questions from our inquisitive and articulate young learners, who were keen to ask Tom about how he had discovered a love for poetry; what advice he would give to those who wanted to write stories; where his inspiration comes from; and how it made him feel when *The Great Realisation* sparked the worldwide attention which it did in April 2020. As part of Tom's work with Year 6, the teachers discussed more of his work with the pupils including his recent, and poignant, appearance at the Festival of Remembrance where he read his self-penned 'Alive with Poppies' at the Royal Albert Hall.

"I thought the lesson with Tom was very inspiring because he talked about how he produced ideas during lockdown about how to write his poetry. This inspired me as, during lockdown, I didn't know what to do or how to feel and it gave me some wonderful ideas about what I could do if there is another lockdown in the future. When I received my signed book, I was extremely happy, it made me feel very proud of myself. Winning the competition and receiving my book has made me feel more confident in myself and my ability to write poetry. I love the book - the pictures are very meaningful, and they made me smile." -

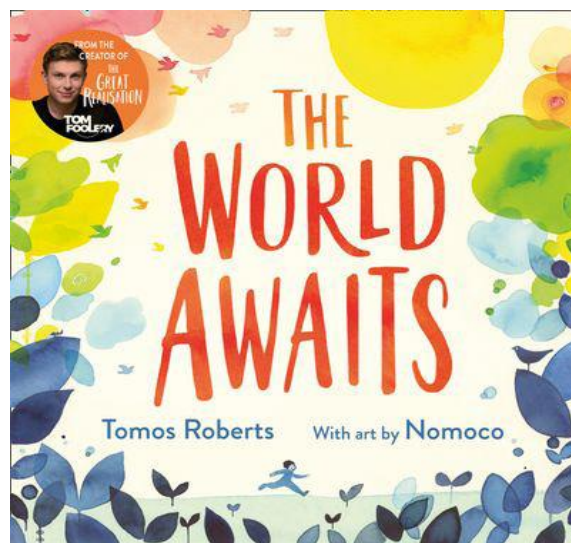
Chloe Coggins 6RH

"I thought the lesson with Tom was very helpful because I have recently begun writing my own book and it was great to hear from an experienced writer who is successful. I asked Tom about writers' block during the session, and he discussed this at length sharing some tips which I found useful. When I received my book, it felt very personal and meaningful because Tom had seen and read my poem, which I wasn't expecting. I have read some of his book already and found it inspiring because I can relate to the feelings about lockdown, and it is helping me to focus on positive things!" -

Erin Smith 6MD

Pupils were then given the challenge of writing a poem connected to the theme of community and compassion; the winners were Emily, Erin and Chloe who were all then presented with their own personally signed copy of 'The Great Realisation' by Tom himself!! To say they were excited was an understatement, and this act of kindness from Tom in signing the books for our pupils has now drawn attention from the local MP for Redditch, Mrs Rachel Maclean.

We are extremely grateful to Tom for his inspiration, and incredibly proud of the work of our school community in realising this whole project, which all started from a video watched online about 'The World Awaits'. Tom, himself, is so impressed with the school display, that this is soon to be posted on his Instagram site where he has a following of 154k. We hope to work with Tom again in the future and would relish the opportunity of him coming in again to inspire the next generation of writers, poets and story tellers.



300 likes

probablytomfoolery Massive appreciation for the kids at Church Hill School for sending me their Global Goodness display of pluses based upon their reading of my second book #theworldawaits 🥰 To any teachers out there, for the last eighteen months I have been offering free virtual creative writing workshops with any age or year group which include a 35min presentation on creative writing & poetry, and then a 25min Q&A. Since they are virtual, any country is welcome, any school is welcome, I normally book in a maximum of 3 per week, and they are allocated purely on a first come first

LA CUISINE FRANÇAIS

WRITTEN BY **SARAH NOBLE**
DLS OF MFL, ARROW VALE

Year 9 and 10 MFL students have been creating gastronomical goodies in the kitchen, or dans la cuisine, since September. Students and their parents and carers receive “une liste” all in French and then they “aller” to the “supermarché” to purchase “les ingrédients”. The teacher models the recipe steps all in French and the students follow a French recipe. So far, we have overdosed on sugary “recettes” but we will be moving on to savoury in a couple of weeks.



YEAR 13 GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP

WRITTEN BY **REENA MISTRY**
GEOGRAPHY TEACHER, ARROW VALE

On Thursday 9th Sept 2021, six Year 13 geographers visited Chesil beach!!! After being unable to carry out field trips for a long time, due to Covid, we were able to go and visit Chesil beach, the longest beach in England in Dorset.

The trip was an opportunity for students to investigate the coastline and gather primary data to support their independent investigations. This investigation would be worth 20% of their overall A Level grade.

The group were very lucky to visit Chesil beach on a calm day, historically our Geography field trips have coincided with huge storms and massive waves. The students took measurements of the beach profile, measured rock sizes as well as worked out the direction of longshore drift and the type of waves affecting the beach. Many tourists approached the students asking them to explain what they were doing.

A great day was had by all. We visited three different locations on Chesil Beach to note the changes between each. Finally, we ended our field trip with an ice cream by the sea side and then made our long journey home!

Thank you to Mr. Marples for driving the long distance to Chesil beach and the Year 13 Geography students for a very enjoyable and productive trip!!!





'WILD'

WRITTEN BY **LORNA MIDDLETON**,
DIRECTOR OF LEARNING AND STANDARDS FOR PERFORMING ARTS, GOSPEL OAK SCHOOL

Gospel Oak Performing Arts students were invited by Black Country Dance Hub to Walsall Arts Venue to watch Motionhouse dance company in their performance of 'Wild'. The students watched the live performance which included Dance-Circus skills and dynamically challenging lifts.

Our young performing artists have spent the last year studying Motionhouse Dance company after spending the day in February 2019 with the choreographer Kevin Finnan and the dancers at their Leamington spa studios pre-pandemic. During that experience, Gospel Oak students were able to see the rehearsals of the performance as well as take part in workshops and participate in a Question and Answer session with Kevin Finnan. Using this information as part of their coursework, Gospel Oak dancers have spent time during lockdown studying the company in detail and feeding this experience into their coursework.

It was fantastic to be back in the Theatre with front row tickets to see the professionals perform the work seen in rehearsals nearly two years ago. Our students were amazed by the level of skill seen on stage and have already begun using this experience in the studio to inform their own choreography!



CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE PROJECT

WRITTEN BY **AMANDA FASSNIDGE**
ART CO-ORDINATOR, SUTTON PARK PRIMARY

During the Summer Term, Sutton Park was delighted about taking part in the Contemporary Art Space Project. The Silhouettes of Sounds sculpture was installed in one of our quad areas and every year group used it as a vehicle for creative exploration. The artwork was linked to each year group's curriculum to enhance pupils' learning and there was lots of discussion around the meaning behind the sculpture and contemporary art in general.

Because pupils had not been able to explore art galleries and access a range of artistic stimuli beyond school, due to restrictions in our ever-changing world, it was decided that they would create their own Contemporary Art Gallery right here at Sutton Park. This allowed them to share their responses to 'Silhouettes of Sounds' with their peers and a wider audience. Tickets were issued to each pupil for their visit to the gallery and work was put outside for parental viewing. Pupils, staff and parents were enthused and engaged; it was a joy to see!

The work produced by the pupils varied in the use of media and form, building on prior knowledge, understanding and experience. The artwork showcased included work from Nursery through to Year 6. In Reception, pupils listened to whale song and responded through mark making, using different media to represent sound waves. In addition to this, pupils created silhouettes of whales and used blow painting with straws to represent how sound moves through water. A 3D sculpture entitled, 'The History of Communication' by Year 3, which explored the idea of communication and how it has evolved over time, certainly sparked creative debates amongst our pupils. Year 5 produced individual compositions, exploring the power of words with quotes from a range of people in our society, both past and present. This too provided pupils with a focus for debate. The project has enriched our Art curriculum and provided an enjoyable experience to enhance pupils' cultural capital.



JOINING FORCES FOR POSITIVE CHANGE

PUPIL LEADERSHIP TEAMS AT OLDBURY PARK AND SUTTON PARK

WRITTEN BY **ANGELA CRAWLEY AND RICK DUERDEN**,
SUTTON PARK PRIMARY



Earlier this term UKS2 children in both schools were given the opportunity to apply for places in their respective pupil leadership teams (PLT). The process involved, initially, those interested writing a letter of application citing why they wanted to join and which of the leadership behaviours they thought they possessed.

'We had to write about all of the qualities that we have that would make us good at the job- solution focused and good communicators for starters.' (Aiden)

We were overwhelmed by not only the amount but also the quality of these letters which meant we needed to put another process into place to narrow down the applicants to our chosen number. This was where the interviews came in!

'It was so scary sitting there just me with two teachers looking at me. I knew I needed to be myself, but it was nerve racking.' (Hannah)

'I did lots of practice at home, Mum asked every possible question she could think of but then you asked me the tiger question, we hadn't thought of that!' (Kitty)

The tiger question was to see how they would deal with a tricky situation where the right thing to do may not be the popular thing to do, it proved very interesting in terms of the differing responses to us having a tiger for our school pet!!

We then had the toughest part yet to do as we needed our joint PLTs to fit on a school minibus so were limited to small numbers. The children who took part in the process all received a letter to find out if they had gained a place or not, and lots of praise for taking part as it was pretty scary stuff.

'Getting the letter was like having a big ball of tension in an envelope.' (Hannah)

'I was so pleased when I got in, I danced around.' (Olubajo)

The whole idea of the PLT is that the children can have a voice that really makes a difference in our schools. It is also a collaborative project so the teams can work together to become even stronger. They will do a number of projects together as well as individually. They enjoyed meeting up at Sutton Park and sharing their ideas for positive change.



Here are some of the things they hope to achieve:

- Work with new people
- Improve both schools
- Write a children's SEF (School Evaluation Form)
- Get involved in the behaviour policy
- Look at forest school
- Look at doing more children's cooking through DT
- Have our say on school lunches
- Plan assemblies to deliver on key issues in school e.g recycling and litter
- Get a tiger as a school pet...only joking!





STAYING ACTIVE WITH ABBEYWOOD

WRITTEN BY *ROSIE PRETTY*
ABBEYWOOD FIRST SCHOOL

Marathon Kids UK in schools is a free running programme designed to get more children moving, whilst earning rewards on their way to becoming healthier and happier.

Each week, all children from Years 3 and 4 run around a 100m track for 20 minutes, counting their laps to clock up the miles! This is added to the Marathon Kids online system and the distances are recorded in the aim of reaching 42.2km (the distance of a full marathon) by the end of the academic year. The children absolutely love these sessions and it is a great opportunity for the children to connect with and talk to other children and adults, whilst also developing their fitness and stamina. Not only are we seeing an improvement in their physical abilities, it is also strongly supporting their mental health and wellbeing, with children feeling more confident and showing greater perseverance and determination to achieve. There is a great sense of camaraderie and children show huge support for each other.

Since joining the Marathon Kids Schools team earlier this year, some children at Abbeywood have already achieved 10km, half marathon and even some full marathon certificates.

Abbeywood were also excited to be runners up in a recent competition and children were awarded with sweat bands, t-shirts, medals as well as a visit from the Marathon Kids MD Christopher McShane, who was really impressed with the children's positivity and enthusiasm for keeping fit and healthy.



THE COLOUR GAMES!

WRITTEN BY *IAIN PRIOR*
ABBEYWOOD FIRST SCHOOL

Keeping children healthy, active and fit is undoubtedly as important as ever with lockdowns and a 'gaming culture' leading to an increased lack of activity. So, to address this, and give our children opportunities to compete through sport, we created The Colour Games!

The Colour Games is a half-termly intra-school competition where children compete in their colour teams (our school's house system) from Years 1 through to 4 to see which team wins! We have placed an emphasis on inclusive sports so that all children can compete and enjoy success. Abbeywood has offered archery, new-age curling and tri-golf which the children have absolutely loved! Giving the children opportunities to experience new sports such as archery and curling has been a huge success and lots of children who shy away from traditional sports such as football and netball have been totally engaged and enthusiastic.

It has been particularly wonderful to see the Team Captains from Year 4 helping to run the competitions, cheering on their fellow team members from younger year groups and

coaching. Providing leadership experiences to our older pupils is something that they have really benefitted from.

Even with Covid and schools staying in isolation from each other we have been able to compete digitally with local schools within this competition. Beoley First School has the exact same team system as us, so over the summer we held a Collaborative Colour Games where both schools took part and competed at tri-golf! Giving the children opportunities to compete amongst other schools, especially with Covid, has been a valuable experience.

After a successful Autumn Term Colour Games competition where the whole school competed in archery, we are now looking forward to dance as our next Colour Games! Maybe it's something you would like to try in your school too?



A DANCE FESTIVAL OF FUN!

WRITTEN BY SARAH CALLANAN
PRINCIPAL, ST STEPHEN'S FIRST SCHOOL

Three of our year groups have been fortunate enough to have been involved with several dance projects over the Autumn term. We worked alongside a local dance teacher to support the children to express their creative side through dance. Our Year 2 Teacher, Mrs Tudberry, had the inspired idea to request that her children learn a dance to support the children's knowledge of The Great Fire of London, enabling them to know more and remember more. The dance sequence and related facts supported the children to remember key facts about the event in London. The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Year 3's dance supported their learning about how to reduce our Carbon Footprint and the effects on our planet. It was a brilliant inspired dance emphasising the necessity to stamp out waste!

Mr Wake, Year 4's class teacher, amped up the experience for them by getting his class to take part in 'Schools Gotta Dance', a dance festival being held at "The Palace Theatre" in Redditch. The dance reflected the skills the class were learning this term as part of their curriculum offer. All of the children attended and performed on stage, as part of the ticketed performance with dance academies from across Worcestershire and beyond.

The children were amazing, brimming with confidence performing perfectly as a team. It was clear that many of our children had not visited a real Theatre before and were in awe of the staging, lights and auditorium. Back stage was a completely different experience. Gad asked, "Who are the cast?", pointing to the 'Cast This Way!' sign on the backstage door. I've never seen a broader smile upon learning it was him!

I'm sure you will agree, the above projects have been worthwhile and will most certainly 'stick' in their memories and perhaps even inspire a few career choices in the future.

We are so very proud of you all.



Please do check out videos of all three performances on the front page of our website: www.ststephensfirstrsa.co.uk



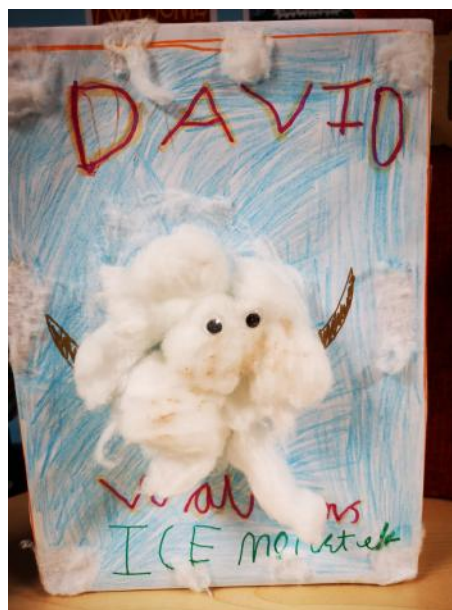
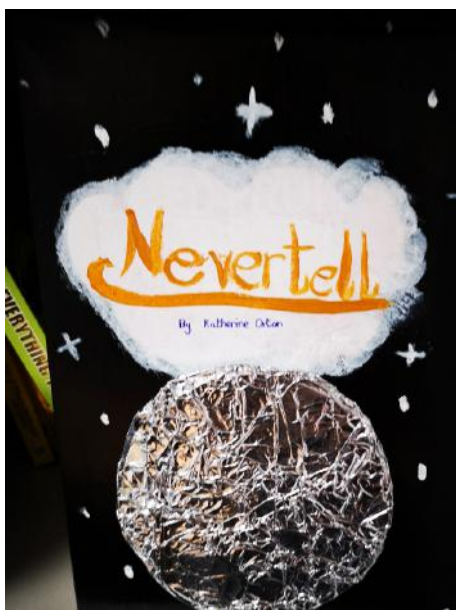
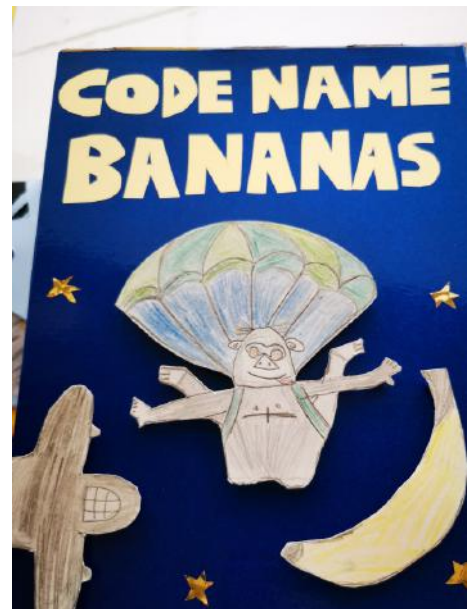
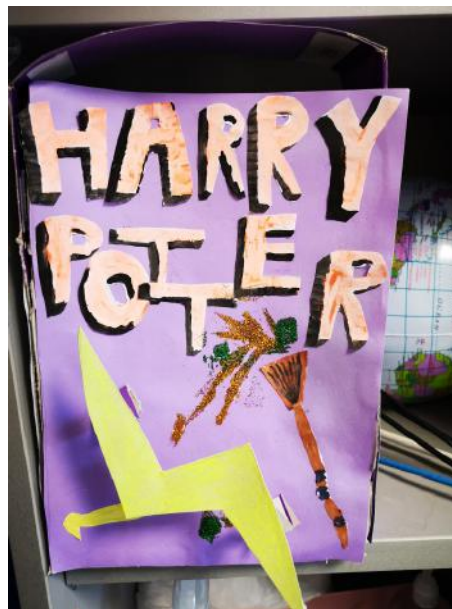
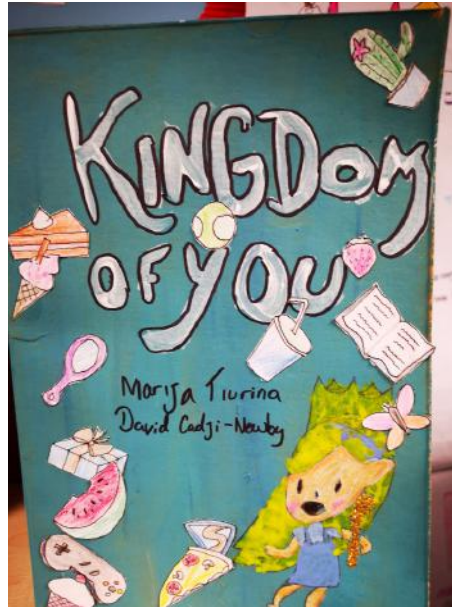
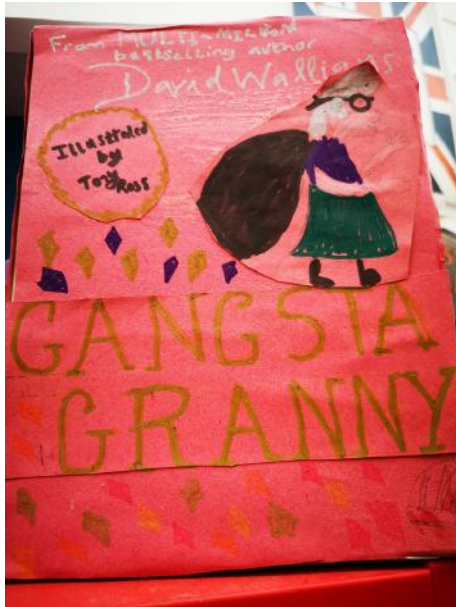
IPSLEY'S MONSTER IMAGINATION

WRITTEN BY *LOUISE FIELD*
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, IPSLEY CE RSA ACADEMY

As a link to their learning in the classroom, Year 5 were set a homework task to use their imagination and create a monster. There were no limits on what they could make and as you can see, they are all unique and fantastic! They had read 'Stitch Head' by Guy Bass which is about a mad professor who creates monsters and they all live in a castle. Stitch Head was his first creation who he then forgot about as soon as he moved on to his next creation. Stitch Head helps the monsters to be less monstrous and stops them from terrorising the local village of Grubber Nubbin.

Year 6 were set homework to create a 3D model of their favourite book. This was to help promote a love of reading across the year group and eventually the whole school as they will be displayed in the school library for everyone to see. There was a wide variety of books and creativity used for this homework and we were so impressed with the high standard of their work.





CHURCH HILL PAY THEIR RESPECTS AT THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

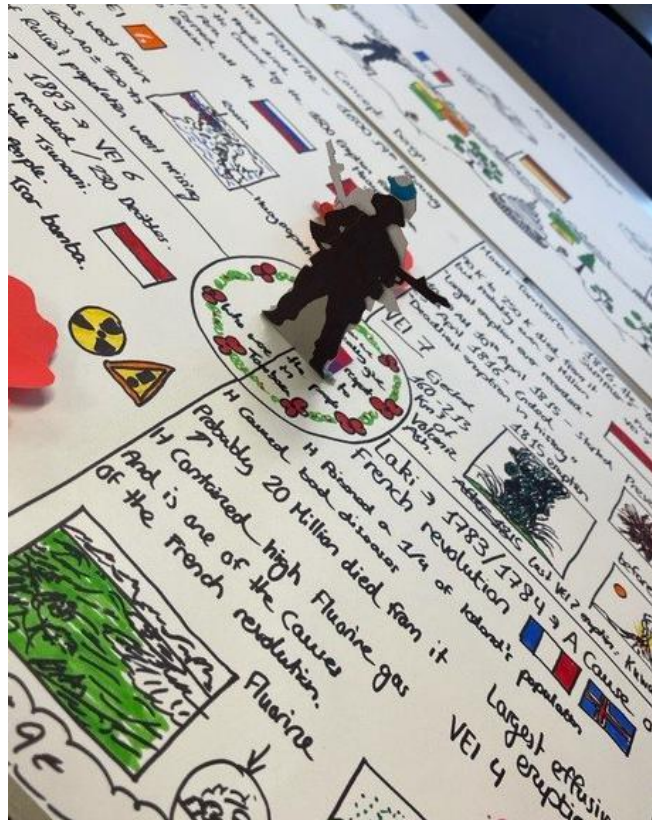
WRITTEN BY *RAFAEL LOZINSKI, LAWSON LAYTON, LILY CARTWRIGHT & DARIA CONSTANDA*
YEAR 8, CHURCH HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL



Our collective experience at the National Memorial Arboretum, in November, was very educational, poignant, and fitting way to pay our respects to the people who have lost their lives in battle or during a war. It helped us understand how important Remembrance Day is and why we commemorate it.

Going to the arboretum was a fantastic experience, because the memorials were a lot bigger in person than on the pictures that we saw in advance; also, it was interesting as there were so many names of the people that fought and who had made the ultimate sacrifice. It was quite challenging to find our last names up on a wall with so many other names, but it was amazing to be able to see all the detail that had been put into the memorials, and to know all the history behind it. There were many different monuments and tributes to different roles and people who sacrificed their lives for our freedom.

We really enjoyed going to the arboretum because we got to pay our respects to so many. The visit was a different experience from what we have been used to and we were able to see the brave people who sacrificed their lives for our country. Furthermore, it was interesting to see many people walking around the memorials with their war badges on (poppies too). Overall, our trip was an excellent experience to teach us the importance of the sacrifices made by our armed services.



WASELEY HILLS HIGH SCHOOL JOINS CENTRAL REGION SCHOOLS TRUST

WRITTEN BY *IAN MELLOR*, ARROWVALE
AND *MICHAELA MOORE*, CRST CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Waseley Hills High School is looking forward to a bright future having joined Central Region Schools Trust on 1st November 2021.

The transfer preparation of bringing Waseley Hills successfully into the Trust began in earnest from late April 2021. Transition group meetings where all functions are represented took place on a regular basis to ensure clear communication and delivery of actions to deadlines. This collaborative style of working is taken forward now into the integration and operation of the school within the Trust.

The Trust complete due diligence research and checks on all new entries to the Trust which includes school improvement, finance, human resources, legal matters, land issues, health and safety and conditions of buildings.

Within the transition period we were excited to learn that Waseley Hills had been selected as one of the 50 schools to benefit from £1 billion pounds of investment from the government. It has now been established that Waseley Hills will be entirely rebuilt across 2022 and 2023. This is a once in a life time opportunity to create a new building to service the current and future needs of the community and generations of families to come. We at Central Region Schools Trust are very pleased and excited by the prospect and have a sense of responsibility to work within the DfE parameters to produce the best outcomes possible.





Additionally, the Trust has appointed Damian Belshaw as the new Principal for the school, who will begin the role on January 1st 2022. Damian has a wealth of experience both as a Principal and a Senior Leader within a school, where he was instrumental in raising and maintaining a high standard of educational outcomes for students from all backgrounds.

Damian said: "I am incredibly excited to be joining the Central Region Schools Trust and to be leading Waseley Hills at such an important time for the school, community and most importantly, the students. Having worked in a number of different contexts I can already see the potential of the school and come with the drive and determination to ensure that everyone involved with Waseley Hills can reach their potential."

Whilst the name of the school and the uniform remains the same, Waseley Hills High School is now part of a dedicated community of schools that works collaboratively to deliver exceptional outcomes for all their pupils.

Guy Shears, Executive Principal (CEO) said: "We are thrilled to be welcoming Waseley Hills High school into our Trust and that such a momentous occasion is being marked by the development of a new building.

"It is a true pleasure to continue to see each of our individual schools grow and flourish together and with that, continue to drive excellence and open up opportunities for our pupils. With the addition of Waseley Hills, our collaborative opportunities for our staff will only strengthen, enabling us to continue sharing our wealth of expertise, school improvement and ensure success for young people across our community."

We look forward to Waseley Hills starting their new era within Central Region Schools Trust.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF MILLIE

WRITTEN BY

MEGAN MILES, SARAH ALLEN AND MILLIE
ARROWVALLEY FIRST SCHOOL

Each morning Millie enters the playground greeting all that she meets. A “good morning” to Miss Adams, a jump with Mrs. Allen and a “hello” to all of her friends. She drops off her big brother before Mum and her baby sister walk around to the reception playground. She carries her book bag and lunch box, and she enters the class happily as mum shouts “bye Millie, have a good day”, “I will” she replies.

8.30 - She enters and tells her teacher all about her morning (especially what her baby sister has been doing), washes her hands, hangs up her coat and puts her things away.

8.35 - She finds her name card and carefully copies it onto a piece paper before putting it on the self-registration board.

8.40 - She excitedly explores the classroom - looking for anything that is ‘new’ or ‘different’

8.45 - Millie enthusiastically tells everyone about/shows

them all of the ‘new’ things she has discovered. She chooses an activity to complete (she usually heads for the sand).

8.50 – She finds her carpet place; she sits on the fox and then the register is taken. She responds “**good morning, Mrs Miles**” with a great big smile.

9.00 - Focus - Millie loves to remind us of all the valley values and shares her ideas confidently.

9.30 - Continuous provision, Millie usually continues completing any activities we have completed during whole class input (e.g. creating repeating patterns with counting bears/sequencing pictures from our story).

Millie's next stop is usually the reading area, she will ask an adult to read a story to her or read a story to a friend or our big teddy bear. Millie often chooses her favourites (the Lion Inside, Monstersaurus, The Gruffalo, The Very Hungry Caterpillar) and joins in if being read to.



Millie can often be found in the home corner sat at the dining table completing her 'homework' using her sound mat to write down words. She also loves using the cookbooks to make food for her friends and the babies.

10.15 - Tidy up time, washes hands, and enjoys a snack.

10.30 - Tidies the snack mats, washes hands, coat on, outside, Millie is tremendously proud of herself as she can do the zip on her coat all by herself.

Millie loves climbing trees, riding the bikes, shovelling the leaves into the wheelbarrows, playing with the fairies in small world and mark making with water/paintbrushes or chalks.

11.15 - Inside, wash hands, coats off.

Phonics, Millie loves saying all the sounds that she has learnt using her actions to help. She loves spotting our new sounds around the room after the session but her favourite of all the sounds she knows so far is the 'M' sound

11.45 - Lunch - Millie always tells the caterers what she has in her lunch box that day and loves chatting with them. After she has eaten, she washes her hands, puts on her coat and out she goes to the playground where she enjoys a game of hide and seek with her friends and loves the slide

12.50 - In she comes, coat off, hands washed and the register is taken again.

1.00 - Kinetic letters - sings the '3 friends' song very enthusiastically and enjoys using the 'magic spells' sent from teaching turtle to form the letters.

1.20 - Indoor provision – Millie enjoys painting, play dough, playing the instruments, completing puzzles and exploring in the water area.

2.00 - Outside - Balance beam, investigation box, reading in the house, more climbing.

2.30 - Story time (Millie's loves our end of day story)

2.45 - Washes her hands, collects things.

2.55 - Singing - Millie's favourites include '5 little speckled frogs' and 'if you're happy and you know it'.

3.00 - Home time - She sits on the fox waiting patiently for her name to be called before meeting mum at the door "did you have a good day?" "Yes!"



ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT AT GOSPEL OAK

WRITTEN BY ARVIND BATRA, CAREERS LEADER
GOSPEL OAK SCHOOL



Engaging with our alumni has been a focus for the school for the last 12 months, through our careers programme. As a school we have transformed from Willingsworth High School to RSA Academy and now to Gospel Oak within the last 11 years, but whatever our name our mission has been clear - to transform the lives of the young people in our community, in Tipton.

As one of the largest employers in our community, we also recruit from within our alumni, currently we have 7 teachers, and 9 support staff employed within the school. Over the years there have been many who have progressed onto flourishing careers after gaining their first employment opportunity here. This has proven to deliver

a double benefit for the school, a local, relatable role model for the students, and an opportunity for a newly graduated teacher or apprentice or former pupil looking for their next rung on the ladder.

Having a relatable role model is vital for our students. According to a report commissioned by Future First and You Gov titled 'Young-people-their-futures-and-access-to-relatable-role-models-2019', encounters with role models and mentors from within the alumni network, proved extremely impactful with young people. Young people reported that meeting 'people like me' boosted their confidence to pursue different opportunities available to them and gave them a sense that they themselves

could also be successful. I recall a time when I invited a successful entrepreneur & RSA Fellow from London in a bid to inspire students, and when I asked the students for feedback on his talk, it was evident that 'some rich bloke from London' failed to provide any inspiration at all! Lesson learned and duly noted, it didn't matter what was said, they didn't find him relatable therefore it wasn't for them.

Being mindful of this, we have engaged a lot with our alumni over the last 3 years. Here's some highlights of some of the activities and profiles of our alumni.

Venandah Mendanhi - is now a trainee lawyer with Latham & Watkins. Venandah has been instrumental in supporting the school at events and individual mentoring, and successfully setting up her own social enterprise 'Talkabout' giving young people a space to talk about issues affecting them. Despite moving to London and having a busy schedule herself, Venandah always makes time for students from her former school, championing higher education, student leadership and social action.



Megan Hampton - Megan joined us as a 'One million mentor.' Megan at the time worked for Microsoft after leaving home at the age of 17 and joining Microsoft's very first apprenticeship scheme, was instrumental in helping us take a group of students to learn more about the apprenticeship scheme at Microsoft. Megan mentored two of our Year 13 students motivating them into employment. Megan now works as a Project Manager for Amazon and recently won Early in Career Project Professional of the Year in the Project Management Institute Awards 2021.



Alice Johnson - When Alice left us she was determined to be a children's nurse. As well as qualifying as a Paediatric Nurse, Alice brought up her little boy. She now works at Birmingham Children's Hospital and was a great inspiration to our potential students who are considering nursing as a career.

Tom Mills - Tom Mills is a managing director of an independent recruitment company specialising in the supply of Field Service Engineers. He has offered to support any students looking for a career in engineering. He has also attended speed networking sessions in the school.



Chloe Geddes - Chloe is a trainee teacher at Gospel Oak School. Her love of dance led her to study dance at higher education at the University of Wolverhampton. By working and teaching in the school that she herself has attended, she inspires students every day. Chloe has been an inspiration to students and has supported students to consider pursuing dance at University showing them that there is a pathway. She attends, supports and dances at all the events and is a great champion of bringing diversity and cultural variety to the art.

Steph Yeomans - Steph is a forensic scientist and was here when the school was known as Willingsworth. She has very generously delivered talks about her role in drugs testing and analysis which our students have been fascinated by. We recently launched Future Friday lunch time conferences and Steph was our very first visitor, where she highlighted the roles in her sector. Steph is a credit to her profession, where she has been involved in ensuring drugs are kept off the streets.



Eleanor Armstrong - Former Head student Eleanor, left us to study Economics at University of Nottingham and now works for BDO, and has been supporting students by promoting BDO's Apprenticeship Scheme and encouraging students to apply.

This is just a highlight of some of our alumni activities. Our mission over the next 12 months is to engage with many more alumni students, celebrate their success and encourage our students to be brave and take bold steps in this post pandemic world. The impact of encounters with alumni is powerful, as one student reported after attending an alumni networking session;

'It was really interesting learning about past student's experiences and how much they have progressed and developed since being in the exact position we are in now. It gave me a sense of hope and reassurance for my own future, knowing that if they can make it...so can I!' - Year 12 Student

CENTRAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

WRITTEN BY **MATTHEW PURSLOW**
TRUST LEAD FOR CPLR&D



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. We fundamentally believe in establishing and implementing a clear infrastructure which supports expert teacher development through all stages and phases of career.

Our new trust-wide strand focuses on the core purpose of developing staff across the entire trust, across phases and throughout all areas of staff engagement and at every career stage. The philosophy of CPLR&D is to empower every individual from across our trust to be the best that they can be and to provide opportunities to progress within their careers. Our staff development is centred around pupil impact and outcomes and transcends all areas of our trust from teaching and learning to operations and support staff.

During the autumn term, we came together to celebrate our RQT cohort from 2020-21; colleagues have again demonstrated resilience, commitment, and an absolute passion for improving pupil engagement and outcomes through dedicated and focused interventions. This cohort overcame immense challenges throughout the pandemic, and we are proud of all their achievements. In November, our new cohort from 8 schools within the trust came together at the Assay studios for the launch of their training, which now take them on a journey of research and discovery over the next 12 – 18 months. It is so lovely to welcome staff back into our training base, and to allow colleagues to network safely together and to share experiences from across their schools.

Our ECTs (early career teachers) have been working incredibly hard and have demonstrated an intrinsic motivation for the profession in their planning, response to the new early career framework and embracing the instructional coaching model which forms such a fundamental and pivotal part of their training in year 1. Our ECT conference was supported by SLEs from Arrow Vale, Church Hill, Ipsley, Waseley Hills and Holyhead schools, thank you again to all facilitators for their time and commitment to staff development – you are greatly appreciated.

Our relationship with our strategic partners continues to flourish, with Arthur Terry and Prince Henry's Teaching School Hubs, with Stour Vale, with the Four Stones Academy Trust, and further with Haybridge Teaching School Hub. We have most recently been facilitating the new suite of NPQs alongside Arthur Terry and Haybridge, with our colleagues delivering on the new NPQ in Leading Teacher Development and further on the NPQ in Senior Leadership and finally on the NPQ for Headship and

Executive Leadership. Indeed, we have multiple colleagues across our trust signed up to these courses themselves to avail themselves of the latest research and evidence base to be as informed as they can be, and to continue 'getting better'; such commitment to their own development is again reflective of the mentality of our staff and trust, in the approach to supporting pupil outcomes.

Our aspirant and middle leadership trust-led development course will launch in the new year, working alongside Insights Leadership profiling, and we are again looking forward to sharing this new course with colleagues within the trust. We are developing exciting programmes in line with DFE funded strands in Oracy, Literacy and Mental Health. Through our co-design model of curriculum design, we are now affiliated with professional bodies across all our secondary subject areas. Our work with curriculum hubs further develops as we are a provider for the GLOW maths network and have a burgeoning relationship with the Central Computing hub for both primary and for secondary. There are developments across both phases for school-to-school support and further relationships continue to contribute to the rich tapestry of our curriculum design within the trust.

This is an exciting time for our trust and there are multiple opportunities available through our strategic partnerships, and from within our own core provision in respect of professional development. Please visit the CPLR&D section of the CRST website to discover what we offer and the holistic approach we have, to staff development.

www.centralregionsschoolstrust.co.uk/cplr&d

A NEW YEAR, A NEW START

WRITTEN BY **TERESA WILSON**
Trust Lead for ITT and Early Careers

What an amazing start to the academic year, our Teach Central web page is now taking shape and our marketing has been revamped with our new branding, it looks fantastic, creating a fresh and innovative look.

Our trainees have made a fantastic start, they have settled into their schools and have made good progress to date, this was evidenced in their Midpoints, they have made excellent reading and demonstrates their dedication and commitment to their professional development. I'm delighted to share our current trainees' accomplishments, trainees are doing well and have worked extremely hard this first term. Trainees are developing a range of teaching and learning strategies and starting to embed these into their practice, including the new Core Content Themes, they are beginning to link the theory and subject knowledge to their practice to support their training, incorporating this into their planning and teaching. They are beginning to take ownership for their classes and are listening to advice and feedback. Mentors have commented on how well trainees respond to feedback and act upon it. The level of engagement from trainees has also been fantastic. Mentors, professional mentors and BCU tutors have all commented on how proactive trainees are, this is clear to see in their classroom practice and overall professionalism.

Quality Assurance visits went well earlier in the term, trainees feel well supported and our provision across our family of schools is consistent and robust. BCU tutor visits and observations are also going well. Feedback from trainees has been fantastic, trainees have commented on the high level of support and training they receive, this has clearly impacted positively on their progress and development. Trainees are enjoying the Monday training sessions, finding them useful, up to date and informative -

evaluations have been positive, trainees have commented on how knowledgeable the facilitators are and how pertinent the session content is. Trainees have been able to use this practically in their teaching to support their progress, impact in the classroom and further develop their evidence-based practice to practical application and implementation. It's been a real pleasure to see how well trainees have settled into their departments, schools, and training. They have made really good progress over their first term, well done.

Current recruitment for 2022/23: we have received applications across a range of subjects and interviews are going well; with a growing cohort for 2022/23 across Secondary and Primary phases. There are still vacancies across many subjects in our family of schools with very attractive bursaries of up to £24k available in some subject areas; we offer courses in both Primary and Secondary across the West Midlands.

If you would like further information on how to apply or information on our courses and provision, please contact myself directly; alternatively visit our Teach Central website; if you have friends or relatives who are interested in teaching, please do encourage them to come and talk to us or to contact me directly at twilson@teachcentral.co.uk.



Coronavirus

Wash your hands with soap and water more often for 20 seconds



Palm to palm



The backs of hands



In between the fingers



The back of the fingers



The thumbs



The tips of the fingers

Use a tissue to turn off the tap.
Dry hands thoroughly.

CORONAVIRUS

**PROTECT
YOURSELF
& OTHERS**

Need a space for a team meeting? Away from the hustle & bustle. Get in touch with the Central Team!



info@centralrsaacademies.co.uk



CHRISTMAS DOESN'T COME FROM A STORE. MAYBE CHRISTMAS PERHAPS
MEANS A LITTLE BIT MORE — DR. SEUSS, THE GRINCH

STAY SAFE, SUPPORT OUR NHS, SAVE LIVES!

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