



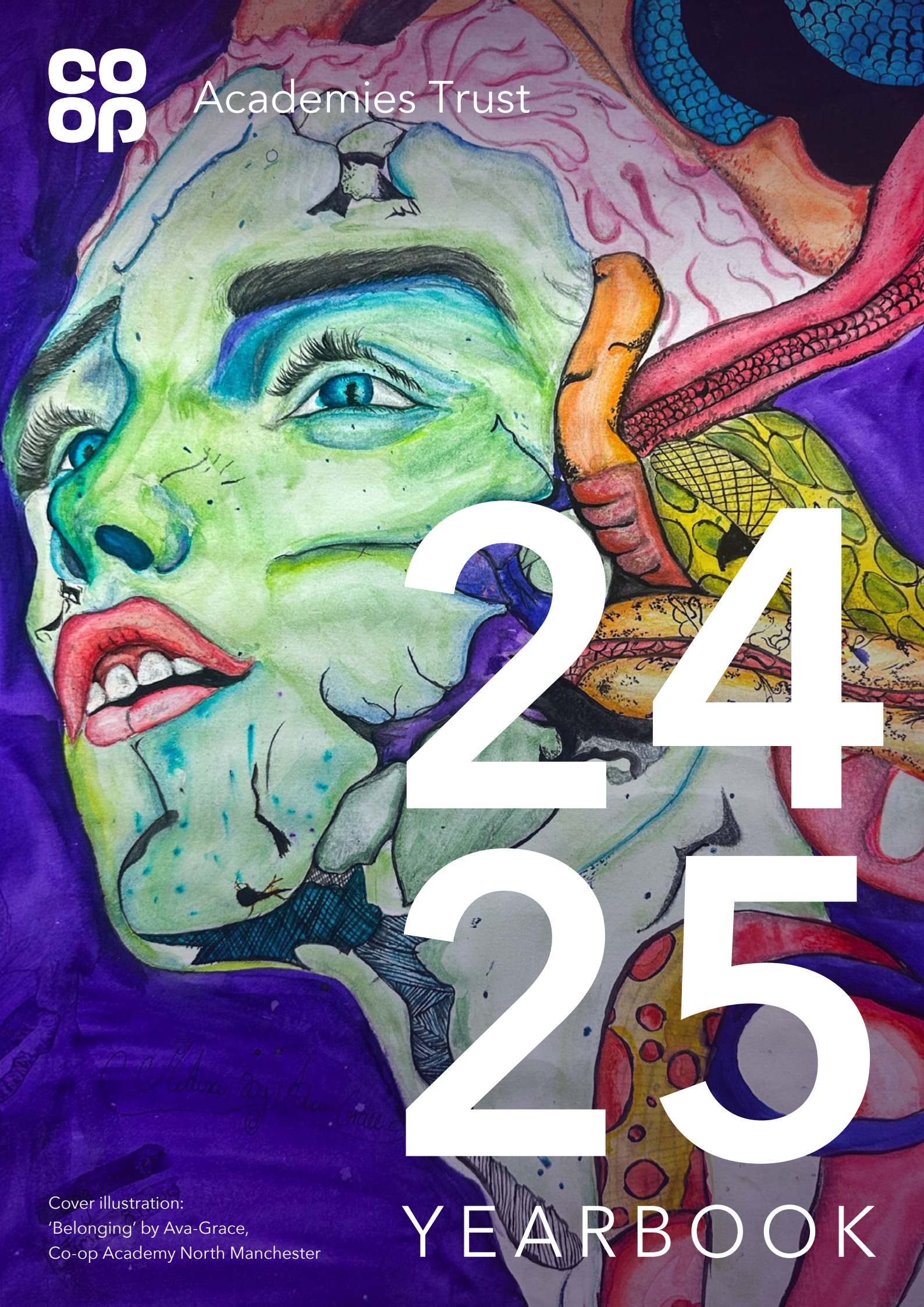
Academies Trust

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YEARBOOK

Cover illustration:
'Belonging' by Ava-Grace,
Co-op Academy North Manchester





Academies Trust

Welcome to our Co-op Academies Trust Yearbook 24/25!

As we reflect on another extraordinary year across our Trust, I am once again filled with pride and appreciation for everything our students, staff and communities have accomplished together.

The 2024/25 academic year has brought with it fresh opportunities, new challenges, new schools and countless moments of inspiration. From academic success and enrichment to community and cultural engagement, our academies continue to display the Co-op values that unite us all.

This year, we've seen our students grow not only in knowledge but in confidence and character. They've stepped up as leaders and change makers taking part in programmes such as Reach, Co-op Young Leaders and Time for Change. They've demonstrated growth through our Trust-wide events and unique school experiences including the Maths Excellence programme, Public Speaking competition, sports, performing arts, careers and many more that you will read about in the pages of this book.

We capture just a fraction of those special moments. The celebrations, experiences and the everyday activity that shape a meaningful school journey.

Behind every story inside this collection is the unwavering dedication of our staff, who continue to inspire and create spaces where every young person can thrive both in and beyond the classroom.

We also celebrate the successes of our Year 11 and Year 13 students and though we can't write about all of our leavers, we are immensely proud of each of them.

I want to thank you all for being an essential part of our Co-op Academies Trust.

I hope these pages bring joy and inspiration.

Warmest wishes,

Dr Chris Tomlinson

CEO, Co-op Academies Trust

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Dr Chris Tomlinson
CEO, Co-op Academies Trust



SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2024

Term One



Co-op Academy Florence MacWilliams

Florence welcomes founding cohort

The founding cohort of Year 7 students start their high school journeys at Co-op Academy Florence MacWilliams, Stoke-on-Trent's newest academy.



Today, 120 Year 7 students will begin learning inside temporary classroom accommodation while the school's state-of-the-art building is constructed.

Local residents will start seeing big changes on the site during September as the steelwork is erected and the outline of the new building will become clear. The school will grow year-on-year until it has students aged 11-19 in all year groups by 2030.

The vision at Florence is that colleagues and pupils will work at PACE - ensuring pride, ambition, care and excellence for self, school and city.

For Headteacher **Elizabeth Clewlow**, this moment has been many years in the making. She said: *"It is a great privilege to be able to create a legacy for future generations that is built in, by, and for Stoke. Contributing to the Florence MacWilliams project from inception and seeing it through to fruition is a once in a lifetime opportunity."*

"Florence will be an exceptional academy; our founding pupils will benefit hugely from being part of a growing academy that has the opportunity to establish a strong culture from the very beginning, with our staff getting to know every child and family."

For parents and carers with secondary-aged children in Meir and the surrounding areas, Florence fills a gap and means children don't have to take long journeys to access education.

From September 2025, the school's admission number will increase to 180, offering even more places to local children.

"We live in an area of the city where options for high schools are limited so we were very happy to have secured a place for our son at Co-op Academy Florence MacWilliams."

Having heard about the ambitions for the academy from attending a digital 'Meet the Headteacher' event, we know this will become a very successful school in Stoke-on-Trent. The ethos and values of Co-op Academies Trust were also a big draw when deciding where to apply. The school and the Trust have high expectations for students to succeed so we're excited our son gets to continue his education here."

Elizabeth Wilkinson,
Florence MacWilliams parent



Co-op Academy Manchester

BBC Bitesize Careers Tour visits Co-op Academy Manchester

The tour aims to visit 125,000 secondary school students across the UK in a bid to inspire young people about their future job prospects and forms part of a wider remit of the BBC to inform, educate and entertain.

The session was hosted by Ross Fiddes, BBC Sports Reporter and Presenter, who gave an insight into his career journey as well as highlighting careers within and outside of the BBC. In addition, we welcomed special guest Alicia Forde - star of the hit TV series Waterloo Road, who shared an insight into careers in the TV industry.

"I spoke to a number of students and staff who found the session informative, especially as they had the opportunity to ask questions. Some had not heard of BBC Bitesize before the session but will definitely begin using it in the future."

Mrs Davey, Careers Coordinator





Co-op Academy Belle Vue

BBC Bitesize Careers Tour, with special guest Ollly Rhodes, inspires students

We had the extraordinary opportunity to host the BBC Bitesize Careers Tour this week, featuring a special appearance by Ollly Rhodes, who plays the character Billy Savage in the popular TV series Waterloo Road.



This exciting event provided our students with unique insights into the entertainment industry and broader career opportunities. The BBC Bitesize Careers Tour is part of a nationwide initiative designed to inspire young people and help them make informed decisions about their future careers. At our academy, the event featured interactive sessions where students received advice from industry experts.

Ollly Rhodes, known for his role as Billy Savage, captivated our students with his personal journey in the acting world. He shared his experiences, the challenges he faced, and the dedication required to succeed in such a competitive field. His presence brought the world of television to life for our students, many of whom are fans of the show.

A standout moment was the Q&A session, where students had the opportunity to ask Ollly Rhodes about his career, the entertainment industry, and tips for pursuing a career in acting. His down-to-earth advice and encouragement resonated with many students, leaving them inspired to follow their passions.

The event was a resounding success, sparking excitement and motivation amongst students as they consider their future career paths. Co-op Academy Belle Vue remains dedicated to offering such opportunities to help our students achieve their fullest potential.

“Having Ollly Rhodes visit our academy was amazing! I’ve always loved Waterloo Road, so getting to hear from someone who’s actually in the show was really inspiring. It made me think seriously about my future and what I want to do after school. I’m definitely more motivated now to follow my ambition.”

Belle Vue student



Co-op Academies Trust

Our Community Team and volunteers transform academy spaces over summer

During the summer, volunteers from across Co-op Academies Trust worked tirelessly to enhance the learning environments and community spaces at 10 of the Trust's academies.

Organised by the Community Team and Regional Community Development Managers, the projects ranged from transforming outdoor spaces into eco-friendly gardens to refreshing classrooms for the new school year.

Community garden at Co-op Academy Friarswood

Volunteers from DHL, led by experienced community gardener Matt Linley-Simon and the school's Academy Community Pioneer, continued work on the school's Environmental Garden.

Following on from their previous work, the team expanded the garden by adding three new beds and planting strawberries, rhubarb, blackberries and mint, many of which were reclaimed from the school's grounds.

Jon Harwood, a DHL volunteer, reflected on the hard work. He said: *"Ryan, Rob, and myself joined Matt to take advantage of the school holidays to do some maintenance in the community garden."*



"At the end of the session, we left with aching bodies but smiles on our faces, knowing we helped create something that will give pleasure to the pupils."

Matt Linley-Simon added: *"DHL has once again helped us continue developing our environment, making it a welcoming space for both the children and the local community."*

Clearing garden space at Co-op Academy Brownhill

In July 2024, volunteers, teachers, and parents transformed an overgrown garden at Co-op Academy Brownhill into a vibrant outdoor space. Originally filled with weeds and debris, the garden is now an engaging area where students can learn about nature and environmental stewardship.

Led by Brownhill's Ian Ingles, the project not only improved the garden's appearance but also created an outdoor classroom for hands-on learning and a peaceful retreat for students.

Zhainab Talab, Academy Community Pioneer, said: *"This garden shows the power of community collaboration. It's more than just plants; it's a space that inspires curiosity and belonging."*

Revitalising Co-op Academy New Islington

At Co-op Academy New Islington, volunteers from Co-op Property and Mitie worked on 20th and 21st August to give the academy a fresh start for the new school year. The teams helped to rejuvenate academy spaces, repainting classrooms, a cloakroom and an office, while outdoor structures such as the climbing frame and Wendy house were stained and preserved for future use by students.

The Nest gets a makeover at Co-op Academy Woodlands

On 12th August, Co-op Academy Woodlands' community room, The Nest, received a much-needed makeover thanks to a dedicated group of volunteers. Originally a space in need of TLC, The Nest was transformed into a relaxing and welcoming environment for the school's families.

Academy Community Pioneer Amanda Herron organised the event, enlisting help from volunteers from Sky as well as Ed Powell, Chair of Governors at Brownhill.

The transformation involved painting and refreshing the room to create a more inviting space.

Ed Powell said: *"It's been fantastic to come into Woodlands and get stuck in. This was a brilliant opportunity to create a great atmosphere vital for schools and communities like Harehills."*

A Sky volunteer added: *"It was a pleasure to be involved in a project like this. It's the small changes that make the biggest difference."*

Amanda Herron expressed her gratitude, saying: *"I want to thank all the volunteers for their hard work and for making the day flow with ease. I really appreciate the time and effort to help make The Nest look so much better!"*

Eco-Friendly revamp at Co-op Academy Medlock

On 13th August, volunteers from Mitie and Co-op Property joined staff at Co-op Academy Medlock to help transform their outdoor space.

Led by Janet Pearson from Mitie and Chris Wood from Co-op Property, the teams cleared overgrown areas, dug out a pond for the academy's Forest School, and cut back brambles and branches on trees.

This work supports the school's Eco Conference project, which was presented at Angel Square earlier this year.

Zoe Hopkins, the academy's Eco Lead, praised the volunteers. She said: *"It was amazing how much a good team of people achieved in just a few hours. The tasks completed would have taken us weeks to get done."*

The project was part of a larger collaboration with Ardwick Climate Action, a local group closely tied to the academy.

Transforming the Allotment at Co-op Academy Broadhurst

On 13th August, Co-op Academy Broadhurst's overgrown allotment was given some much-needed attention thanks to the efforts of a dedicated team of volunteers from Mitie.

The space, once cluttered with weeds and brambles, was transformed into a functional area ready for students to grow their own produce.

The project, supported by Broadhurst staff, involved clearing a substantial area that had become unmanageable.

The Mitie team worked tirelessly through the heat, removing all weeds and brambles, and even dismantling old garden beds to create a clean, open space.

Jo Alderson, Assistant Teacher and Eco Lead at Co-op Academy Broadhurst, praised the volunteers. She said: *"The Mitie team were incredibly friendly and unfazed by the daunting task. They went above and beyond, not only clearing the allotment but also removing old beds to give us a clear space for the children. A massive thank you from all at Co-op Academy Broadhurst."*

Eco Warriors garden at Co-op Academy Glebe

Co-op Academy Glebe saw a transformation of its outdoor garden space thanks to volunteers from the local community, Wickes Fenton store, and local businesses Challenge TRG and GXO.

On 29th August, 15 volunteers came together to dig, paint, and construct garden essentials such as greenhouses, polytunnels, and a new shed.

The school's Eco Warriors Club, led by teacher **Rachel Kenny**, said: *"The garden looks fantastic, and the children are going to absolutely love spending time there in the Eco Club."*

Headteacher **Kirsty Suleman** expressed her gratitude, adding: *"We are truly grateful to all the volunteers, for their kind donations and time. Seeing our pupils' faces on the first day back just showed how much they valued it."*

Creating a sensory space at Co-op Academy Portland

At Co-op Academy Portland, an unused, overgrown space at the front of the school has begun its transformation into a sensory area for students, thanks to the efforts of volunteers and Co-op colleagues.

The project, led by Academy Community Pioneer Anya Lewis, has seen the space cleared of litter and foliage, and plans are underway to paint fences, add planters with year-round flowers and herbs, and lay down chipping bark for safety.

The goal is to increase biodiversity with pollinator plants and provide a beautiful, engaging space for the school community.

Anya Lewis expressed her gratitude for the volunteers' contributions: *"It was great to get to know the volunteers and learn about their roles within the Co-op. Their enthusiasm, creativity, and kindness are much appreciated by the whole school community. We look forward to engaging pupils and families to make this space a vibrant and welcoming place for all."*

Co-op Academy Smithies Moor: Eco Club support

Earlier this month, Co-op Academy Smithies Moor received a generous donation from Co-op Group Heckmondwike Funeralcare. The funds, applied for in July, will support the school's new Eco Club by purchasing a polytunnel.

Devon Clegg from Heckmondwike Funeralcare expressed her excitement, saying: *"I'm thrilled to start collaborating with Co-op Academy Smithies Moor."*

Regional Community Development Manager **Lisa Wilson** added: *"This partnership will not only benefit students' education but also support their well-being through active involvement in the Eco Club."*

Liz Garrity, Head of Community Development, said: *"These volunteering projects are a great reflection of the impact we're having in supporting our academies to collaborate with their communities."*

"The positive effects of these initiatives will be felt by students, staff, and local communities long into the future, showcasing how volunteering can transform school environments and build stronger, more connected communities."





Co-op Academy Smithies Moor

Our benchball team wins bronze!

Our pupils recently took part in a benchball tournament against other schools, marking the first of many inter-school events planned for the year.

We were delighted when our pupils returned with bronze medals after coming in third place!

The tournament, which took place at Co-op Academy Leeds, was designed to foster competition and cooperation and saw 72 pupils from Co-op Academy Oakwood, Woodlands, Nightingale, Brownhill, and Smithies Moor take part.

The event provided students the chance to try a sport not typically offered in primary schools, while reinforcing our core Ways of Being.

“The games were very competitive with all of the students showing great skills and teamwork. The scores were very close with finishing positions coming down to the last game of the day.

All of the participants were fantastic and enjoyed meeting new peers and competing in a fun and supportive atmosphere. This event has set the stage for more exciting events to come throughout the year.”

Lauren Broadley, Regional Sports Coordinator





Co-op Academy Leeds

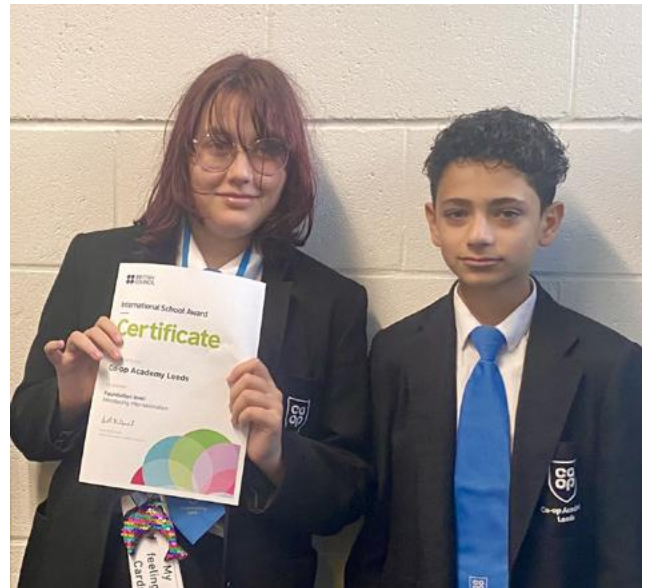
International School Award

We are thrilled to announce that our school has received the prestigious International School Award from the British Council!

This recognition celebrates our successful partnership with Collège in Valenciennes, France, where our Year 7 pupils have been exchanging letters and discussing their local areas with their French counterparts.

This project has been a fantastic opportunity for our students to build cultural awareness, practice language skills, and foster international friendships. We are incredibly proud of their hard work and enthusiasm throughout the project!

A huge thank you to all our staff, students, and our friends in Valenciennes for making this possible. Together, we are building a brighter, more connected future!



Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff

Fairtrade Fortnight

Fairtrade Fortnight was a success!

Fairtrade fortnight started off with a whole school assembly focusing on educating our pupils about Fairtrade's global impact, supporting over 2 million farmers and workers in 68 countries by ensuring fair wages, ethical production and sustainable practices.

The assembly ended with a prayer for fairness and responsibility, along with a message promoting kindness and helping others, tying it to school values.

Then our Year 6 children made cakes using Fairtrade products and sold these to the rest of the school, making £22.20 for our school fund.





Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent

Venimus, Vidimus, Vicimus - Scholars' Programme trip to Rome!

From 17th - 20th September, a group of Scholars embarked on an unforgettable educational trip to the heart of ancient history – Rome.



Departing from Manchester Airport, this immersive experience was made possible by the generous support of the Latin Excellence Fund, an initiative dedicated to fostering a deeper appreciation for classical languages and cultures.

The group wasted no time diving into the city's rich history. Their first stop was the iconic Colosseum, an awe-inspiring symbol of Roman engineering and gladiatorial spectacle. As the scholars explored this ancient amphitheatre, they imagined the roar of the crowds and the intense battles that once took place in the very space they were standing.

The next highlight was a guided tour of the Roman Forum, the bustling centre of political, commercial, and social life in ancient Rome. Walking through the ruins of temples, basilicas, and government buildings, the scholars were able to visualise the grandeur of the Roman Empire at its height.

One of the more hands-on experiences came on the third day with a visit to a Gladiator School. The students were given the chance to train like ancient Roman warriors, learning basic sword-fighting techniques and getting a sense of what life might have been like for gladiators in the Colosseum. This engaging activity brought history to life in an exciting and unique way.

The day concluded with a visit to St. Peter's Basilica, one of the most significant sites in Christianity. Located in Vatican City, the basilica's stunning architecture, Michelangelo's breathtaking Pietà, and the grandeur of the dome were awe-inspiring. The scholars reflected on the blending of ancient Roman heritage with the city's religious significance as they wandered through one of the most beautiful churches in the world.

The final day brought a blend of sightseeing and Roman culture. One of the most enchanting stops was the Trevi Fountain, the grandeur of which, with its baroque design and mythological statues, left everyone in awe.

Next on the agenda were the Spanish Steps, a popular meeting place for both locals and tourists. The scholars climbed the steps to enjoy panoramic views of the city, soaking in the vibrant atmosphere that has drawn artists and poets for centuries.

The scholars' four-day Roman adventure was packed with historic sites, immersive activities, and unforgettable cultural experiences. Thanks to the Latin Excellence Fund, these students not only deepened their understanding of ancient Rome but also made lifelong memories. The students returned to the academy filled with new knowledge, inspiration, and a shared passion for history that will stay with them for years to come. Thank you to Ms Williamson, Ms Latham and Mr Horscroft for leading the visit. We can't wait for the next residential!

“On several occasions we were complimented by local people we interacted with, be it shop owners complimenting our Italian, or our tour guide at the Colosseum saying we were the best school group she'd ever seen. The students embarked on the trip with a respectful curiosity and I'm so pleased that they were able to take so much from the visit.

Not only did they get the chance to experience one of the world's greatest cities, but also to consolidate their knowledge of ancient Roman culture and civilisation, all whilst enjoying lots of Italian food!

Well done to all the scholars for such a fantastic attitude throughout.”

Ms Williamson, Trip Leader





Co-op Academy Bebington

Pot Noodle product launch

Our students have showcased their creative talents on a national scale by collaborating with Pot Noodle to help design promotional artwork for the brand's latest flavour, Korean BBQ Beef.



As part of Co-op's Careers incentives, Year 8 students from Co-op Academy Bebington and four other schools were invited to participate in a Dragon's Den-style competition, where they pitched creative concepts for the new Pot Noodle flavour's in-store point-of-sale (POS) materials.

After months of preparation and collaboration with Unilever and Co-op staff, students presented their designs to a panel of judges at Co-op's Head Office, Angel Square.

Our students 'Bring the Bull to the BBQ' concept was crowned the winner, and the design will now be featured in promotional displays across more than 1400 Co-op stores nationwide.

Students were invited back to Co-op's Head Office to see the final POS design and meet with Unilever staff as part of an official launch event.

Carl Perkins, Teacher at Co-op Academy Bebington said: *"The DT department at Co-op Academy Bebington were delighted when our students won the competition to design the new POS and packaging for Pot Noodle. Now to see it come to life is such a fantastic experience for them and we couldn't be prouder."*

"The students really enjoyed the challenge of entering their first design competition. This opportunity, facilitated by DT teacher, Lucy Forber and myself, has enabled them to learn about the design process, branding and visualisation and has been a truly valuable learning experience."

"They entered as Year 8 students and now they're in Year 9, preparing to select their options. These kinds of experiences really help to influence choices and now many of them are thinking about taking a creative subject."

The competition was part of a larger initiative by Co-op Academies Trust to offer real-world career experiences to students. Five academies - Co-op Academy Bebington, Co-op Academy Manchester, Co-op Academy North Manchester, Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent, and Co-op Academy Swinton - were shortlisted to participate in the final round, where they worked with industry experts to refine their designs and develop their marketing pitches.

Talented Year 9 student, **Daniel**, shared his excitement at seeing the POS materials for the first time: *"It's really cool seeing it all come together, and knowing me and my mates designed it is just really cool. When we first pitched our design, we were really nervous about speaking in front of people and didn't think we'd win, so to find out we did was amazing."*

"I love drawing and like to do graphic design and animation, so I have really enjoyed being part of this experience and will definitely look to take part in more things like this in the future."

On Monday 30th September we went to Co-op Teehey Lane to see the promotional set-up in action, we are incredibly proud of all their hard work!

"This collaboration is a great example of how Co-op as sponsor can bring exciting opportunities to our students. Pot Noodle helped us bring to life how a business like Co-op not only offers new and exciting products for our Members and customers, but also offers real social value."

This experience has offered our students an insight into the careers they may want to consider, as well as developing key skills like problem solving and confidence. Not many Year 9's can say their designs have been in 1,400 Co-op stores nationwide as part of a new product launch!"

Hazel Remeika, Academies Business Partner in the Community and Member Participation Team





Co-op Academy Medlock

Greater Manchester Mayor, Andy Burnham, visits Medlock

Andy Burnham recently visited Co-op Academy Medlock to discuss the school's work on environmental initiatives and sustainability.



The visit was the result of a persuasive letter-writing project by pupils, then in Year 5, as part of their Sustainability topic. The pupils wrote to Andy to raise awareness about the high levels of traffic and other pollutants around the school, asking for changes to improve the local environment.

The pupils' letters were presented to Andy Burnham at an event at Manchester Museum. He was impressed with their arguments and commitment to making a difference and asked to visit the school in person so he could answer the children's questions and learn more about their efforts.

During his visit, representatives from the Eco Club discussed various projects and Andy joined in discussions with students about how young people can help tackle climate change and create a more sustainable future for Manchester.

Headteacher, **Jonathan Brown**, said: "It was a real pleasure to welcome Andy Burnham to Co-op Academy Medlock last week.

"Andy and our Eco Club talked about traffic, green spaces, the Bee Network, and how we can all work together for a safer and cleaner Ardwick.

"We can't wait to carry on this good work with the School Streets programme where we are hoping to become Bee Network Ambassadors, with Andy also promising to return in summer to see our continued good work."



Co-op Academy Failsworth

GCSE Citizenship kicks-off Community Fridge Fundraising

As part of their GCSE in citizenship pupils are required to organise an active citizenship project on an issue of their own choosing. Angel, Lily, Gracie-Mai and Miley, all Year 11 pupils, decided to focus on our Community Fridge.

Last week, the girls organised a food collection event for Year 7. Students brought in donations each morning for the Community Fridge. These items were tracked and the form who brought in the highest number of items across the week won a double lunch reward on Friday.

Congratulations go to 7E who donated 103 items over the week!

In total 405 items were donated. A huge thank you to all parents and carers for their kind donations.

As part of this project, Janae in Year 7 went above and beyond: she saved her pocket money and used this to buy 4 bags of shopping to donate to the project, a special thank you to Janae for her act of kindness!

Well done to all of our Year 7 students for getting involved and our Year 11 Citizenship students for organising this great fundraising event!

Our Community Fridge is open Monday - Friday, 2pm - 5pm and offers no-questions-asked support to all families who need support with food and hygiene products.





Co-op Academy Walkden

National Poetry Day

On Thursday 3rd October 2024 we celebrated National Poetry Day at Co-op Academy Walkden.

Jessica, Year 8 has written a wonderful poem that we would love to share with you all below.

Do you want to live
in a world
That just doesn't care,
Or live in a world that
just isn't fair,
Well that's what our world
is turning into,
But there is a way to
reverse it,
If we just do our bit.

If kindness becomes more,
Then happiness shall
be galore,
Instead of teasing,
People should be pleasing,
Rather than being
mad or bad.

If we are kind,
It improves the mind,
It makes the world a
better place,
For all of the human race.





Co-op Academies Trust

Women in Tech Week

As part of #WomenInTechWeek, we spoke to IT Service Analyst at Co-op Academies Trust, Jess Tarrant, who told us what it's like to work in tech for the Trust and why she believes representation is so important.



Tell us about your role at the Trust

I have been working at the Trust now for four and a half years as the IT Service Analyst, having originally joined in a contracted role. I support our academies and IT colleagues with any IT issues they are having within the Trust. I also lead on the procurement for the Central IT Team, speaking with suppliers to procure equipment for new starters, replacing current equipment or supporting academies with quotes.

What do you enjoy about working at Co-op Academies Trust?

Being able to combine working within IT for an organisation such as Co-op Academies Trust was enticing. Working within education can be very rewarding, knowing the differences we make in IT not only supports our staff but can also provide our students with a better learning experience.

The main thing I enjoy about working in the Trust is the people and knowing I have a good relationship with not only the IT Team but also with other staff in different departments and schools. The team I work with on a daily basis are very supportive, not just for me but also anyone else in the Trust.

What would you say is your biggest challenge as a woman in tech?

I would say the perception of gender bias and stereotyping. As IT is a male-dominated industry, it is often regarded that men are more suited to technical roles. However, this isn't the case at all, but this stereotyping can deter women from wanting to work in a male-dominated industry. The lack of females can often result in some women feeling uncomfortable about being the only female in the team or room.

How do you survive as the only female on the team?

To be honest, I don't see myself as being one of the only females on the team as I don't think I am treated any differently for being a female. I am treated equally by each team member.

Why do you think it is important to have more women in tech?

I think it is important to have more women in tech to beat this stereotype and provide a wider representation of diversity in technology for the younger generation.

What would you say to other women looking to join the Co-op Academies Trust Tech Team?

I would say, if you want to try working in IT, just give it a go and ignore the typical stereotyping and gender bias.

Once you are in the role you will realise you do not get treated any differently just because of the gender you are.



Co-op Academy Portland

Bringing smiles across generations: students share special moments with care home residents

Beehive class have been visiting Oxton Grange Care Home in an intergenerational exchange. The pupils have loved chatting to and reading with the residents.

Oxton Grange Care Home is a wonderful, purpose-built home for senior citizens within well maintained landscaped gardens.

During their first visit on 9th October, the children presented the residents with flowers and then they had drinks and snacks together.

The Intergenerational Exchange offers a chance for children to visit older people in a care home to socialise and participate in activities together. The activities benefit everyone, giving residents and children opportunities for socialising, mental and physical stimulation, emotional support and personal growth.

Mrs Smith said: *"It was the most heart-warming trip I've been on. The children and the residents loved it, and they are looking forward to going again."*

In a post on Oxton Grange's Facebook page, we got to see what they thought. They said, our Intergenerational Reading Group was utterly enchanting. Pupils from Co-op Academy Portland brought such warmth, joy and enthusiasm with their shared reading. To quote one of the residents, **Sheila**, *"It's been the happiest day"*.

Staff at Oxton Grange said: *"We can't wait to see our new friends again soon, huge appreciation to teachers Mrs Smith and Miss Smith for making our home feel at the centre of our community."*





Co-op Academy Friarswood

Autumn Woodland Walk 2024

At the end of school on the 17th of October, parents and children once again joined members of the PTA and our Academy Community Pioneer (Matt Linley-Simon) for a walk in the woods.



Following the successes of previous seasons, participants were keen to follow the passage of the year as nature slows down in autumn, making ready for winter. Matt also leads on the Forest School at the academy as part of his role as Community Pioneer and has been using the sessions to develop confidence, resilience and teaching the children new life skills.

The walk was open to the whole community, and we inevitably adopted several walkers and their furry companions as we kept our eyes mostly glued to the ground, hunting for the plentiful funghi all in full fruit. They were everywhere, in the grass, on trees, and even around the ephemeral ponds in the parks.

As we completed our circuit of the woodland and through the local cemetery, one parent said:
"Great autumn walk! Thank you!"

Matt, our Academy Community Pioneer said: "It was a lovely opportunity to continue the observation of our local area's native wildlife, particularly at this time, so shortly after National Funghi Day. These funghi are the stars of the show, and it was great to see such biodiversity in what we saw.

"These regular walks encourage us to stop and really see what's all around us. Hundreds of people walk through these woods every week, without having the time to appreciate all it has to offer. The children who joined us dashed from log to fairy ring, careful not to tread on any of the delicate mushrooms and toadstools. One brave soul even picked up a snapped Fly Agaric, though I'm thankful to say not directly with his hands and everyone was very careful not to take any risks!"

A huge thank you to Matt and everyone who joined him for the Autumn woodland walk. We hope to see you all on our next walk in winter!



Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op Academies Trust announces partnership with Impetus to combat school exclusions

The partnership is through the Engage Fund, in collaboration with The Henry Smith Charity.

This exciting collaboration aims to improve outcomes for young people at risk of school exclusion, providing tailored support to ensure they stay engaged in their education and have the best opportunities to succeed.

In addition to core funding of £100,000 per year, the Trust will benefit from the expertise of Impetus' dedicated Investment Team and access to a world-class pro bono network. The partnership will enable the trust to design and implement high-quality, inclusive Internal Alternative Provision (IAP) models across its schools, helping to transform the lives of its most vulnerable students.

This partnership will enable the Trust to focus on their IAP model, already implemented across the Trust's 10 secondary schools, which is built on evidence-based principles. The IAP programme aims to reintegrate students back into mainstream education by providing academic support, special educational needs services, and a continued connection to the wider school community.

Dr Chris Tomlinson, Co-op Academies Trust CEO, said: *"We are very excited to partner with Impetus and The Henry Smith Charity through the Engage Fund to further develop our IAP model across our secondary schools. At Co-op Academies Trust, we believe every young person deserves the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their background or challenges. This partnership will enhance the support we provide to students at risk of exclusion, ensuring they remain engaged in education and feel a sense of belonging in our school communities."*

Co-op Academy Grange and Co-op Academy Failsworth have already been identified as examples of best practice, showing promising early results in reducing exclusions and improving student outcomes.

Adam Alagiah-Glomseth, Impetus Investment Director, said: *"The long-term impact of school exclusions can be devastating, not only for the students affected but for their communities and the wider economy."*

"Through our partnership with Co-op Academies Trust, we are developing high-quality, inclusive interventions that will not only improve the lives of vulnerable students but also provide valuable insights into the potential of IAP as a sector-wide solution."

This collaboration will also serve as a learning opportunity, as the Trust and Impetus work together to create a model that can be adapted for diverse and geographically dispersed school populations. The ultimate goal is to demonstrate that high-quality IAP can reduce school exclusions, keep students engaged in their education, and set them up for future success in life and work.





Co-op Academy Princeville

Creating a school where nature can thrive with RHS Grant

During this academic year, we are excited to launch a project that will create many new green spaces around our school site.

Recently we were delighted to be awarded a grant from the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) to support biodiversity work around the school site. You might have seen some of our work already during phase one!

Our children really enjoyed the first part of the project which involved planting climber plants (such as Jasmine and Wisterias) and fruit trees. For some of our pupils this was a brand new experience - using tools such as spades and gardening gloves. As an inclusive school we wanted to make sure that every child had an opportunity to have a go at planting and we worked hard to ensure there was a chance for everyone to get involved.

As well as planting around the playground and outside areas, every classroom has a plant for the class to look after and keep hydrated. **Mrs Yunas**, Year 4 teacher, who has taken a leading role in coordinating the RHS project around the school says: *"The children take great pride in watering the plant and ensuring it is in the best position in the classroom to receive sunlight. We are looking forward to our fruit trees blossoming over the course of the year, and we are hoping to use the fruit in our recipes for our Design Technology curriculum."*

The project will continue throughout the year. Our next phase is to create homes for wildlife to move into and where they can flourish. Each Year Group will be allocated a 'wildpod' where they will select which animal they would like to create a habitat for. This will include researching and working together to create the optimum habitat for the animals to survive the harsh conditions of the winter. Our focus is not only to provide a habitat for the animals but also for children to learn and understand the significance of nature and natural habitats.

Please keep your eyes peeled for future updates on this exciting project!





Co-op Academy Hillside

Hillside raises awareness of hidden disabilities

Co-op Academy Hillside is proud to be a Stoma Aware School.



By celebrating the people who live with this hidden condition, pupils at the school have been putting into practice our Ways of Being Co-op: Show you care; Be yourself, always, Do what matters most and Succeed together.

Pupils have shown a great deal of compassion when taught about this subject, and we look forward to them being able to talk to people with stomas openly and with empathy. One of Hillside's brilliant pupils has a stoma and this has ignited the school community with a desire to make her feel valued and understood.

A stoma is a small opening in the tummy that is used to remove body waste into a collection bag. People have a stoma after a colostomy operation. It is now estimated that every one in 335 people in the UK are currently living with a stoma.

Children and adults of all ages can have a stoma. Stoma surgery is used to treat a range of illnesses including cancer and Crohn's disease or following an injury to the tummy.

The charity Colostomy UK received a phone call every 42 seconds - and that magic number inspired the the staff, pupils and community at Hillside to come together on the playground for an early morning 'Wake Up 'N' Shake Up', lasting for 4 minutes and 2 seconds.

Headteacher, **Katy Bergman**, said: "As a Co-op Academy we embrace 4 values - 'Show you care', 'Be yourself, always', 'Succeed together' and 'Do what matters most'. Yesterday, we came together - our Hillside family - and embodied these values in 4.2 minutes to show support and raise awareness for one of our very special pupils and Colostomy UK. We did this the Hillside way - with joy in our hearts and smiles on our faces! Huge thank you to everyone who joined in and donated! Now, shall we make it a regular event!?!"

'Wake Up 'N' Shake Up' coincided with Stoma Aware Day, organised by charity Colostomy UK. The theme for 2024 was 'Do You See Me?' and asks us all to be aware of the people around us with a stoma, and not to ignore them.





Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op Foundation supports Maths Excellence in Co-op Academies with significant funding award

Co-op Academies Trust has secured nearly £1 million in funding from the prestigious Maths Excellence Fund, thanks to a partnership with the Co-op Foundation.

The funding, aimed at improving maths education across eight academies, will support a programme running from 2024 to 2026 that focuses on enhancing both student outcomes and teacher training in mathematics.

The project began with an initial £20,000 contribution from the Co-op Foundation, alongside support in the grant application process. The Maths Excellence Fund awards grants to projects that encourage continued maths study, with a focus on students from underrepresented groups where increased support can have a significant impact.

Out of 53 applicants, Co-op Academies Trust was one of just four recipients, securing significant funding to support their ambitious plans for maths education.

The funding will be used to recruit maths graduates, provide additional qualifications for students, offer specialised training for maths teachers and expand the use of technology in the classroom. The aim is to raise the standard of maths education and increase student engagement in the subject.

Jay Timotheus, Director of Mathematics at Co-op Academies Trust, commented on the impact of the funding. He said: *"With the support of the Co-op Foundation and nearly £1 million we've secured from the Maths Excellence Fund, we can now bring real, lasting change to how we deliver maths education across our academies. The impact of this programme will be profound, and we're excited to see the difference it makes."*

"The partnership between Co-op Academies Trust and the Co-op Foundation highlights how collaboration across Co-op organisations can drive meaningful and positive improvements in education. A massive thank you to the Co-op Foundation for their support.

We are committed to ensuring that every student in the Trust has the chance to excel in every area, maths is a crucial subject and this partnership will help to further enhance our pupil experiences.

This substantial funding from the Maths Excellence Fund will enable us to elevate the quality of maths education even further. By recruiting top maths graduates to provide excellent tuition, enhancing teacher training, and integrating advanced technology, we will provide our students with the skills and support they need to succeed."

Dr Chris Tomlinson,
CEO of Co-op Academies Trust



Connell Co-op College

Connell highlighted in Gatsby Benchmarks Report

Our college has earned recognition in the newly updated Gatsby Benchmarks report, which outlines the future of world-class career guidance for the next decade.



The Good Career Guidance: The Next 10 Years report, published in November 2024, has been shaped by nearly two years of research and sector-wide collaboration, and we feature as a standout case study of how the Benchmarks can be successfully implemented to benefit young people.

Our approach was recognised in the report under Benchmark 3 - Addressing the Needs of Each Young Person and referenced the importance of personalised action plans to help guide young people toward their next steps.

Emma Soper, Principal, said: *"It is a tremendous honour to have Connell Co-op College featured in this pivotal report. The updated Gatsby Benchmarks reaffirm the education sector's commitment to providing young people with the career guidance they need to thrive."*

"At Connell, we integrate individual aspirations from day one and these are continuously reviewed during their time with us. We also use students' aspirations to shape career days, employer visits and industry experiences, providing opportunities that align with individual goals."

Since their introduction in 2014, the Gatsby Benchmarks have transformed career guidance in the UK, helping schools and colleges provide structured, impactful career education. Our approach has been highlighted as a model for aligning with the updated framework, ensuring that students receive the tools and experiences needed to navigate their futures with confidence.



Co-op Academy Beckfield

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves MP, visits Beckfield

Our local MP (and Chancellor of the Exchequer) Rachel Reeves joined us this week to browse for books at our Pop-Up Bookshop event.

The Pop-Up Bookshop was hosted by the national literacy charity the Children's Book Project. During the event, every child from Reception to Year 6 was given the opportunity to take home two free preloved books of their own, encouraging a love of reading.

The event was a lot of fun and showed our focus on creating engaged readers using hundreds of carefully chosen books donated by the charity plus posters, bunting, bookmarks and stickers to further capture the imaginations of our amazing pupils!

Caroline Watkiss, Headteacher, said: "At Beckfield, we make it our mission for all children to leave us being fluent, confident readers. Working with the Children's Book Project gives us the chance to connect children with books they can choose for themselves and keep; books they can share and recommend with others; books they can love. To see the children's faces light up when they see what's on offer for them at the Pop-Up Bookshop is wonderful."

Children's Book Project Founder and CEO, **Liberty Venn**, said: "We are absolutely thrilled that Co-op Academy Beckfield was able to host such a celebratory Pop-Up Bookshop this week and that Rachel Reeves MP was able to visit and see first-hand the powerful impact of our charity's core model, which makes use of surplus children's books to change futures. We are looking forward to building partnerships across the region and rolling this project out across many more schools."

"It was fantastic to visit Co-op Academy Beckfield in Tyersal and attend the Pop-Up Bookshop by the Children's Book Project. It was great to speak to so many enthusiastic young readers and see first-hand the brilliant work of the Children's Book Project!"

Rachel Reeves, MP





Co-op Academy North Manchester

Anti-Bullying Ambassadors launch new initiatives for Anti-Bullying Week

For Anti-Bullying Week, our school's Anti-Bullying Ambassadors led an inspiring campaign encouraging pupils to "do something positive" and "choose respect."



Pupils attended special assemblies with Mrs. Fiddler and the Ambassadors, where they learned about the importance of kindness, empathy, and taking a stand against bullying.

A highlight of the week was an initiative led by the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to foster positivity throughout the school. Pupils were invited to write uplifting messages on paper leaves, which were then displayed on the "Positivitree" that is located in the main reception. This tree of positive messages has become a symbol of unity and support, reminding everyone of the power of respect and encouragement.

Our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors are introducing several new initiatives to strengthen the academy's commitment to creating a supportive environment. Alongside the "Positivitree" display, the ambassadors will conduct a ballot to gather input from pupils on ways to effectively address bullying. This ballot aims to capture a broad perspective, giving all pupils a voice in shaping the school's anti-bullying strategies.

In addition, the ambassadors are setting up a Self-Care Corner in the school library, a dedicated safe space where pupils can relax, reflect, and recharge. This space will serve as a supportive resource for pupils seeking comfort and calm during the school day, furthering our goal of fostering a respectful and inclusive school community.

Through these activities, our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors will empower pupils to create a kinder, more inclusive school environment.

Mrs Fiddler, Vice Principal added: *"This week, our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors engaged in impactful assemblies and activities focused on anti-bullying, emphasising the importance of choosing respect, kindness, and inclusion in our school community. We are especially proud of our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and their commitment to their leadership roles, which are vital in promoting our Anti-Bullying Charter and creating a safe and supportive environment for everyone at Co-op Academy North Manchester."*



Co-op Academy Walkden

Remembrance Day

In preparation for Remembrance Day, our Cadets Force pre-recorded a parade including a 2 minutes' silence, to be viewed by our whole Academy on 11th November at 11am.

Captain Bawden, Captain Murphy, Captain Green and Captain Taylor led the cadets one Saturday earlier in November, to perform the parade. Students helped create a mural of falling poppies, as well as some students giving a reading.

On Monday 11th November, each classroom watched the video at exactly the same time and fell into silence whilst watching our cadets.

We could not be more proud of our students for honouring the memory of those who served and those who continue to serve. Lest we forget.



Use the QR code to watch our Remembrance Parade video.





Co-op Academies Trust

Salford Councillors visit Co-op Academies Walkden and Swinton

Councillors Bill Hinds, Executive Support Member for Education, Learning and School Improvement, and Jim Cammell, Lead Member for Children’s and Young People’s Services at Salford City Council, recently visited Co-op Academy Swinton and Co-op Academy Walkden to celebrate the schools’ journeys of improvement.

Both academies, now officially rated as Good schools, have become shining examples of progress in education within Salford and both academies play a pivotal role in the Trust’s Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and Early Career Framework (ECF) programmes.

Offering highly sought-after placements for aspiring teachers, both Swinton and Walkden have been champions of the Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework (ITTECF) programme since its inception. From investing in academy leaders to help design curriculum frameworks, to supporting non-teaching staff in transitioning to teacher training, the academies have demonstrated a strong focus on nurturing and retaining talent.

The Trust’s “Train to Retain” model has seen remarkable success, with 80% of trainees choosing to stay within Co-op Academies after completing their training.

Councillor **Jim Cammell** praised the schools’ dual focus on student achievement and staff development. He said: *“We are always very pleased to hear about the success of Salford schools. They play a vital role in helping children to have happy and healthy lives and positive futures, and support our work to become a child friendly city.”*

“It’s inspiring to see how Co-op Academy Swinton and Co-op Academy Walkden have transformed into schools where both students and staff thrive. The support they provide to early career teachers ensures that young people benefit from highly skilled and passionate educators.”





Councillor **Bill Hinds** added: *“The journey of improvement at these academies is remarkable. Their commitment to nurturing new talent in teaching not only benefits their schools but also strengthens the broader education system in Salford.”*

Andy Gibson, Head of ITTECF at Co-op Academies Trust, said: *“The journeys Co-op Academy Swinton and Co-op Academy Walkden have been on over recent years are to be commended. The dedication from all staff at both academies to change the lives of the young people they serve and strive for better outcomes was recognised in their most recent Ofsted inspections and something to be celebrated and shared with Councillors Cammell and Hinds.”*

“The dedication of staff from both academies can also be seen in their unwavering support of the Co-op Academies Trust Initial Teacher Training programme. With the aim of producing high quality teachers for the Trust and educational workforce, Headteachers Zarina Ali at Swinton and Matt Hacker at Walkden have been champions from day one.”

“Our Trust is continually moving towards a more secure workforce, during a crisis of teacher retention and recruitment, which creates a more stable, consistent and effective learning environment for the fantastic students of Salford.”

Zarina Ali, Headteacher at Co-op Academy Swinton, said: *“It was a pleasure to welcome both Councillors Hinds and Cammell to our academy and discuss our school’s unique context and progress journey. Both have strong ties to the school and were pleased to chat to our cohort of initial and early career teachers to gain a deeper understanding of how we develop and support both our staff and students.”*

Matt Hacker, Headteacher at Co-op Academy Walkden, said: *“We value community ties and were delighted to welcome both Councillors to our school recently. We spoke about creating opportunities for all and how this extends to both our staff and student body.”*



Co-op Academy Grove

Positive Noticing Day

Celebrating Positive Noticing Day has been an absolute delight, as the atmosphere has been filled with warmth and kindness.



It's been heartwarming to see children and staff taking the time to write thoughtful notes for one another, highlighting the unique qualities and efforts they appreciate.

These small but meaningful gestures have created a ripple of positivity throughout the day, fostering stronger connections and a genuine sense of community. Witnessing the smiles and joy these notes bring has been a beautiful reminder of the power of acknowledgment and encouragement.

We encourage you to bring the joy of Positive Noticing Day into your homes! Take a moment as a family to share kind words and thoughtful notes with one another. It could be as simple as leaving a note on the fridge, writing a message on a mirror, or saying something special at the dinner table.

Celebrating these moments of appreciation helps strengthen bonds and brings positivity into everyday life. Let's keep spreading kindness and lifting each other up, at school and at home!



Co-op Academy Brierley

Co-op Academy Brierley students move into their brand-new school

Students at Co-op Academy Brierley have officially moved into their new, purpose-built facility on Cross Green Lane.

The two-storey, 4294m² state-of-the-art school has been specially designed to support students with additional needs and features a range of specialised spaces tailored to enhance learning and well-being.

The school's thoughtful design includes three sensory rooms, a sensory integration room, an immersive space and a rebound room, as well as dedicated life skills areas, a food tech room, a primary kitchen, and flexible spaces for art, music, science, and design technology.

Headteacher, **Sarah Harridge**, said: "Monday marked an inspiring new chapter for Co-op Academy Brierley as we moved into our purpose-built facility on Cross Green Lane.

"Our school is more than just a building; it's a thoughtfully designed space to support the unique learning needs of our pupils. Every feature, from specialised classrooms to sensory-friendly areas, reflects our commitment to providing an environment where all students can thrive.

"As we embrace our new surroundings, we are dedicated to empowering our students to grow with confidence, creativity, and independence. Our new school will allow us to offer tailored resources and learning spaces that support each child's individual journey."

Dr Chris Tomlinson, CEO of Co-op Academies Trust, added: "We are delighted that Co-op Academy Brierley's state-of-the-art new facility is now open. This incredible space will support our mission to foster ambitious and aspirational futures for every student and will allow us to support them to develop the knowledge and skills they need to help them thrive."







Co-op Academy Beckfield

Beckfield recognised as 'Good' in all areas following latest Ofsted inspection

We're delighted to share the news that our school has been recognised as a 'Good' school by Ofsted.

Our inspection at a glance

Inspection dates:

22nd and 23rd October 2024

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good

The latest inspection highlighted the school's commitment to creating a safe and inclusive learning environment where pupils thrive academically and socially.

Ofsted praised the school for its high expectations for achievement and behaviour, noting **"pupils enjoy attending the school and their improving attendance reflects the school's thoughtful approach to promoting regular attendance."**

The report went on to commend the **"calm and orderly"** school for its ambitious curriculum and **"carefully designed"** learning environments where pupils are **"keen to share their learning with visitors"** and **"children in the early years interact well with each other."**

Headteacher, **Caroline Watkiss**, said: *"I am so, so proud of everything we have achieved since the last inspection. This report reflects all the hard work and determination by everybody involved with Beckfield, and it feels really great to have the improvements recognised."*

"Our goal has always been to support children to achieve their best and to be confident, ambitious learners. The report means the start of another new chapter for our wonderful school and we're all very excited about what it will bring."

CEO of Co-op Academies Trust, **Dr Chris Tomlinson**, said: *"Co-op Academy Beckfield has truly earned this recognition from Ofsted. The school has made remarkable progress, with leaders and staff fostering an inclusive environment that benefits every student at Beckfield."*

"Ofsted has clearly acknowledged the journey of improvement Beckfield has been on and we are immensely proud of the staff, leadership team, pupils, and families who have worked together to make this well-deserved achievement possible."





Co-op Academies Trust

Recognition Awards 2024

This year's Recognition Awards brought together close to 300 colleagues from across Co-op Academies Trust at the historic King's Hall in Stoke-on-Trent for an evening of celebration, inspiration and togetherness.



The evening celebrated the outstanding contributions of staff from across our Trust, showcasing the values and achievements that make our Trust so unique. It was a night to reflect, applaud and recognise the hard work and dedication that continue to shape our academies and local communities.

The event was made even more special by incredible performances from our talented pupils. Students from Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent wowed the audience with a stunning showcase from the musical *The Lion King*, featuring a powerful rendition of *He Lives in Me*. Adding to the night's joy, the Co-op Academy Friarswood choir delivered an uplifting Bob Marley medley that had everyone on their feet.

Thank you to everyone who made this event so special - we look forward to celebrating even more of our successes next year!

Be Yourself, Always Award

Lucy Tappin - Co-op Academy Woodslee

Vicki Hughes - Co-op Academy Brownhill

Chris Corbett - Co-op Academy Walkden

Do What Matters Most Award

Matt Asher - Co-op Academy North Manchester

Cathy Alred - Co-op Academy Delius

Ryan Long - Co-op Academy Manchester

Succeed Together Award

Co-op Academy Southfield LSA Team

Jessica Johnson, Esha Hussain, Raksana Bi

Connell Co-op College Inclusion Team

Hattie Blundell, Niamh Ayrton,

Nick Power, Ryan Usher

Co-op Academy Friarswood Early Years Team

Jeni Williams, Alison Rushton,

Kerry Tagg, Becky Goodwin

Show You Care Award

Callum Stuart - Co-op Academy Brierley

Matt Godden - Co-op Academy Failsworth

Mark Rogers - Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent

Geoff Clarke Award

Jo Newsome - Co-op Academy Priesthorpe

Neilam Atcha - Co-op Academy Belle Vue

Kerry Fullwood - Co-op Academy Glebe

Community Award

Shirley Brien - Connell Co-op College

Co-op Academy Oakwood Community Team

Jan Dodds, Karen Jones and Richard Day

Jo Anderson and Rachel Smeeton -

Co-op Academy Broadhurst

Central or Hub Colleague of the Year

Catherine McCarney - Regional Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead, Greater Manchester

Liam Brown - Graphic Designer

Linda Warburton - Executive Support (Business Operations)

Support Staff Award

Claudia Mirazi - Co-op Academy New Islington

Amy Smith - Co-op Academy Leeds

Julie Mounfield - Co-op Academy Bebington

Teacher of the Year

Clare Lenge - Connell Co-op College

Stephanie Clements - Co-op Academy Delius

Amy Clarke - Co-op Academy Belle Vue

Director of the Year

Carys MacRae - Director of Primary Curriculum

Best Team Award

Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent English Department

Lifetime Achievement Award

Dave Wheetman - Co-op Academy Brownhill

Carol Mitsi - Central Team

Glynnis Fox - Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff

Sharon Hands - Co-op Academy North Manchester

Catherine Kelly - Co-op Academy Bebington

Primary Academy of the Year

Co-op Academy Glebe

Secondary Academy of the Year

Co-op Academy Belle Vue

Special Academy of the Year

Co-op Academy Delius



Co-op Academy Southfield

Wuthering Ice!

On Wednesday we had some very special visitors at Co-op Academy Southfield.

The Lord Mayor of Bradford, Beverley Mullaney came to visit some of our students with Bradford's brand-new grit spreader.

Classes 107 and 209 had entered a competition to name the new gritter. As part of their curriculum, they had been looking at Bradford and some of the famous people who hail from the city. Some of the names suggested were Ice Hockney, Titus Salt, Dynamo and Zayn Gritter; but the winner was Jimmi-Jack with his fantastic entry "Wuthering Ice"!

The students had a lot of fun creating the names for the competition and even more fun experiencing sitting in the gritter, ably helped by the fantastic visiting council staff who allowed every student who wanted to, a turn sitting in the gritter.

Jimmi-Jack loved speaking to the Lord Mayor and said *"My mum will be proud of me."*





Co-op Academy Woodlands

Local MP Visits Woodlands

On Friday 13th December, Richard Burgon MP visited Woodlands.



The visit was filled with excitement as Mr. Burgon toured the school, met with staff, and engaged with our pupil parliament members to discuss important topics close to our hearts.

Mrs. Clark greeted Mr. Burgon before guiding him through school. He was introduced to the vibrant learning environments, children working hard in lessons, and the strong sense of community that makes Woodlands so special.

During their tour, Mrs. Clark shared insights about the school's vision and the challenges faced by many families in our community. They spoke about the importance of providing holistic support for students and their families and highlighted ongoing initiatives to ensure every child thrives.

The highlight of the visit came when Mr. Burgon sat down with members of our pupil parliament. The students had prepared well, eager to ask him questions about his role as an MP and how he could support local schools like Woodlands. They tackled topics such as violent crimes, social housing, litter and support for the Police.

Mr. Burgon was impressed by the pupils' confidence and insightful questions and he commended their passion for making a difference.

Take a look at some of the questions our children asked Richard:

What are you doing to help make our roads safer?

How do police deal with violence in our area?

What action could we take to stop there being so much litter on our streets?

How can you help there be more police on the streets?

What made you want to become an MP?

Do you agree that there needs to be more youth clubs in the area?

How can you increase security on our streets?

What are you doing to create more job opportunities in the area?

Where can we build more social housing?

We are grateful for Mr. Burgon's visit and look forward to working together to support our families and build a brighter future for all.





Co-op Academies Trust

Students awarded with a special trip to Co-op Live

Co-op Academies Trust students were given the VIP treatment thanks to a generous donation of Hits Radio Live tickets at Co-op Live, Manchester.



The tickets, which were distributed among the Trust's Young Musician of the Year finalists and other high-achieving students, offered many their first-ever music concert experience.

Braving the wintery weather, on Saturday 23rd November, students enjoyed performances by artists such as Teddy Swims, Rita Ora and Clean Bandit and even got a behind the scenes peek at the Backstage Club.

Keela Walsh, Academies Business Partner, Community & Member Participation, said: *"As a proud sponsor of Co-op Academies Trust, we seek to recognise and reward the excellent efforts of our students."*

"We were delighted to recently donate 150 tickets for Hits Radio Live at Co-op Live Arena, Manchester and for many, it was their first-ever live concert experience. Despite the rainy weather, the students arrived buzzing with excitement which was fantastic to witness."

"We're dedicated to continuing our collaboration with Co-op Live and our suppliers to bring even more inspiring experiences to our students across the Trust, recognising their hard work and determination."

"It was really exciting to win the tickets and to be invited to come to this gig. I've never been to a concert before and it was an incredible experience. Thank you Co-op for inviting me!"

Sebastian Dallimore,
Year 7 student from Co-op Academy
Florence MacWilliams and Trust
Young Musician of the Year finalist



Co-op Academy Delius

Ballet lessons

We are very lucky to be working alongside Project Resurgence Dance Company this year to offer pupils from across school the opportunity to access some ballet lessons.



Each half term there is a small group of up to 10 pupils taking part in a weekly lesson with Martin Howland, who is an ex pro dancer and trained at the Royal Ballet School, and Charley Lovett.

The lessons are adapted to suit each group and individual needs, with pupils from across our academy, with a range of physical needs accessing the lessons.

We're working with Project Resurgence to help them develop techniques to help all learners have the ability to access ballet at an appropriate level, and to also give our pupils the exciting opportunity to spark a love for ballet!

We can't wait to see how our learners progress over the year with this exciting opportunity!



Use the QR code to watch our ballet lessons video.



Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op Academies Trust joins forces with ASE to boost science education

Co-op Academies Trust has announced a partnership with the Association for Science Education (ASE), securing institutional membership for its 13 secondary schools and colleges.

The partnership will grant up to 130 science educators from across the Trust access to a wealth of professional development opportunities and resources.

The Trust will gain digital access to School Science Review, Education in Science and related articles and technician-focused tools like Topics in Safety and the Prep Room Organiser.

In addition, the Trust will receive exclusive access to the Science Teacher Education (STE) Hub for its science leaders, preferential rates for group bookings, and support to host networking events such as TeachMeets.

Sam Mortimer, Director of Science at Co-op Academies Trust, said: *"This partnership is testament to our belief that all our science teachers, trainees, leaders, and technicians have an entitlement to high-quality professional development."*

"At the same time, we're excited about the opportunities to work collaboratively with other schools and professionals through the ASE, as we work towards our science departments being beacons of success in our regions."

Lynn Ladbroke, CEO of the ASE, said: *"We're delighted to be working with Sam and Co-op Academies Trust in a tailored way that benefits not only individual teachers and technicians but also the Trust as a whole. This new approach to working with multi-academy trusts will help ensure we add real value where it's needed most."*





Co-op Academy Glebe

Glebe Choir visits Tremolo Recording Studio

Our choir recorded this year's Port Vale Christmas Charity Song!



Our angelic-voiced Glebe choir returned to Tremolo recording studio this week to record this year's Port Vale Christmas song. They have been practising the lyrics to 'Merry Christmas, Valiant Ones' in order to complete the recording, which will now be shared with other Co-op schools in the area. Each school will now record footage to create the charity single, in order to raise money for the annual Port Vale Christmas Appeal.

The song will be available soon, and you will be able to make a donation to the appeal.



Co-op Academy Bebington

WinterFest '24

Wasn't WinterFest fantastic? We enjoyed a fabulous evening of entertainment from students and staff, and we're truly in the Christmas spirit now!

A huge amount of effort goes into making these events happen. THANK YOU as always to Miss Utley, Mr Young, our PTA, our wonderful audience for their support and our incredibly talented students!





Co-op Academies Trust

Christmas gift collection at Angel Square

On Monday 9th December, colleagues from Co-op and Co-op Academies Trust joined forces to host a volunteer Christmas gift collection day at 1 Angel Square in Manchester.



The event brought together over 30 volunteers who helped collect and organise more than 300 kindly donated gifts from Co-op and Trust colleagues to ensure they reach the academies and communities where they are needed the most.

Recognising that the holiday season can be a challenging time for some families and children in our academies, the Trust's Community team, spearheaded by Liz Garrity, Head of Community Development, arranged an opportunity for colleagues to donate gifts.

The day was filled with holiday spirit, complete with Christmas music, mince pies, and plenty of teamwork as gifts were donated throughout the morning and afternoon.

Keela Walsh from the Co-op Community & Member Participation Team played a pivotal role, promoting the event internally among Co-op colleagues and arranging festive refreshments.

She said *"Co-op colleagues came together to donate Christmas gifts to spread joy and kindness during the holiday season, reminding ourselves and others of the true spirit of giving. Together, we can make a positive impact in our academy communities and bring smiles to those who need it most."*

The Community Team began sourcing gifts for their Christmas campaign in August, securing donations through strong collaborations from Dunelm, Cash for Kids Mission Christmas, The Salvation Army and Co-op stores on the Wirral who have also been collecting in-store for families and academies in the local community.

The Trust's Community Team have now been in post for over a year and in that time have established strong local links in their regions and also throughout the Trust via their team of Academy Community Pioneers (ACPs) which is growing each month with 34 ACPs now in post.

"It was inspiring to witness Co-op Academies Trust and Co-op come together to generously donate Christmas presents. This act of kindness will bring joy to many in our communities."

Will Goodrum, Regional Community Manager



DECEMBER 2024





Co-op Academies Trust

Term One sports round-up

Term One saw an energetic return to sport across the Trust, with students from primary and secondary academies stepping up, competing and supporting one another in a packed calendar of events.



From football to benchball, athletics to badminton, hundreds of pupils have taken part, including many for the first time, showcasing the power of sport to build confidence and skills.

In West Yorkshire, primary and secondary pupils took to the courts and fields in a range of inter-school events. Co-op Academy Oakwood dominated the early benchball tournaments, winning both the Year 5/6 and Year 3/4 competitions held at Co-op Academy Leeds in September. Co-op Academy Priesthorpe kicked off the secondary competition winning a gold in basketball against Co-op Academy Grange. Our Priesthorpe students also supported primary events as outstanding young sports leaders.

October saw greater collaboration, with Co-op Beckfield, Parkland and Princeville excelling in a variety of events, including football and benchball. Meanwhile on the Wirral, Year 6 pupils at Co-op Woodslee began football training in preparation for an end-of-term festival, developing not just skills but resilience and teamwork.

In Greater Manchester, the inter-secondary PE event featured Year 7s from four academies in an exciting benchball tournament led by Co-op Academy Walkden's outstanding Year 10 sports leaders. Later in the term, girls' football and basketball matches between Co-op Academy Priesthorpe and Grange demonstrated great spirit and determination.

As winter approached, indoor athletics events lit up both Manchester and West Yorkshire, with pupils from across the Trust showcasing stamina and sportsmanship.

This term has laid strong foundations for an exciting year of physical activity, competition and leadership. A huge thank you to all students, staff and sports leaders who made it happen.



JANUARY - APRIL 2025

Term Two



Primary Stories



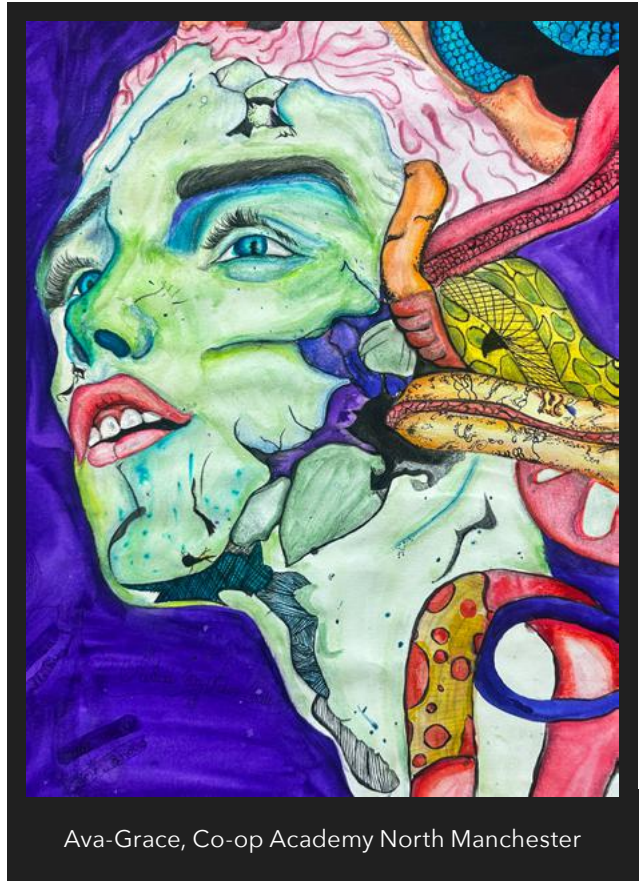
Secondary, College and Through-school Stories



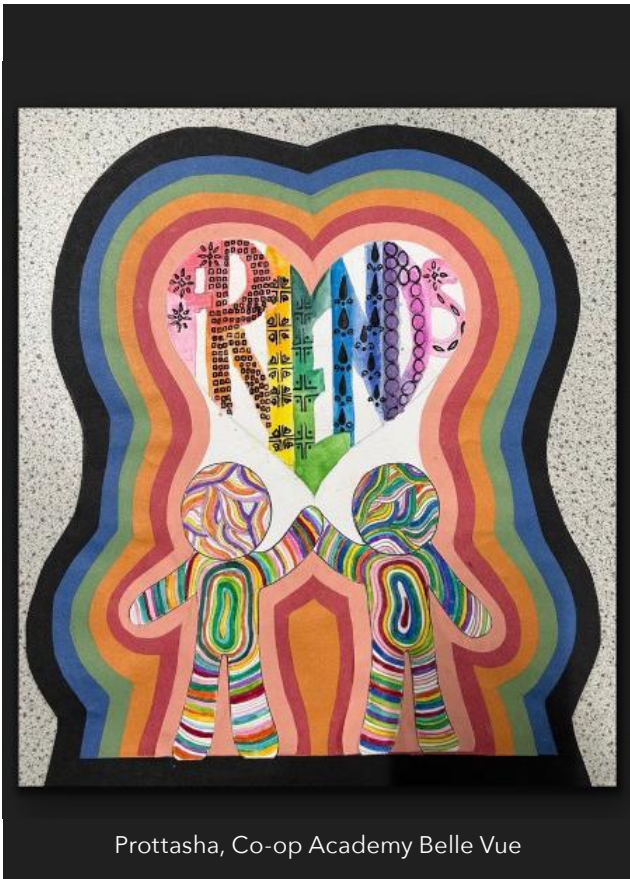
Trust Stories



Nicole, Co-op Academy Swinton



Ava-Grace, Co-op Academy North Manchester



Prottasha, Co-op Academy Belle Vue



Evie, Co-op Academy Manchester



Co-op Academies Trust

Year 9 Art Exhibition 2025

This week, seven secondary academies took part in a brand-new art exhibition showcasing the artistic talents of students from across the Trust.

The exhibition was the idea of ambitious secondary Art trainee teachers Jane Beaumont from Co-op Academy North Manchester and Bronwyn Lane from Co-op Academy Belle Vue who together engaged Year 9 students from across the Trust in a meaningful exploration on the theme of Belonging.

Inspired by Tahera Aziz's powerful Creative Sparks exhibition, both teachers were compelled to address issues of identity and inclusivity within their teaching with the view to hold a Trust-wide exhibition. Throughout this project, which began in the autumn term, students have been reflecting on their experiences and perspectives to create artwork that mirrors the diverse communities we proudly serve.

Schools were asked to choose five pieces of artwork to feature in the exhibition which was on display in the atrium of 1 Angel Square, from the 21st to the 24th January. Co-op colleagues were invited to vote for their favourite pieces using a provided QR code.

The art exhibition received more than 200 votes from colleagues from across the Trust who were also provided with virtual access to the exhibition and asked to vote for their favourite pieces.

The results were shared at a special event on the final day of the exhibition, attended by artist and guest judge **Dan Callaghan**. He said: *"Visiting the Co-op Academies Trust Art Exhibition and seeing the creativity on display from the students was incredible."*

"At such a young age the students were able to capture ideas with illustrations that I couldn't even imagine. They have bright futures ahead of them and some could already be selling their artwork online from what I've seen!"

Jane Beaumont said: *"We are proud of the effort and enthusiasm shown by all the students and are thrilled at the success of this event. We look forward to building on this experience and hopefully hosting the competition yearly. We wish to continue fostering creativity, collaboration and a shared sense of belonging across the trust."*

Bronwyn Lane added: *"Art has such a powerful role to play in encouraging conversations and this exhibition has given our students a platform to reflect on their own experiences. Their work has been truly inspiring and we're so proud of everyone who has taken part."*

Artist's Choice Winner:

Nicole from Co-op Academy Swinton

Public Vote Winners:

1st Place: Ava Grace from Co-op Academy North Manchester

2nd Place: Prottasha from Co-op Academy Belle Vue

3rd Place: Evie from Co-op Academy Manchester



Co-op Academy Manchester

Former student Tamar is heading to Oxford

We were delighted to hear from former student Tamar. This summer she will complete her A Levels at Loreto College before moving on to read PPE at the University of Oxford.



A Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) course is an ambitious and popular course that only a few universities in the United Kingdom offer. Famous people with PPE degrees include Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai, ITV's political editor Nick Robinson, Prime Ministers such as David Cameron, Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak and many high profile broadcasters and journalists.

As a Co-op Academy Manchester student, Tamar took part in the *Universify Programme*, which she excelled at. The year-long programme starts in the summer after Year 10 to help state school pupils learn what university is like through residential and coaching sessions.

Universify was just one of the many projects that Tamar was involved in outside the classroom, and which she balanced with hard work in every single one of her GCSE subjects. She was a leading member of Eco Club and Eco Council as well as the Lonely Not Alone campaign and anti-bullying initiatives.

Staff at the academy were really pleased to hear from Tamar - as we are from all our former students. We would love to hear from more of our alumni as they move on to university, apprenticeships and employment.



Co-op Academy North Manchester

The National Holocaust Museum visits Co-op Academy North Manchester for special workshops and survivor talk

On Tuesday 21st January, Co-op Academy North Manchester had the privilege of welcoming The National Holocaust Museum for a profound day of education and remembrance.

Year 9 pupils, along with selected Year 10 and 11 GCSE pupils, participated in insightful workshops and had the rare opportunity to hear a moving testimony from Holocaust survivor Martin Stern. The day offered an impactful and thought-provoking experience for all involved.

A Day of Learning

The day commenced with an interactive workshop for our pupils, delivered by representatives from The National Holocaust Museum. This session provided pupils with a deeper understanding of the Holocaust, its historical significance, and its enduring relevance today.

The highlight of the event was an emotional and inspiring talk from Holocaust survivor Martin Stern, who shared his personal experiences and reflections. His testimony offered pupils an invaluable and first hand perspective on one of history's darkest chapters.



A Memorable Experience

Reflecting on the day, **Mr. Cooper**, Joint Head of Personal Development, remarked: *"We hope all pupils and staff involved in the day found the sessions insightful and meaningful."*

Representatives from **The National Holocaust Museum** also praised the pupils, stating: *"The pupils at Co-op Academy North truly impressed our educators at The National Holocaust Museum. They engaged in the workshops with enthusiasm and demonstrated a real understanding of the importance of learning about this history. We explored the rise of discrimination against Jewish communities in Europe and discussed how ordinary people can become perpetrators of such horrific events. The students' maturity and respect for the subject matter were truly commendable."*

Year 10 pupil **Ollie** shared his experience, saying: *"The workshop was incredibly informative and will greatly assist me with topics in my curriculum, such as human rights abuses. Martin's testimony was touching and emotional, inspiring us to take action to end discrimination within our local community and society at large."*

Lessons for the Future

Hosting the museum at the academy provided pupils with an extraordinary opportunity to learn from history and reflect on its lessons for the future. The event emphasised the importance of remembrance, understanding, and working towards a more inclusive and tolerant society.



Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent

Year 7 and 8 inspired by live performance and talk from Joel Foster

Students in Years 7 and 8 at Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent were treated to a fantastic live performance from Joel Foster, a talented up-and-coming artist from Burton-Upon-Trent.



The event wasn't just about great music – it also carried an important message about healthy relationships, bullying, and mental health, followed by an engaging Q&A session where students had the chance to ask questions and hear Joel's personal experiences.

During the session, Joel not only performed his original music but also shared his personal journey with bullying and mental health, offering heartfelt advice to the students. His honest and relatable stories inspired many, showing how music and determination helped him overcome challenges and achieve his dreams.

The students were captivated by his energy and talent, and his Q&A session provided a valuable opportunity to discuss topics that matter most to young people today.

A huge thank you to Joel Foster for delivering such a powerful and inspiring session. It was fantastic to see our students engaging with the performance, learning about resilience and positivity, and leaving the session feeling inspired. We wish Joel every success as he continues to share his music and message with audiences across the UK!



Co-op Academy Woodlands

National Lottery funding secured for Co-op Academy Woodlands

Amanda Heron - Academy Community Pioneer - has successfully secured £20,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund.



After attending Community team training on bid writing in the autumn, Amanda gained the skills and confidence to apply for funding through the National Lottery initiative and successfully secured £20,000 to turn her vision into a reality.

Having seen the impact community spaces have in other academies, Amanda had the innovative idea to transform an unused storage container on the academy site into a fully functioning community facility. Within her bid, she discussed the possibility of repurposing the container into a welcoming space where families and community members could access affordable food and hygiene products and this vision will soon become a reality thanks to her successful bid.

The £20,000 grant will now enable key upgrades to the container, including installing an electrical supply, fitting a skylight and adding shelving. The improvements will create a functional, inviting space designed to meet the needs of the local community.

Adele Clarke, Headteacher at Co-op Academy Woodlands, has been in full support of the project, recognising its importance for local families. She said: *"I cannot wait to see this up and running. It's a wonderful way to support our community and bring people together."*

Liz Garitty, Head of Community, said: *"As part of their professional development, all Academy Community Pioneers (ACPs) were offered an opportunity to attend a bid writing session delivered by Angus Martin who supports Co-op Academies Trust with writing bids. We have seen many academies benefit from the wonderful work of ACPs in gaining funding to support the academies with their new projects and we're really pleased to see Amanda use it to make such a positive impact within Co-op Academy Woodlands."*

Once open, the community space will provide essential items for families. **Mrs. Heron** expressed her excitement about the project, saying: *"I can't wait to see the end result and look forward to continuing to support our families and community."*



Co-op Academies Trust

GoIT Primary competition finals held at Angel Square

Co-op Academies Trust this week held the goIT competition finals with primary academies in partnership with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).



The project, which works to broaden the ICT opportunities available to primary pupils, tasked Year 6 pupils with responding to a TCS brief asking them to design a digital solution that will help tackle a sustainability issue in their communities in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The projects were worked on throughout the autumn term with the winning groups from each primary academy presenting their digital ideas to design an AI solution to help reduce the impact of climate change to a panel of esteemed judges from TCS, Co-op and Co-op Academies Trust.

Two in-person events were held on the 28th and 29th of January at 1 Angel Square with an overall winner chosen from each day.

Shirine Khoury-Haq, CEO of the Co-op Group, presented awards to the winning teams alongside Co-op's Chief Technology Officer, Rob Elsey. Dr Chris Tomlinson, CEO of Co-op Academies Trust, was also in attendance and spent time congratulating participants on their hard work and creativity.

All of the teams confidently presented their AI solution focused products making for a very difficult final decision.

Co-op Academy Penny Oaks' interactive presentation on their carbon footprint scanning app stood out and saw them being announced as the overall winner. Co-op Academy Beckfield's interactive litter detection presentation earned them the runner-up position.

On day two, primary academies from the Wirral, Manchester and Stoke-on-Trent presented their projects with Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff's well-researched 'Sort it Out' recycling app earning them the top spot. Co-op Academy New Islington were announced as the runner-ups with their water purifying device idea.

Keela Walsh, Academies Business Partner for Community & Member Participation, was on the judging panel, she said: *"The use of AI throughout all of the concepts was very well thought out and a lot of detail and consideration had clearly been put into the research for each project."*

"The two winners were chosen because their ideas not only met the brief but there was a real community advantage to both ideas which made them very impressive concepts."

GoIT is dedicated to teaching students the skills they need to be successful in Tech. With technology being a key part of STEM, as a Trust, we are always keen to upskill pupils, so they have a broader understanding and knowledge of a significant growth sector.

The winning teams from both finals will now be shortlisted and entered into the Global Innovator of the Year event - goIT's largest competition that highlights the top digital innovators from across 42 participating countries.

"We were blown away by the pupils' concepts this year as they did a fantastic job at recognising the advantages of AI and how this can be harnessed to address sustainability. Having such a range of colleagues from TCS, Co-op and the Trust enabled our pupils to learn about key jobs in different sectors and opened their eyes to future opportunities.

Seeing how much research and thought has been put into their ideas and how confidently these young people presented in front of peers was truly inspiring."

Jo Sykes, Director of CEIAG for Co-op Academies Trust







Co-op Academy New Islington

New Islington recognised as 'Good' in all areas following latest Ofsted inspection

Following a two-day inspection in January 2025 - our first in 10 years - Ofsted praised our school for its vibrant and inclusive atmosphere, where pupils thrive in learning.

The report highlighted how our wonderful pupils take immense pride in their school, benefiting from strong relationships with staff and feeling well-supported in all aspects of their education.

The report read: **"Around school, pupils are confident. They are celebrated as individuals who are free to express their unique personalities. The atmosphere is one of happiness, inclusivity and vibrancy."**

"Pupils are polite and considerate of others. They are respectful of each other's opinions and beliefs."

Behaviour was also celebrated within the report noting **"Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils know and follow the school rules, conducting themselves maturely and sensibly."**

We were also recognised for offering a **"clear and ambitious curriculum"** which ensures our pupils develop a secure body of knowledge. Our incredible teaching staff were also praised for actively checking pupils' understanding and adapting lessons to meet their needs.

Beyond the classroom, Ofsted noted the **"broad range of opportunities to enhance personal development"** to help our pupils **"have high aspirations for their future."**

Our dedication to meeting the needs of pupils with SEND was also reported, acknowledging that we ensure pupils receive compassionate and purposeful support.

"The report truly reflects the dedication, passion and hard work that make our academy such a special place.

We strive to create a nurturing and inspiring environment where every child can thrive, and it's wonderful to see this recognised. A huge thank you to our staff, families, and, most importantly, our amazing students!"

Joshua Berry, Headteacher

"Congratulations to Joshua Berry and the team at Co-op Academy New Islington.

The report highlights some wonderful comments about the staff and students showing their enthusiasm for learning and school life. The community has a school to be proud of and one that continues to keep making progress, we're sure they will continue to 'strive for excellence'."

Dr Chris Tomlinson,
CEO of Co-op Academies Trust



Co-op Academies Trust

Trust-wide Spelling Bee 2025

Pupils from 28 academies from across Co-op Academies Trust came together at Co-op's Headquarters, 1 Angel Square to compete in the annual Trust Spelling Bee.



This is the third year running the competition, led by the Trust's English Director, Hanna Lilley, which provides a fantastic opportunity for students to meet fellow peers from across the Trust and have a fun, challenging spelling competition.

It's a great experience for young people to develop their confidence, practise public speaking skills and to thrive under pressure!

This year, 28 teams from both primary and secondary gathered for the event and the standard of spelling was excellent.

English Director at Co-op Academies Trust, **Hanna Lilley**, said: *"It was a fantastic day at our third and biggest yet annual Spelling Bee. We saw 28 teams from Years 5, 6, 7 and 8 compete to be crowned Spelling Bee champions."*

"Our finalists were asked to spell really tricky words such as effervescent, lugubrious, mellifluous and the audience's favourite - defenestration."

"It was fantastic to see everyone involved show such a love for language and have tremendous courage to perform under pressure in front of peers from across the Trust. A huge well done to everyone who took part."

Winners: Medlock

Runners up: Belle Vue

Second place: North Manchester

Third place: Manchester



Co-op Academy Delius

City of Culture 2025 - Opening Day

We are the City of Culture 2025! Today we held an opening day to introduce the exciting plans we have for the year ahead.

To kick off, we had lots going on around school:

The Sound of Bradford - this was an opportunity to dive into the vibrant sounds from Bradford! From rock and folk, to Bhangra and baseline - pupils played along and commented on their favourite songs.

The Opening Ceremony - we recreated the RISE opening ceremony in our Immersive suite, giving our pupils the opportunity to experience what it felt like to be there.

Salt Dough Bradford - we unleashed our creativity and brought famous Bradford landmarks to life using salt dough! From the Alhambra Theatre to Salts Mills.

Special Assemblies - during our assemblies we learnt about what this all means, what we might see and do, and how we might feel.

Community Art - we all worked on small pieces of art, to add together to make a special piece, with everyone taking part! Some of us explored the uses of wool, others looked at Bradford Buildings, and some of us even drew the people who make Bradford.

We have developed a plan so that all pupils have the opportunity to learn about, and experience, 5 main Bradford themed topics through the year. (More info to follow soon)

We're from Bradford and we're proud!





Co-op Academy Brierley

Co-op CEO Shirine Khoury-Haq visits Co-op Academy Brierley for Time to Talk Day

On 6th February, Co-op Academy Brierley proudly welcomed Co-op CEO Shirine Khoury-Haq and the Co-op Operations Board for a special visit.

The event provided an opportunity to showcase the academy's newly opened facilities, highlight its inclusive approach to education and reinforce the importance of mental wellbeing and community support.

During the visit, Shirine and the board took a tour of the academy. They also joined the school's 'Time to Talk' coffee meeting, an event designed to bring families together in a safe and welcoming space to encourage open and supportive conversations about mental health.

Shirine Khoury-Haq said: *"Time to Talk Day is so important in opening up conversations around mental health to create safe spaces where we can all talk honestly about our experiences and feelings.*

"With the world around us feeling both volatile and uncertain, I'm proud that our Co-op supports this day and this issue so powerfully.

"Every day I take inspiration from our Co-op Academy schools and my visit to Brierley was no exception. It was a privilege to see our amazing pupils and the support that they receive from staff, parents and carers.

"The parents and carers Time to Talk coffee meeting felt like a uniquely supportive space where a community of people with shared experiences were able to safely discuss the joys, trials and the everyday of being in that caring role. Having safe spaces to talk like this can really help people connect, break down barriers and lessen a sense of loneliness or isolation."

Co-op Academy Brierley's Headteacher, **Sarah Harridge**, said: *"Shirine and the board were really interested in the adaptations we have made on-site to meet the needs of our learners and how we individualise learning to meet children's needs.*

"I shared with the board how complex our children and families' needs are and how the work of our family support and pastoral team is central to addressing issues around mental health and wellbeing for the whole family.

"Dropping into the parent 'Time to Talk' coffee meeting really highlighted the importance of bringing our families together to talk, enabling supportive and sharing conversations."

Time to Talk Day, the UK's biggest conversation about mental health, is supported by Co-op's partnership with Mind, SAMH, and Inspire. The initiative encourages people to talk openly about mental health, support one another, and break down stigma.







Co-op Academy Hillside

Wirral Co-op Academies unite to raise over £1500 for local Mental Health Charity

Teachers and support staff from Co-op Academy Hillside, Co-op Academy Woodslee and Co-op Academy Portland joined forces for a non-stop spinathon on Saturday 8th February. Together, they cycled for 1474 miles - the same distance as cycling to Naples!



The £1500 raised will go to local charity Wirral Mind. The spinathon was billed as a 'ride and rant' - creating a space for positive conversations about mental health.

The event was part of the schools' Time To Talk Day celebrations. Time to Talk Day is the nations' biggest mental health conversation. Staff from the three schools were keen to pool their resources to do something special.

Hillside's Academy Community Pioneer Brady Clayton and the team enlisted the help of Sammie Dalton, Manager at Active Wirral Bidston Sports and Activities Centre, who kindly allowed the use of their facilities. Brady also coordinated the fundraising campaign across the schools.

School pupils had the opportunity to be involved too, with some children from Years 4, 5 and 6 at Hillside contributing the 1474 mile total during the school day on Friday 7 February.

Our three schools often work closely together and are all overseen by Executive Headteacher Katy Bergman, who could be seen instructing her colleagues in spinning routines throughout the day. We are also united by our commitment to making a difference in our communities. This includes innovative practices such as appointing an Academy Community Pioneer in each school.

Academy Community Pioneer, **Brady Clayton**, said: "I am so proud of all the staff who came together to be involved in such a memorable day. We cycled, chatted, and laughed for 6 hours. Wirral Mind is an amazing charity who do some fantastic work and to be able to support them was an honour. I can't wait to get stuck into the next community event."

1 in 4 people are estimated to experience a mental health problem of some kind each year in England. The schools involved are proud to support Wirral Mind and the programmes they have available for when people need them.



Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent

KS3 scholars explore creativity at Manchester Art Gallery

Our KS3 Scholars recently enjoyed an inspiring visit to Manchester Art Gallery, where they had the opportunity to engage with a range of incredible artwork and explore their own creativity.

Students took part in a guided tour, where they discussed and analysed key pieces from the gallery's collection, including Ford Madox Brown's "Work", John William Waterhouse's "Hylas and the Nymphs", and L.S. Lowry's industrial cityscapes. Their intelligent and thought-provoking questions showed real curiosity and enthusiasm for the arts.

A highlight of the visit was a hands-on clay workshop, where students created their own clay figures inspired by the theme of identity. This activity encouraged them to reflect on self-expression and the ways in which art can tell personal stories.

Throughout the day, our scholars were fantastic ambassadors for the academy, showing enthusiasm, respect, and a real passion for learning. The visit truly fired a passion for the arts, and we hope it will inspire many of them to continue exploring creative pathways.

The Scholars' Programme is designed to broaden students' academic and cultural horizons, providing opportunities to engage with high-level concepts, experiences, and environments. This visit was another fantastic example of the enriching activities our scholars take part in.

A huge thank you to Ms Latham for organising such a brilliant and memorable experience!





Co-op Academy Penny Oaks

Year 6 visit the Houses of Parliament

Year 6 visited the Houses of Parliament in London and even squeezed in a trip on the London Eye!

On Monday 3rd February our Year 6 children travelled down to London for a tour of the Houses of Parliament and a trip on the London Eye.

After an early start at Bradford Interchange, we set off to the capital on the direct train to London. The children were very excited - for most of them this was their first time in London. After arriving in London, we took the Tube to Westminster, where we were greeted by our first sight of the newly refurbished Big Ben. We took our trip on the London Eye, from where we could see Central London from up high! We were able to spot Buckingham Palace, the Shard and plenty more iconic buildings.

After lunch in the park, we made our way to the Houses of Parliament for our guided tour. We were very excited to see the House of Commons and House of Lords. We learnt about the parliament post office, parliament "Ping-Pong" and much more. Our tour was followed by a workshop led by the wonderful Kai, and we were then treated to a surprise visit from our very own MP Imran Hussain! Mr Hussain was so interesting, and we loved listening to his tales of being an MP. He inspired us to chase our dreams and to not let anyone tell us that we can't do something we dream of doing.

After our exciting day it was back to Bradford on the train (with a McDonalds for tea!)





Co-op Academy Parkland

Parkland pupils help to launch new book

Year 4 pupils recently took part in a special event to launch a new book! 'Cones and Rural Broadband' is the latest book to feature walking, talking traffic cones. Our children visited the University of Bradford to mark the occasion, alongside children from all over the city!



The book is the latest in a series of Cones adventures. Each story from author Chris Madeley is designed around a fun adventure that also involves navigating the dangers they encounter along the way. 'Cones and Rural Broadband' has been made possible thanks to broadband provider Quickline and hundreds of children across Bradford have received a free copy.

Our Year 4 pupils spent a wonderful day engaging with the ideas in the book, creating story maps, designing their own front covers and presenting to the audience, including the Lord Mayor of Bradford councillor Beverley Mullaney.

Councillor Mullaney said: *"I'm delighted that the latest instalment of this wonderful educational book series has been launched in Bradford. I hope the children enjoy reading this book and the others in the series and finding out about the different industries and the importance of safety by following the adventures of the cone characters in the books."*



Scan the QR code and watch a video about what happened on the day.

We are so proud of our pupils for taking part in this special day and we were delighted that they won a £100 voucher for their hard work!



Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff

Nurturing Blossoms

Nurturing Blossoms is our new lunch time nurture group. The children can spend lunchtime in our polytunnel and sensory garden.



Our new outdoor lunchtime group, "Nurturing Blossoms" have been busy planting flowers and vegetable seeds. They also made watering cans out of milk bottles.

Miss Louisa will be inviting a small group of children to take part in structured activities in our newly built polytunnel and sensory garden.

We can't wait to see what they get up to.



Co-op
Clarice Carr

Lusie

FEBRUARY 2025





Co-op Academies Trust

Maths Olympics 2025

Secondary students from across Co-op Academies Trust put their mathematical skills to the test at the Maths Olympics.

Students from Years 7 and 8 from Co-op Academies Bebington, Failsworth, Grange, Leeds, Manchester, North Manchester, Priesthorpe, Stoke, Swinton and Walkden gathered at 1 Angel Square on Thursday 27th February to go head-to-head in our inter-school maths competition.

In teams of four, students competed in a series of challenging rounds designed to test problem-solving, teamwork and logical thinking. The maths Directors and maths Graduates were also on hand to support throughout the day - even dressing up to break up the tension!

The day began with the Group Task, testing collaboration and mathematical reasoning where students worked together to answer as many questions as possible.

Next came the Shuffle Round, a fast-paced challenge requiring quick calculations.

After lunch, students were pushed to think critically and solve a complex problem with incomplete clues during the Logic Round before finishing off the day with a high-energy Relay Round.

The Results

Round 1 Winner: Co-op Academy Swinton

Round 2 Winner: Co-op Academy Walkden

Round 3 Winner: Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent

Round 4 Winner: Co-op Academy Priesthorpe

After an exciting day of competition, Co-op Academy Walkden emerged as the overall winners with Co-op Academy Swinton securing the runner-up spot.

Organiser and Specialist Executive Maths Teacher, **Natalie Wright**, said: "We had 10 academies in attendance and the buzz in the room was electric. The students were on task and competed with determination in a bid to be crowned the Maths Olympics champions for 2025!"



Scan the QR code to watch a video about what happened on the day.

"The staff really got involved and the maths Graduates alongside the maths Directors worked together to keep the day running smoothly.

"Thanks to all involved; I'm looking forward to 2026!"



Co-op Academies Trust

World Book Day 2025

On 6th March, pupils across Co-op Academies Trust celebrated the magic of reading as part of World Book Day.

From sharing favourite bedtime stories, literary quizzes and dressing up as storybook characters, the annual event helps to foster a love of reading in all of our students which is key to unlocking creativity, imagination and lifelong learning.

Whether it's discovering new worlds, stepping into the shoes of fascinating characters, or gaining knowledge, books have the power to inspire and transform lives.

“Encouraging a love of reading from an early age is vital, as it not only sparks imagination but also helps children develop the skills they need to lead happier and more successful lives.”

Will Goodrum, Regional Community Manager for West Yorkshire

This year, our Community Team worked with World Book Day partners, Rubies and Parentkind, securing hundreds of costumes to enable students to celebrate their favourite literary characters.

The initiative benefited multiple academies, including Co-op Academy Brownhill, Clarice Cliff, Glebe, Oakwood and Smithies Moor.

The Regional Community Manager for Co-op Academy Glebe was successful in receiving a donation of 70 new costumes for pupils. The costumes will also be used for the children to wear for school productions and imaginative play beyond World Book Day.

Staff in the Early Years classes observed children had been more imaginative and expressive in their roleplay as a result of wearing the costumes.

The whole school, staff and pupils were thrilled to receive the donation with Glebe's Academy Community Pioneer, **Helen Maybury**, saying: *“It was so exciting to receive the costumes, the children love wearing them and they look amazing.”*

Will Goodrum, Regional Community Manager, secured similar donations for academies in West Yorkshire. He said: *“Providing so many costumes for pupils as part of World Book Day was fantastic, we're thrilled the children are enjoying them so much.”*

Liz Garrity, Head of Community, said: *“Parentkind has given children the opportunity of dressing up for World Book Day and finding the fun in reading and books. This has been a brilliant example of how the Community team have been able to source support for helping our academies develop learning.”*



Clarice Cliff



Delius



Medlock



Northwood



Swinton



Walkden



Co-op Academy Princeville

Year 6 climb high during residential trip

We were delighted to take our Year 6 pupils on a residential trip for a few days in February.

The final year of primary school is a really important year as pupils undertake SATs in May and prepare for moving to secondary school. For that reason, we think it's really important to ensure that they also have the chance to leave primary school with unforgettable memories from engaging school trips.

We headed to a PGL activity centre where pupils take part in a wide variety of challenging outdoor activities.

Staff who accompanied the children on the trip were really proud to see them pushing themselves and facing their fears on the aerial adventure course. The days were full of smiles and laughter and we hope they will remember these fun-filled days for years to come.





Co-op Academy Bebington

Let Girls Play

In honor of International Women's Week, the PE department hosted **#LetGirlsPlay**, the biggest football session. This exciting initiative aimed to encourage and empower girls to take part in football.



The event saw an overwhelming turnout, with over 80 girls showing up to the final Girls-Only Astro session, a fantastic display of enthusiasm and support for women in sports. The **#LetGirlsPlay** movement is all about breaking down barriers, promoting gender equality, and inspiring young girls to pursue their passions on and off the field.

Throughout the session, participants had the opportunity to practice their football skills, build confidence, and, most importantly, have fun in a supportive and empowering environment.

The success of this event serves as a reminder of the importance of creating inclusive spaces where girls can thrive in sports and other areas traditionally dominated by men. The PE department is proud to be a part of such a significant event and is committed to continuing to support and celebrate girls in sport, not just during International Women's Week, but all year round.

We'd like to extend a massive thank you to all the girls who participated and to the PE staff for their hard work in making this event a huge success. Here's to many more **#LetGirlsPlay** sessions in the future!



Co-op Academies Trust

International Women's Day 2025

International Women's Day, celebrated annually on 8th March, is a global day celebrating the achievements of women.

Across Co-op Academies Trust, incredible women are making a difference every day - leading, inspiring and encouraging action to drive gender equality.

This International Women's Day, we celebrate the achievements, resilience and impact of some of the incredible women across our Trust. Aligned with this year's theme, **#AccelerateAction**, we recognise those who drive change, champion equality and empower future generations across our academies.

We invited colleagues across the Trust to nominate the inspirational women they work with, and the response was overwhelming! From countless nominations, we've highlighted just a few of the remarkable women who go above and beyond in their roles, inspiring both students and colleagues with their dedication, vision and expertise.



Carol Mitsi

Carol Mitsi is an inspiring role model in estates and facilities management, excelling in a traditionally male-dominated field. She embodies Co-op values with dedication, passion and a great sense of humour. Fearless in tackling challenges, Carol's care for others and unwavering commitment make her an inspiration to all.



Zarina Ali

Zarina is a strong leader as headteacher at Co-op Academy Swinton who empowers her team and especially the women around her. She understands the work / life balance that can be difficult for women in education and always seeks ways to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.



Susan Pratt

Support Assistant at Co-op Academy Southfield, Susan Pratt, has dedicated over 20 years to the school. Always putting students first, at nearly 70, she remains a reliable, hardworking, and good natured person. From early starts to after-school clubs, she goes above and beyond. Her commitment and kindness make her truly inspirational.



Rimah Aasim

Rimah Aasim, Executive Headteacher at Co-op Academy Princeville and Oakwood, is a passionate leader dedicated to student success. She fosters inclusive, high-achieving environments and promotes our Ways of Being, empowering students and staff while driving positive change in education.



Ruth Nutton-Jones

Ruth has always been a pillar of strength to colleagues at Co-op Academy Medlock. Caring and compassionate, she is dedicated to bringing the community and the school together. Working in a school, especially as a leader, can be challenging but parents and colleagues look up to her as an inspiration in the school community.



Gemma Rothenburg

Gemma leads on behaviour at Co-op Academy Grange and works tirelessly to improve the culture at the school without imitating dominant leadership behaviours. She is a great role model of strong female leadership for staff, pupils and parents within the community.



Mandy Bawden

Mandy Bawden is a PE teacher at Co-op Academy Walkden and leads the school's Cadet's programme. She is a role model for students, bringing her determination and strength into her teaching role, especially by showing our girls that there are no limits to what they can achieve.



Karine Hendley

Karine is the Regional Director for West Yorkshire and has been an incredible advocate for our academies. She provides incredible expertise and guidance to all, not just those within her region. Karine provides challenge and support to everyone to get the best outcomes for our pupils.



Elizabeth Clewlow

Liz has spent six years passionately championing high-quality education in Stoke-on-Trent. She has led Co-op Academy Florence MacWilliams from inception to reality, empowering students and colleagues alike. A STEM advocate, she inspires girls to pursue their potential, proving that background is no barrier to success. Her dedication and vision are truly transformative.



Ruth Agnew

Ruth has been recognised in The King's New Year's Honours List for her services to education and will receive the prestigious title of Member of the British Empire (MBE). Her work within Co-op Academies Trust has had a transformative effect on our schools and as Chief People and Governance Officer, has played a pivotal role in ensuring that the Trust maintains strong governance and a culture of inclusivity and excellence.



Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff

Year 5 visits the Houses of Parliament

Year 5 had the amazing opportunity to tour Parliament and find out how laws are made.

Our pupils had the incredible opportunity to tour Parliament, stepping inside the House of Commons and House of Lords to learn how laws are made. They then took part in a workshop, debating like real MPs on a range of important topics!

After lunch, we took a scenic walk through St James' Park to Buckingham Palace, where the children were amazed to see the iconic palace. As we made our way back, we even spotted the King's Guards on horseback!

A fantastic day of learning, history, and memories that will last a lifetime!





Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent

Year 10 students explore careers in sport

Year 10 Sport students had a fantastic day gaining insight into the world of sports careers, with visits to Staffordshire University and Stoke City FC.



The day was designed to give them a deeper understanding of career pathways in sport, from sports science to professional coaching and sports management.

At Staffordshire University, students took part in a sports science taster session, experiencing the cutting-edge technology and facilities used to study human performance and athletic development. They also enjoyed a campus tour, getting a real taste of university life and learning about the different courses available in the field of sport.

The second part of the day saw students head to the bet365 Stadium, home of Stoke City FC, for a behind-the-scenes stadium tour. They explored key areas of the club, from the changing rooms to the pitch, before taking part in a careers and pathways talk, where they learnt about the many roles that exist within professional sport.

It was an inspiring day that gave students a real insight into the opportunities available in the sports industry. A huge thank you to Staffordshire University and Stoke City FC for hosting such an engaging experience.



Co-op Academy Parkland

A Bright Start: Parkland's new Early Year space opens

Co-op Academy Parkland's brand new Early Years classrooms welcomed our Reception and Nursery children on Monday 3rd March, marking the culmination of a four-week transformation.



Building work was completed on Friday 28th February. The renovation of a former classroom and two intervention spaces allowed children to step into their new learning environment on Monday morning, a testament to the incredible dedication of our staff who worked tirelessly throughout the weekend.

The new area brings both the nursery and reception children together in the same space to follow the Early Years framework.

The bright modern space includes two large interconnected classrooms, which are divided by a movable partition wall. This flexible space can respond to the needs of the children, being divided for focused activities and opened into one for collaborative play in our many provision areas.

The provision is carefully planned by our experienced practitioners to ensure that it provides opportunities for the children to practise and rehearse new skills that they have learnt and also challenges them to achieve their next steps in learning.

We follow a carefully sequenced curriculum that has clear links to the whole school curriculum, ensuring that our pupils leave the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful as they move through school. Staff use this curriculum to plan enhancements and independent challenges for the children to access, ensuring that they have opportunities to use and apply the new knowledge and skills they have acquired through the teaching of the EYFS curriculum.

Relocating children to the main building fosters a sense of community, easing the transition to Year 1 and providing valuable opportunities for older pupils to support our youngest learners. Our older children can't wait to come and share stories with the Early Years children, or to carry out their responsibilities as Eco Warriors and Wellbeing Ambassadors.

Head of School, **Charlotte Wierzbianski**, expressed her delight, saying: *"I'm immensely grateful for the extraordinary dedication of our staff, who worked tirelessly throughout the weekend to ensure a smooth transition for our children. Their commitment to maximizing every learning moment is truly inspiring."*

"We are also thrilled to partner with the Yorkshire Academy of Creative Arts & Dance (YACAD), who will be utilizing the former nursery building to provide valuable wraparound care, engaging holiday programmes, and community activities. We are proud to work together to offer amazing activities for the local community."

Did you know, children can start at our Nursery the term after they turn 3 years old. If your child has turned three recently, please contact the school office to enquire about places in our nursery.

Whilst the reception application deadline has now passed, please do get in touch if you are still looking for a reception place for September and we will try to help.

"After months of planning, it's wonderful to see the joy this new space brings to our children and their families."

Charlotte Wierzbianski, Head of School



Scan the QR code and watch a video about what happened on the day.





Co-op Academies Trust

Public Speaking Competition at Angel Square

Last week, students from secondary academies across our Trust gathered together for the annual Public Speaking competition.

Now in its third year, the event, organised by trust English Director, Hanna Lilley, saw students stand up and speak confidently in front of one another about issues important to them.

Developing their oracy skills, students passionately talked about a range of topics. From speeches on global conflicts, female empowerment and coin collecting to poems that inspired hope and spoke of kindness.

Each and every impassioned delivery impressed the panel of judges which included Steve Brice, Regional Director for Merseyside and Salford, Keela Walsh from Co-op's Member and Participation team and Headteacher of Co-op Academy Penny Oaks, Michelle Khambhaita.

"It was an absolute pleasure to spend the day in the company of some fantastic young people, who had so much to say. The event was the highlight of my week.

We were treated to original speeches and poems, and were moved and inspired in equal measure.

Every single student should be proud. Choosing our category winners was no easy task."

Steve Brice, Regional Director

"The event was incredible. Students used their voices to discuss all kinds of issues from climate change to autism, mental health to coin collecting.

The speeches and poems educated us about Ukraine and Kurdistan, inspired us to be more like angler fish and made us feel empowered to build better futures for everyone.

Students celebrated each other's success beautifully and there was a real sense of celebration and respect between competitors - backs were slapped for original poetry winning prizes, hands were shaken in congratulations and students shared the joy of each other's passions and interests."

Hanna Lilley, English Director

This year's winner was Annie from Co-op Academy Belle Vue. Annie captivated the audience with the powerful delivery of her speech 'Self-Love starts with 'Self'.

In 2nd place was Year 7 student from Co-op Academy Leeds, Michael with his original poem about hope.

Taking the 3rd place spot was Kaninysola, from Co-op Academy North Manchester, who spoke on the importance of young people in society.





Co-op Academy Grove

Gareth Snell MP Visit

On Friday 28th March 2025, we were visited by local MP Gareth Snell.

Gareth spoke to our School Council to ask their views on what they liked about living in Stoke-on-Trent, and how they felt it could be improved. He also answered questions about being a Member of Parliament.

As always, the children were amazing, and I know Gareth was wowed by their knowledge about democracy and parliament. The children articulated their views very well, and asked and answered lots of sensible questions.

We are so proud of them!!





Co-op Academy Delius

Musica Spectacular performance

We are bursting with pride for all our pupils that took part in Musica Spectacular last night!



A group of pupils from across school gave the audience a glimpse into our weekly ballet lessons, that we do with Martin Howland & Project Resurgence.

They did us proud showing off their beautiful technique, stage presence and confidence! The piece was split into 5 sections - arms, legs, jumps, turns, and moving across the stage - so we could really see what they could do!

Our Signing Choir also took to the stage to perform 'Take me Home' by The Good Citizens, a song well known to Bradford City Fans!

Bradford City AFC kindly donated us 20 shirts to wear on stage, and they really pulled our performance together - thank you!





Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op Academy Priesthorpe students meet the Chancellor of the Exchequer at Downing Street

Two Year 11 students from Co-op Academy Priesthorpe had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit Downing Street and meet Rachel Reeves MP - Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Anoosh and Othniel received the most staff nominations to attend the prestigious meeting, due to their dedication and aspirations. Anoosh, an active member of the Community Council, has ambitions of becoming a barrister, while Othniel, a talented mathematician who volunteers to support other students in the Maths Hub, hopes to become a software engineer.

Their visit included a tour of Westminster, where they watched a live debate on Free School Meals, before making their way to 11 Downing Street for afternoon tea with Rachel Reeves MP.

"I really enjoyed meeting the Chancellor. I consider it as one of the best days of my life. It was such a great opportunity to go inside both No. 10 and No. 11 Downing Street. I know this was a special event that very few people get to experience."

Othniel, Year 11 student

"The day was really exciting and it felt like a dream to be able to meet Rachel Reeves in No. 11 Downing Street. It was an amazing opportunity and one I will remember forever."

Anoosh, Year 11 student

During their meeting, the students impressed the Chancellor with their questions. Othniel asked about investment in the North and NHS funding, while Anoosh discussed breaking barriers as the first female Chancellor.

Anoosh also shared the Youth Manifesto for Leeds, developed as part of the Leeds Learning Alliance Youth Summit, highlighting young people's vision for the city.

After their conversation with Rachel Reeves MP, the students were given an exclusive tour of No.10, visiting the Cabinet meeting room, the state dining room, and the reception room where Sir Keir Starmer recently met President Zelenskyy. Although they didn't see the Prime Minister, they did spot Larry the Downing Street cat!



Co-op Academies Trust

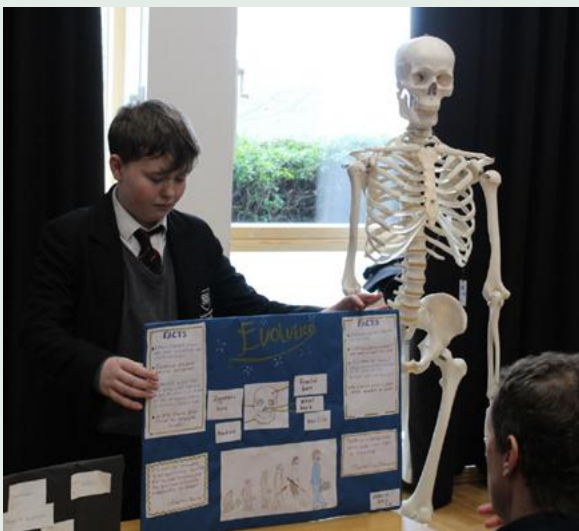
British Science Week

British Science Week was a ten-day celebration of science, technology, engineering and maths, that took place from 7th - 16th March 2025.

This year's theme was 'Change and Adapt' and our academies interpreted the brief through a range of activities and experiments linked to changes in nature, technology, space, and more.

Learners across the Trust also focused on behaviour and the adaptations we could make to create positive changes for the population and planet.

Take a look at how our academies got involved!



STEM Fair at Failsworth

Co-op Academy Failsworth held their annual STEM Fair which was a huge success with more than 40 entries created and entered into the competition. Prizes up for grabs for the budding scientists included tickets to the Science and Industry Museum!



Hands on experiments at Woodlands

Co-op Academy Woodlands invited parents to join their children in class to take part in a range of interesting experiments. From watching how plants absorb water using food dye to testing air resistance with paper planes, everyone had a great time investigating, questioning and experimenting.



Clarice Cliff learn about anatomy

Pupils in Year 6 at Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff had the opportunity to dissect a lamb's heart during their biology lesson. They carefully examined the chambers, valves and arteries, linking their hands-on experience to their studies on the circulatory system.



Parkland team up with Balfour Beatty

Co-op Academy Parkland marked British Science Week in each class with a variety of experiments, investigations and workshops. Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 took part in workshops led by Balfour Beatty, learning all about construction, while nursery pupils were very excited about the results from their shaving foam and food colouring experiments.



Changes and adaptations in the animal world at Portland

Year 3 pupils at Co-op Academy Portland really enjoyed their British Science Week live stream where they learned about animal adaptation and even got to witness a calf being born!



Stoke students inspired at GCSE Science Live!

GCSE Triple Science students from Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent had an incredible opportunity to attend GCSE Science Live in Sheffield, where they heard from five of Britain's leading scientists.





Co-op Academies Trust

Community Iftars bring academies together this Ramadan

During Ramadan, many of our academies hosted special community Iftar events, bringing together families, pupils and staff to share a meal and mark the breaking of the fast.



From shared meals to student-led prayers, each gathering brought a real sense of togetherness, reflecting the spirit of Ramadan and the values we hold across our Trust. And of course, there was plenty of delicious food to enjoy too!

At Co-op Academy Woodlands, their community Iftar began with Quran recitations from pupils Najwa and Algali, followed by a heartfelt call to prayer from Kia. Families shared food, and donations were collected for Islamic Relief. Event organiser Mrs. Akhtar thanked everyone for their generosity and support, while Headteacher Adele Clark said the event showed just how caring and connected the school community is.

Over at Co-op Academy Penny Oaks, parents, pupils and staff gathered to break their fast together, with prayers and reflections shared throughout the evening. Leftover food was kindly donated to local families and a nearby business supporting the homeless, and the school also raised almost £120 for Islamic Relief.

Co-op Academy Princeville welcomed more than 250 guests to their Iftar on 26th March. It was a hugely successful evening with pupils performing readings and nasheeds (Islamic songs), and everyone enjoying a delicious shared meal. The event was supported by donations from local businesses.

Connell Co-op College also hosted its first Iftar earlier in the month. Around 60 students and staff attended, with Year 13 pupils leading prayers, readings from the Quran and speeches about reflection and community. Principal Emma Soper praised the students for taking the lead and making the event so special, saying she hopes it becomes an annual tradition.

At Co-op Academy Belle Vue, more than 400 staff, students and family members came together at what was the largest Iftar event in the Trust this Ramadan. The event was a huge success with lots of families saying how much the event meant to them.



Co-op Academy Walkden

Co-op Academy Walkden brothers dominating the racing and film-making world

The sky is the limit for Zaman and Zain who have both carved themselves a path to success.

Back in Autumn 2024, Year 9 student Zain shared an update with us on his racing career and preparations for his 2025 racing season. You can watch Zain's races live on YouTube and can follow his career on his social media pages [@Zainkwekha](#).

Zain's older brother, Zaman is an ex-student of Co-op Academy Walkden, since leaving the academy Zaman enrolled at Manchester College to join the T-Level Media and Film, from there he was able to apply for a place at the British Film Academy. Out of all the North West applicants, only 20 were chosen and Zaman was offered a place, this is where Zaman and his peers created a short film which was screened at Home Cinema in Manchester earlier this year.

Further to this, Zaman also applied for the British Film Academy residential course at the University of Wales and out of 300 applicants he secured his place, this was a specialist course focusing on visual effects within film making.



Like his brother, Zaman has an Instagram page [@lemonzfilmz](#) where he has started to put a portfolio together of his experiences and achievements in film making. Part of his experience has been the media side of helping his brother get sponsors for this year's racing season. The boys have successfully secured some interest from investors in the Middle East.

Along with Zain and Zaman's family and friends, we are incredibly proud of them both for remaining focused on their desire to succeed in their chosen career paths. It was lovely to hear from their mum that both boys have loved their time at Co-op Academy Walkden and how Zaman's education here has been instrumental in his ability to take the next steps in his post-16 journey and what a success that has been so far.



Scan the QR code to watch a video directed and produced by Zaman



Co-op Academy North Manchester

Robotics Teams shine at Regional Competition and secure three prestigious awards

In an outstanding display of innovation, teamwork, and sportsmanship, the InCTRL and Mecha Minds Robotics Teams achieved remarkable success at the recent FIRST Tech Challenge regional competition.

The teams proudly brought home three prestigious awards, underscoring their dedication to excellence in robotics and community support.

InCTRL were honoured with the Think Award again, in recognition of their exceptional engineering design process and meticulous documentation in their engineering notebook. This award celebrates their ability to effectively plan, iterate, and innovate throughout the competition.

Mecha Minds - a new team for Co-op North Manchester, also received the highly regarded Judges' Award, which is given to a team that the judges feel embodies the spirit of FIRST Tech Challenge in a unique way. This award recognises the team's overall performance, creativity, and commitment to advancing STEM learning.

"We are incredibly proud of our team's performance and the recognition we received," said Mr Slattery, Teacher of ICT. "Winning these awards reflects our hard work, dedication, and the supportive spirit that defines our team. We are excited to continue growing, learning, and competing in future events."



The achievements at this regional competition mark an exciting milestone for InCTRL and Mecha Minds as they continue their journey in robotics. With innovation, perseverance, and teamwork at their core, the future looks bright for this talented group of pupils.



Adding to the excitement, team member Michalina was awarded the Gracious Professionalism Award, a testament to her outstanding support to the other teams in the competition. Her willingness to assist, collaborate, and inspire her fellow competitors exemplified the core values of FIRST, demonstrating that success is not just about winning but also about uplifting others along the way.



Co-op Academy Smithies Moor

Litter Heroes show they 'Love where they live' with local MP

Our Student Council took part in a litter pick as part of the Great British Spring Clean 2025.



The Year 3 and 5 members of our School Council met with Kim Leadbeater MBE, the Member of Parliament for Spenn Valley. They took part in the Great British Spring Clean 2025, a nationwide campaign organised by Keep Britain Tidy.

This campaign encourages people in communities all over the country to work together to pick up litter, ensuring it is collected safely and recycled.

This year we are spreading the word that the environment belongs to everyone!

Since the launch of the Great British Spring Clean campaign, millions of **#LitterHeroes** from communities, faith groups, schools, businesses and local authorities have united to help tackle litter - we all have a role to play.

Many volunteers regularly find 'retro rubbish' that was dropped many years ago but is still causing harm to our environment today, releasing greenhouse gases as it slowly breaks down in our soil and water, which contributes to the climate crisis.

Litter-picking is a simple action that anyone can do to make an immediate and visible difference to the environment where we live, work and play.

In fact 97% of people surveyed after 2024's campaign agreed they felt they had made a difference to their local area, and 86% said they felt part of a national movement that is taking action to tackle litter.



Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent

Culture Day - celebrating our diversity

Culture Day was a vibrant celebration of the many nationalities, backgrounds, and traditions that make up our academy community.

Students and staff proudly displayed their culture, wearing national dress, the colours of their country's flag, cadet uniforms, sports kits, and more—showing the rich diversity within our school.

One of the most powerful activities of the day was 'Mapping Our Diversity,' where students placed stickers on a large banner to represent their heritage. This interactive display will now become a permanent feature in the Academy, serving as a reminder of the many cultures that come together in our school.

Tutor groups took part in a fantastic cultural quiz, testing their knowledge of traditions from around the world, while students explored posters featuring facts about the 60 different countries represented in our Academy.

The highlight of the day was the cultural food and drink tasting, planned and run by our Co-op Young Leaders. Every student was given a token to try something new from one of our five themed stalls—Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, and Oceania. Over 800 students took part, sampling delicious treats such as puff puff, Supermalt, Tim Tams, and chin chin.

Culture Day was a true celebration of community, inclusion, and learning from one another. It was wonderful to see so many students embracing the opportunity to share and experience different cultures, strengthening our Academy's commitment to diversity and togetherness.

"It was amazing to see our students celebrating their cultures with such enthusiasm and pride. The energy and sense of togetherness in the Academy were incredible. Days like this remind us how diverse and welcoming our community is, and I'm so proud of the students for embracing the opportunity to learn from each other."

Ms Williamson, Assistant Headteacher



Scan the QR code and watch a video about what happened on the day.





Co-op Academy Bebington

National Space Academy

Last week in science we had a visit from the National Space Academy who delivered a special session about forces, rockets and surviving in space.

Our lucky Year 7 and 8's reviewed their knowledge on forces before building their own rockets to launch outside. They calculated the height the rockets reached using the time they stayed in the air to find the winner of the best rocket!





Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff

Longton Carnival and Pig Parade

The carnival and Pig Parade took place on Sunday 6th April through Longton town centre.



On Sunday 6th April, 30 children and 8 enthusiastic staff members took part in the annual Pig Parade through Longton Town Centre.

The children, dressed in their colourful, self-made costumes as butterflies, squirrels and parrots, brought the streets to life with a burst of creativity. The staff also joined in the fun, wearing giant squirrel costumes that added to the whimsical atmosphere.

The parade was a lively spectacle, filled with bright colours and lively music, drawing smiles from everyone along the route.

There was also a fun fair, artisan stalls and live performances taking place throughout the day.

It was truly an amazing day, showcasing the joy, energy and talent of the community.

Thank you to Urban Wilderness for inviting us to take part again.

APRIL 2025





Co-op Academies Trust

Term Two sports round-up

The sporting spirit continued into Term Two across Co-op Academies Trust, with even more students taking part and excelling in events that promote teamwork and resilience.



From inter-academy tournaments to behind-the-scenes experiences in professional sport, Term 2 offered something for everyone.

In West Yorkshire, kicking off the start of a new year, more than 45 Year 4 and 5 pupils took part in a high-energy five-a-side football tournament at Co-op Academy Priesthorpe. Co-op Academy Parkland clinched 1st place with Co-op Academy Beckfield coming second and Co-op Academy Princeville taking 3rd place. The event was supported brilliantly by Key Stage 3 Sports Leaders, who continue to play a vital role across our Trust events.

Over in Manchester, 40 girls from Co-op Walkden, Belle Vue, Failsworth, and Swinton came together for the Year 7 and 8 Girls' Football Tournament. It was a fantastic day of sport, made possible by ten student referees who showed great leadership and teamwork.

The Year 7 Sports Hall Athletics event at Co-op Academy Walkden was another highlight. All six Manchester secondaries took part, with 108 students competing and 13 Year 10 Sports Leaders ensuring the event ran smoothly. Medals and Co-op Ways of Being awards made it a day to remember.

In Stoke, Year 10 sport students from Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent explored future career options with visits to Staffordshire University and Stoke City FC. From sports science labs to a behind-the-scenes stadium tour, students gained real-world insight into the world of professional sports.

On the Wirral, Co-op Academy Bebington received an unforgettable visit from the LFC Foundation in March when they brought the European Cup trophy to the academy as they delivered workshops in resilience. Coping strategies were inspired by Liverpool's famous comeback in the 2005 Champions League final.

And finally, huge congratulations to Co-op Academy Belle Vue's girls' football teams. Both reached the regional finals, with the Year 8 and 9s securing silver and the Year 7s being crowned 2024-25 Champions.

It's been another outstanding term for sport at Co-op Academies Trust. Well done to all involved.



APRIL - JULY 2025

Term Three



Co-op Academy Bebington

Iceland Trip

Bebington went on a fantastic Geography educational tour to Iceland over the Easter break.

Students were able to swim in the naturally heated Secret Lagoon, visit glaciers, walk behind waterfalls, visit deserted windswept beaches and experience the vast and awe-inspiring volcanic landscape of Iceland. Reykjavik also provided many cultural highlights, including a visit to the stunning Hallgrímskirkja Cathedral.



Co-op Academy Woodlands

NHS Leeds workshops

Year 3 took part in a workshop with Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust!

The children used a range of equipment that medical professionals use in their jobs to help people with their health. The team were so impressed with the children's engagement and enthusiasm too!





Co-op Academy North Manchester

A Night to Remember: our first-ever cabaret show delights the local community

On Tuesday 29th April, we were thrilled to open our doors to members of the local community for a very special evening, our first-ever Cabaret Show.



Held at the academy, the event was a celebration of live music and community spirit. The audience was treated to an unforgettable night of entertainment, featuring performances from the Academy Big Band, the Co-op Academies Trust Band, and the Co-op Community Stage Band.

Each ensemble brought their unique sound to the stage, showcasing a wide variety of musical styles and demonstrating the incredible talent within our community. From toe-tapping jazz numbers to powerful ensemble pieces, the energy and enthusiasm of the performers lit up the room.

The evening was a huge success, with guests leaving inspired and uplifted. We'd like to thank everyone who attended and supported the event, as well as all the musicians and staff who helped make the night so special.

We're proud to have hosted such a vibrant and inclusive evening of entertainment, and we're already looking forward to the next one

It was a fantastic night. The audience were really receptive and seemed to really enjoy the more relaxed, social atmosphere. All the bands played really well and the students remarked on how the decoration of the room really helped to create the relaxed atmosphere.



Co-op Academies Trust

Trust colleagues run in the London Marathon

Showcasing our Co-op values in action this weekend were colleagues from across the Trust who took part in the London Marathon.



Leo Moore, Head of Religious Education at Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent, ran on behalf of his sister Hannah, who had to pull out due to an injury. Hannah's husband Tal passed away from Pancreatic cancer in December 2023 while Hannah was pregnant with their son. Tragically, Tal passed away before being able to meet his son. They had been married for less than three months and Tal died a month after his diagnosis.

The survival rates for pancreatic cancer are unfortunately very low and by the time that it is diagnosed it is often tragically too late. Leo also lost his best friend Adam to pancreatic cancer.

"It was tough going in the heat but the crowds were amazing and it was a truly humbling and moving experience to be able to remember both Tal and Adam. I am especially grateful to my friends, family and Co-op colleagues for their generosity and support in helping to raise over £5,000 for Pancreatic Cancer UK."

Leo Moore

Helen Richardson, TA and Pastoral Leader for Year 9 at Co-op Academy Bebington was running the London Marathon in support of Asthma + Lung UK in memory of her late father. Unfortunately, Helen suffered an ACL injury early on in her run and was recovered by medics on the course.

"I trained hard for 16 weeks and it took over my life - mentally and physically - so I am absolutely heartbroken to be honest and very frustrated. I crossed the start line on marathon day and my knee went as I crossed it, the pain was excruciating and I couldn't even walk on it.

Medics removed me and I'm now recovering on crutches! On a positive note, I have hit my target and raised £2010 for an amazing charity. I've applied to run again next year."

Helen Richardson





Maths teacher at Co-op Academy Bebington, Roy Caine, ran the marathon in memory of his friend Alan who passed away in 2023. Fundraising for British Liver Trust, the support of the crowd and the memory of his late friend kept him going throughout the gruelling course.

“It was probably the hardest thing I’ve ever physically done because of just how hot it got, and I’m really grateful to all the supporters and volunteers who kept everyone going. It got really tough, especially after about 30km, but knowing I had the support of my friends and family, and that my friend Alan was on my shoulder, got me through.

I’m delighted to have raised money for the British Liver Trust in his name, and I must just take a moment to note just how generous so many of my colleagues have been at Bebington. I did say I wouldn’t do it again, but I did also sign up for the ballot for next year, so who knows!”

Roy Caine

After completing the Manchester 10k, Andy Tobutt, PE teacher at Co-op Academy Walkden, set himself a new target for 2025. Andy decided to tackle the London Marathon, running on behalf of Milly’s Smiles. This charity was chosen by pupils at Walkden as their school charity for 2024/25 for the incredible support they offer families whose lives have been affected by cancer.

“This is a cause so close to our hearts following our spells in hospital with my daughter Darcie over the past two years. We know only too well the importance of a Milly Bag for families when first admitted to hospital so all monies raised this year will go towards providing a Milly Bag to every family admitted to hospital in Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Newcastle and London.

During the marathon I experienced heat exhaustion at mile 21, so had to receive treatment from the medics on course. My condition improved and I was allowed to continue - walking the remaining 5 miles to the finish line.

It meant such a lot to me to be able to complete the marathon and to fundraise for such an amazing charity. Thank you to everyone who has donated so far.”

Andy Tobutt





Co-op Academies Trust

Community support is strengthened through MCKS partnership

Since launching a dedicated Community Team in September 2023, we've been strengthening ties with our local communities to provide meaningful support to those who need it most.



A key partner in this mission has been the MCKS Charitable Foundation UK (MCKS), a non-profit organisation committed to tackling social issues through targeted, research-informed support.

MCKS has ensured 13 of our academies across our regions are now receiving regular donations of food and hygiene products, with more schools on waiting lists. The partnership is not only helping meet immediate needs of our families but also creating long-term, community-driven solutions.

In Stoke-on-Trent, Co-op Academy Glebe, Co-op Academy Stoke and Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff receive MCKS deliveries every two weeks. These include pantry items throughout the term and hygiene products at the end of each term.

In Merseyside, Co-op Academy Portland has benefited from breakfast deliveries for several years, enabling the school to provide consistent and healthy breakfast options for students. Recently, Co-op Academy Hillside was also added to the MCKS waiting list for pantry support.

The impact is equally strong in West Yorkshire, where over half of the academies now receive regular food deliveries, supporting students, their families and the wider community. At Co-op Academy Leeds, a weekly community fridge serves up to 30 families every Friday morning. Donations are also tailored to meet the cultural and dietary needs of each community.

"We've made over 800 high-quality food parcels with MCKS donations. Their support has been incredible and we couldn't have achieved this without them," said a member of the Safeguarding Team at Co-op Academy Woodlands.

"The support from MCKS has been game-changing," said **Liz Garrity**, Head of Co-op Academies Trust Community Team. *"Their generous support has allowed our schools to launch community fridges and social supermarkets and many schools also provide food parcels using surplus donations."*

"MCKS is committed to providing caring compassionate support to people in need and our work with schools across the UK ensures children have access to basic provisions such as food and toiletries to help alleviate any anxieties around poverty."

MCKS Charitable Foundation UK



Co-op Academy Grove

We've launched our free Breakfast Club!

Last week marked an exciting moment for us at Co-op Academy Grove – we officially launched our brand-new free Breakfast Club!



We were thrilled to be selected as one of the first 750 schools across the country chosen to take part in this government pilot. The idea behind the free Breakfast Club scheme is to ensure every child has the chance to start their day with a healthy, nutritious meal.

From the moment we opened the doors, we saw how much of a difference it makes. Whether it's crumpets, fruit, cereal or porridge, our pupils are now arriving at school with full tummies, happy faces and are ready to learn.

Every morning, our school hall is filled with a warm, welcoming atmosphere. It's calm, sociable and full of chatter. It's a lovely way to start the day together.

After breakfast, the children enjoy playing with a range of games and toys, giving them time to relax and have fun with friends before lessons begin. Thanks to the generous support of our local councillor, Adrian Knapper MP, we were able to buy a whole range of new resources which have already made a huge difference.

Headteacher, **Shirley Carrigan**, said: *"I've already noticed how much of a positive impact the Breakfast Club is having. Pupils are arriving on time, settled and in a much better frame of mind to start learning."*

"We know that not every child has access to a nutritious breakfast at home – sometimes it just isn't affordable – so being able to offer this to all our families, for free, is incredibly important to us."

This programme is about more than just food – it's about giving children the best possible start to their day. Research shows a clear link between having a good breakfast and improvements in behaviour, attendance and school performance.

Our goal is to welcome as many children as possible into the Breakfast Club each morning. Whether they come for the food, the company, or the games, what matters is that they start their day feeling ready, focused, and valued.

We're proud to be leading the way in this pilot scheme and proud to see the smiles on our pupils' faces as they tuck into breakfast with their friends. It's already become a special part of our school day, and we can't wait to see how it continues to grow.



Co-op Academy Leeds

NHS Roma Training

Our students led the Roma cultural sensitivity training with NHS workers from 12 GP practices. A watershed moment for the Roma community!

Amalia, our Year 11 Student, talked about her educational journey from Italy, where she was discriminated against, to the UK. She expressed her gratitude to Co-op Academy Leeds for allowing her to flourish, be herself and feel that she belonged. Andy Haigh, the director, thanked Co-op Academy Leeds for being so supportive of the Roma community and for being the most impressive key player for inclusion in the local community. We look forward to developing our partnership to support Roma students!





Co-op Academy Manchester

Year 9 student Sahid's writing success

Sahid is excited to be attending a writer's residential in West Yorkshire following his First Story success.



Last year, Sahid achieved 3rd place in First Story's 100 Word Story competition.

Now, in recognition of his commitment to the programme, Sahid has been invited to attend a summer residential in West Yorkshire.

Sahid says: "Going to the residential will be a very exciting event - a week away from home to do an activity I enjoy!" He is also looking forward to connecting with others who share his passion for writing, and taking part in workshops and tutorials with authors.

"There was a very strong field of applicants so we would like to pass on our congratulations!" First Story.

Sahid heads to West Yorkshire for 5 days in July and we can't wait to hear all about his experience.



Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op Academies Trust Governance Conference 2025

More than 80 Trustees, Community Council Members and Resolutions Team Members from across Co-op Academies Trust came together in Manchester last week for the 2025 Governance Conference.

The event, held at Co-op headquarters, 1 Angel Square, began with a welcome from Russell Gill, Chair of the Trust Board, who reflected on the Trust's vision, mission and values, and how these guide its strategic priorities. Attendees then heard from Dr Chris Tomlinson, CEO of Co-op Academies Trust, who presented key themes emerging from the Trust-wide listening exercise, placing strong emphasis on striving for excellence in both academic outcomes and enrichment opportunities for all pupils.

The keynote speech was delivered by Sam Freedman, Senior Fellow at the Institute for Government, who gave an insightful presentation on the wider strategic landscape facing schools and multi-academy trusts. His address explored how educational institutions can navigate evolving challenges while staying true to their purpose.

After lunch, attendees were able to take part in a range of workshops delivered by senior Trust and Co-op colleagues.

The conference also provided an important opportunity to celebrate and strengthen the vital role of Community Council Members (CCMs). Each academy within the Trust is supported by an Academy Community Council (ACC) made up of dedicated volunteers including parents, staff, community members and representatives from Co-op. These individuals work closely with school leaders to support improvement, monitor the experiences of vulnerable pupils and act as ambassadors within their local communities.

"It was a pleasure to see so many of our Trustees, Community Council Members and Resolutions Team Members in Manchester for our annual conference.

The theme of the conference was 'Striving for Excellence' and focussed on the development of the Trust's new strategic plan.

Delegates were able to attend a range of workshops exploring essential strands of our Trust's identity: the content of our trust dividend, the relationship with our Co-op sponsor, how we ensure we are inclusive, and what 'excellence' means to us over the coming five years.

A huge 'thank you' to all who attended and participated and for continuing to support local governance in driving school improvement."

Sarah Lay, Head of Governance





Co-op Academies Trust

Minister for School Standards officially opens Co-op Academy Brierley in Leeds

On Wednesday 15th May, Co-op Academy Brierley in Leeds was officially opened by Catherine McKinnell MP, Minister for School Standards.

The school building opened its doors to pupils in November 2024, with the Minister officially opening the school in a special ceremony marking a proud milestone in the academy's journey.

In a celebration that brought together key figures from government, education and the co-operative movement, the day recognised Co-op Academies Trust's mission to improve and transform education for all pupils including those with special educational needs and disabilities.

Minister McKinnell was joined by Co-op Academies Trust CEO Dr Chris Tomlinson, Co-op Group CEO Shirine Khoury-Haq and invited dignitaries from Leeds City Council, including the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Abigail Marshall Katung.

Lord Mayor, **Councillor Abigail Marshall Katung**, said: *"It was a pleasure to attend the official opening of Co-op Academy Brierley alongside Catherine McKinnell MP. The academy stands as a beacon of opportunity and aspiration for our young people in the community."*

"It is clear that the values of cooperation, inclusion and ambition are at the heart of the school's ethos. I congratulate everyone involved in bringing this wonderful new facility to life in the Burmantofts & Richmond Hill Ward, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact it will have on pupils, families, and the wider community for years to come."

Co-op Academy Brierley is a specialist school for children aged 5 to 16 with a wide range of identified special educational needs including Complex Communication needs, Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD).

Named after Eliza Brierley, the first female member of the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers and a trailblazer in the co-operative movement, the school honours her legacy through its inclusive values and focus on community-led education.

Headteacher of Co-op Academy Brierley, **Sarah Harridge**, said: *"For many of our students, Co-op Academy Brierley is the first school where they feel truly safe and excited to learn. After often difficult or negative past experiences with education, they are now attending regularly and thriving."*

"We are incredibly proud of the nurturing, ambitious environment we've built and we're honoured to share this special day with Minister Catherine McKinnell and our wider community."

"Co-op Academy Brierley is a shining example of how education can be both inclusive and aspirational. Our goal is to give every young person the opportunity to thrive, and this school is already making that vision a reality for children who need it most."

It was a pleasure to welcome Catherine McKinnell MP to officially open the academy. I'm incredibly proud of the staff team and the incredible work they've done since the school opened."

Dr Chris Tomlinson,
CEO of Co-op Academies Trust

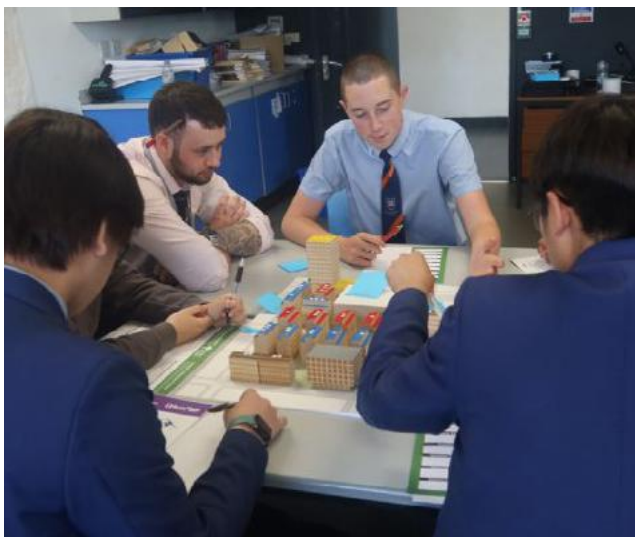




Co-op Academy Swinton

Town planning workshop for Year 10

On Thursday 8th May, Year 10 students were given the fantastic opportunity to take part in an urban planning workshop.



Students were given job roles linked to urban planning and then introduced to three industry professionals. The challenge given to the teams was to design and plan the regeneration of an urban area whilst considering the requirement to provide sustainable features and affordable housing. It was a pleasure to watch students work together with the industry professionals to better understand the challenge and begin to create their designs.

The practical sessions were fast paced and challenged students to demonstrate work related skills such as co-operation, critical thinking and leadership. All 4 groups got the opportunity to pitch their plans to the industry professionals who then asked questions and provided feedback. All 4 groups did amazingly well, with the winning group winning an all expenses, VIP trip to London in July.



Co-op Academy Friarswood

Our KS2 Quad gets a new lease of life!

We're so excited to share the transformation of our KS2 Quad area.

Thanks to the incredible efforts of the Co-op Academies Trust's community team and 25 amazing volunteers from Wincanton, DHL, GXO, Co-op Procurement and Co-op store managers, our outdoor learning space has had a full makeover.

From 8am to 5pm, volunteers worked tirelessly to revamp our outdoor space. They added new wicker fencing, weeded our planting areas, tidied the lawn and spruced-up the stairs, adding solar powered lights and decoration. We're very excited about the new pond area which will allow our pupil's to learn about different species and local wildlife. And we can't wait to get planting in our brand new greenhouse.

Thanks to some very generous donations, we've even given our bins a smiley makeover and have been able to purchase a fun storage bench filled with new games and resources including a giant Jenga, dominoes, picnic mats and litter-picking kits!

Our Eco Warriors, led by Mr Linley Simon and Mrs Bebbington, played a key role in shaping the ideas for the space, and we're so proud to see their vision come to life.

We'd like to give a massive thank you to Matt, who has gone above and beyond collecting, coordinating and working so hard to make this project a reality - even over the bank holiday!

Mrs Garrity, our Head of Community, summed it up perfectly, she said: *"As a team, we're committed to developing learning and community spaces across our academies. We're so proud of what's been achieved here at Friarswood."*





Co-op Academy Oakwood

The Lord Mayor of Leeds visits Co-op Academy Oakwood!

We were very proud and excited to welcome the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Abigail Marshall Katung to our school on Monday 19th May.

The Lord Mayor came to see the amazing things happening at Co-op Academy Oakwood. She was welcomed by our Head of School, Mrs Walsh, and our Executive Headteacher, Mrs Aasim. Our Head Boy and Head Girl also gave her a warm welcome and showed her around.

She visited lots of places in our school, including the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, and Key Stage 2. She also saw our learning shed and our lovely pond. These areas show how much we care about learning outdoors and looking after the environment.

During her visit, the Lord Mayor met with our school councillors and other pupil leaders. They talked about what it's like to be a pupil at Oakwood, how we look after each other and how we help make our school and community better. It was a great chance for our pupils to share their ideas and talk to someone who helps lead our city.

"We were honoured to welcome the Lord Mayor, Abigail Marshall Katung to our school."
said **Mrs Walsh**, Head of School.

"It was a wonderful opportunity to highlight the work our pupils are involved in and they enjoyed talking about their sustainability and environmental responsibilities. We also shared the work we have been doing within the community via our Community Fridge which makes such a difference to people's lives."

"The visit was a special occasion for our pupils to share their aspirations, achievements and celebrate with the Lord Mayor, who inspired our pupils even further."

To finish the visit, we had a special assembly where the Lord Mayor gave a lovely speech to everyone. She told us about her job, how important it is to help others and how we can all be leaders in our own way.





Co-op Academy North Manchester

Manchester United's Hannah Blundell visits North Manchester with FA cup tour to inspire young footballers

On Thursday 15th May, we were honoured to welcome a very special guest to the academy, Manchester United star Hannah Blundell, just days before Manchester United took to the pitch in the Women's FA Cup Final against Chelsea on Sunday 18th May.



The visit formed part of this year's FA Trophy Tour, themed 'Creative Expression On and Off the Pitch.' Hannah brought the FA Cup with her and spent time with our girls' football team, sharing her journey in the game and encouraging the next generation to chase their dreams, in all areas of their lives.

As part of the event, pupils contributed to a powerful ribbon art installation, each writing personal, empowering messages on colourful ribbons. These ribbons, full of support and good luck, were later tied to the goalposts used in the final, a symbolic tribute to individuality, team spirit and the joy of women's football.

While Manchester United fell just short in the final against Chelsea, Hannah's visit left a lasting impact. The day was a true celebration of resilience, inspiration and the power of sport to bring people together.

The experience continued with a fun and high-energy football skills session led by the Manchester United Foundation, giving our pupils the chance to learn new techniques and build confidence on the pitch.

"It was an honour to welcome Hannah Blundell and the FA Cup to our academy. Hannah's story and passion for football deeply inspired our pupils. Even though the result didn't go Manchester United's way, Hannah demonstrated to our pupils that leadership, determination and grace in both victory and defeat are what make a true role model."

Mrs Sloper-Russell, Principal



Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op Academy Portland achieves 'Good in all areas' Ofsted rating

Staff, students and families at Co-op Academy Portland are celebrating after receiving a 'Good' rating across all areas in their latest Ofsted inspection – the school's first in thirteen years.



The report, published following the inspection in April 2025, highlights the remarkable progress made by the Wirral-based school, recognising its inclusive, caring environment where **"pupils are engaged, motivated and committed to their education."**

Inspectors noted that pupils at Portland feel safe, well-supported and proud to belong, acknowledging that they **"live out the school's values"** with pride and maturity.

Inspectors noted the school's focus on improving the curriculum and praised swift and effective actions taken by school and Trust leaders, which have helped pupils to build their knowledge and make meaningful progress. Across all age groups, inspectors reported that pupils benefit from well-structured lessons and increasing opportunities to write widely and develop their vocabulary.

The report also celebrated the school's culture of respect, kindness and responsibility, with pupils proudly taking part in community-focused activities.

Ofsted reported: **"The school places pupils' wider development at the heart of everything that it does. Pupils develop compassion and respect for others. Theatre visits, museum trips, choir and sports opportunities provide pupils with enriching experiences that broaden their cultural understanding."**

"Community safety is promoted through engaging stories and informative workshops. Pupils consistently benefit from this excellent work. They are well-prepared for life in modern Britain."

Parents and carers also praised the school's community hub, which provides a lifeline for so many vulnerable pupils and families.

Reflecting on the school's journey, Head of School, **Shaun Leathers**, said: *"I am incredibly proud to be the Head of School at such a remarkable school. After years of relentless effort and belief from the staff team, it is truly heartening to see our school finally recognised as 'Good' in all areas for the first time in thirteen years.*

"This achievement is a testament to the resilience, passion and dedication of our entire community. I feel so fortunate to work alongside such dynamic and inspiring children and families, and to lead a staff team whose hard work and commitment have never wavered. Their determination to improve and grow has been nothing short of extraordinary, and I'm delighted that we are finally receiving the recognition we deserve. This is a moment of real pride for all of us."

"I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to our entire school community on achieving our first 'Good' Ofsted rating in 13 years.

This proud milestone is a testament to the unwavering commitment, hard work and belief shared by our staff, students, families and wider community. Portland is a truly inspiring place to be, and I feel honoured to lead such a dedicated and passionate team."

Katy Bergman, Executive Headteacher



CEO of Co-op Academies Trust, **Dr Chris Tomlinson**, said of the news: *"This is a proud moment for Co-op Academy Portland and I want to congratulate Katy, Shaun, the entire staff team and the wider school community for this well-deserved outcome.*

"To be judged 'Good' in all areas is a testament to a deep commitment to doing what's right for every child. It reflects the values we hold across our Trust where care, ambition and collaboration drive real change. When the school joined the Trust, it faced major and significant challenges in its environment, culture and educational standards. This outcome shows just how far it has come."



Co-op Academies Trust

Eco Conference 2025

Last week, students from across Co-op Academies Trust came together for two days of environmental action at our annual Eco Conference.

Led by colleagues from Co-op and visiting CIC fairandfunky, pupils from our secondary and primary academies shared their school eco-projects during a two-day conference held at 1 Angel Square, Manchester.

From wellbeing spaces and wildflowers to campaigns tackling litter and improving biodiversity, our pupils proudly presented the ways they're creating positive change.

During the events, pupils presented updates on their progress with their eco projects and learnt more about biodiversity with fairandfunky, a CIC organisation who focusses on sustainability education through interactive and creative initiatives.

Using recycled materials, pupils created bird feeders, insect hotels and even had a go at using a bicycle to power a blender to make their own fruity smoothies.

Hannah Marchant-Collier, Co-op's Social Value & Community Engagement Advisor, said:

"It was fantastic to see our academies come together to tackle climate change. The projects on show were inspiring and a real credit to the students leading them.

"We were especially inspired by the impactful eco-projects our academies are involved in and the positive change they're driving in their communities.

"Children from Eco Clubs presented and shared what their academy had focussed on this past year, from wellbeing gardens, wildflower habitats and the joint efforts to help tackle litter, we heard about lots of brilliant and inspiring initiatives. Well done to everyone who took part."

"We love working with all the students from Co-op Academies Trust, their enthusiasm and care for the planet is infectious and we welcome the opportunity of sharing just how important the actions they take in school are.

Together we took part in a BIG GREEN QUIZ to discover the huge impact of tiny actions. Using waste, students then created a juice carton birdfeeder to enhance their local environments and create discussion around waste and biodiversity.

Our workshops empower the young people with the knowledge that their little steps change the world; and with the birdfeeders they carry the re-think, re-use, re-purpose, re-duce messages into their school and wider communities."

Helen Robinson,
Workshop Leader and
Director of fairandfunky





Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op Academies Trust chosen to pilot new work experience scheme for young people

An ambitious national plan to reinvent work experience for young people is to be tested in 13 Co-op Academies Trust secondary schools.



We're working in partnership with the Careers & Enterprise Company, the national body for careers education, to test a new framework of work experience for every young person. Instead of the traditional two-week block, young people will access high-quality and multiple experiences totalling 10 days throughout secondary education.

Evidence suggests that starting earlier and giving young people more touch points with employers secures better employment outcomes. The new approach also makes it easier for all types of employers to get involved - including SMEs.

The pilot is one of many being rolled out across secondary academies in the Trust, including in Manchester, Liverpool, West Midlands and more. Each is testing a different part of the new approach, before national roll-out.

The government has committed to ensuring that all students are provided with at least two weeks' worth of work experience over the course of their secondary education.

The goal is to ensure work experience builds up over time, and focuses on key workplace skills and emerging sectors, such as life sciences, advanced manufacturing and digital.

Dr Chris Tomlinson, CEO of Co-op Academies Trust, said: *"We're proud to be the first multi-academy trust to pilot this bold new approach to work experience alongside the Careers & Enterprise Company."*

"As a Trust, we aim to provide all students with meaningful and positive experiences. This pilot will allow every student the chance to develop real-world skills, discover their strengths and broaden their horizons. It's a crucial step in helping our students take confident strides toward their futures."

John Yarham, Interim CEO of The Careers & Enterprise Company said: *"We're delighted to be working with Co-op Academies Trust as the first multi-academy trust to join our modern work experience pilot."*

"This new approach gives young people aged 11 to 16 access to multiple, varied experiences - totalling ten days - rather than a single two-week block in the summer term. Our aim is simple: to ensure every young person has the opportunity to build the skills, confidence and insight they need to thrive in the future."



Co-op Academy Broadhurst

Year 4 Shakespeare Project

Year 4 performed *The Tempest* at Home Theatre in Manchester.

On Tuesday 17th June, Year 4 took part in a performance of *The Tempest* at Home Theatre in Manchester. This was part of our annual Shakespeare project with North West Drama. As part of the project, the children devised their own performance, chose lighting and sound and incorporated singing throughout. The children were a credit to the school and their acting abilities were fantastic throughout.





Co-op Academy Brownhill

International Day

Today, the school was filled with colour, music, and celebration as we marked International Day.

Each class explored a different country, learning about its traditions, food, music, and clothing. Thank you to all the families who contributed items and supported the event—it was a fantastic way to celebrate the diversity of our school community.





Co-op Academies Trust

Our Maths Excellence Programme drives maths attainment Trust-wide

Across the Trust, our Co-op Academies take part in the Maths Excellence Programme.

Our Maths Excellence Programme is led by Co-op Academy Trust's Maths Directors, Jay Timotheus and Joanne Chaloner and they are supported by Specialist Executive maths teacher, Natalie Wright. The wider team is also made up of six Graduate Maths Excellence Specialists who work across eight academies with the support of Natalie. In year 2 of the programme, there will be ten Graduate Maths Excellence Specialists working across all secondary academies.

Within our Maths Excellence Programme, our specialists work with cohorts of students who excel in their KS2 SATs with the aim for them to achieve a grade 7 to 9 at GCSE. This, in turn, will encourage more young people to attain and progress in maths, increasing numbers of students staying on the maths pathway to A-Level and beyond, helping to unlock opportunities for students.

The Maths Excellence Programme provides a variety of opportunities for Co-op Academies' students to boost their maths education and grades. These include:

Axiom Maths Clubs and the online platform Sparx Maths

Targeted revision days where all academies attend in one place - Large 'Hit the Mark' events have taken place at 1 Angel Square with all KS4 academies invited and there have also been personalised revision days led at 5 of our academies

MathsFeast and Careers workshop with Connell Co-op College for year 10, Maths4Girls seminars for year 9 and a variety of activities open to academies during Numeracy Week

Careers advice and opportunities to explore maths pathways beyond state education

Weekly online revision sessions for KS4 lead by Jo Chaloner and the Graduate Maths Excellence Specialists

Weekly GCSE exam paper walkthroughs provided by the Maths Directors

Regular one to one and small group booster sessions with one of our Graduate Maths Excellence Specialists

Visits and trips to extend mathematical experiences beyond the curriculum

CPD for all staff and opportunities for collaboration between maths leaders across the trust - KS4 working group (Jay Timotheus), KS3 working group (Jo Chaloner) and ECT support (Natalie Wright)

Thanks to funding received from the Maths Excellence Fund in 2024, we are able to encourage more young people to attain and progress in maths, increasing numbers of students staying on the maths pathway to A-Level.



Scan the QR code and watch a video to discover the impact the programme is having

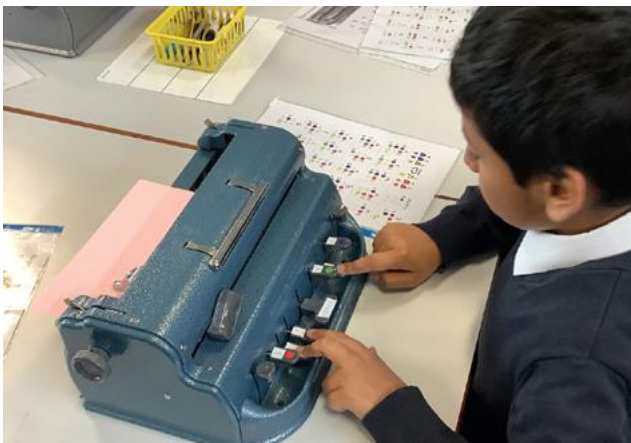


Co-op Academy Nightingale

Braille in Year 6

What an amazing lesson for Year 6 Hawks class!

Before half term, one of our incredible pupils shared her knowledge of Braille with her classmates. The children embraced the challenge, trying out activities blindfolded, using a Braille to write their names, and even spelling out their names in Braille. It was a wonderful opportunity for everyone to understand the power of touch and celebrate different ways of reading and writing!





Co-op Academy Florence MacWilliams

Co-op Academy Florence MacWilliams pupils showcase art at the V&A Wedgwood Collection

Artwork created by our pupils is set to be on display at the V&A Wedgwood Collection, as part of the Clay & Communities project this July.



Working alongside artists from the British Ceramics Biennial (BCB), our students helped create a herd of "Ferdinands" - ceramic bulls inspired by The Story of Ferdinand, a classic children's tale about a peaceful bull who prefers flowers to fighting.

The project invited pupils from across Stoke to explore themes of identity and self-expression through bold, colourful reinterpretations of Ferdinand, originally designed in Queen's Ware by British artist Arnold Machin for Wedgwood.

Our students took part in hands-on workshops with artists from BCB last term, learning about ceramics, storytelling and their local artistic heritage. Their creations will now form part of a rotating display in the gallery, running through to November.

Emily Campbell, Learning and Participation Manager with British Ceramics Biennial, said: *"British Ceramics Biennial were thrilled that Florence MacWilliams took part in our collaboration with the World of Wedgwood, exploring the Munro Leaf story & Arnold Machin artefact of Ferdinand the Bull.*

"The students experienced hands-on clay work through mould making and also had open communication around individuality and peaceful strength, much like Ferdinand himself.

"They responded to the brief with great creativity and thoughtfulness. Many took inspiration from Ferdinand's gentle nature by incorporating symbolic elements such as flowers or other elements that were personal to their own interests and identity.

"Their interpretations showed understanding of the messaging behind the character of Ferdinand as well as the cultural heritage behind the ceramic craft."

The project was delivered through a partnership between BCB and Partners in Creative Learning, with funding from the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, managed by Stoke-on-Trent City Council.

You can see the artwork made by Florence MacWilliams students from July - September.



Co-op Academies Trust

Delius and Southfield shine at City of Culture film premiere

Young filmmakers from two of our special schools in Bradford took centre stage on 17th June, as their original films premiered at the Pictureville Cinema within the National Science and Media Museum.

The event, attended by 120 guests, was the idea of Co-op Academy Delius assistant headteacher, Aimee Helie, and was designed to ensure accessibility and inclusion within Bradford's City of Culture celebrations.

The "Bradford in Film" Project, as part of the "Special Schools City of Culture Programme" saw pupils from special schools Co-op Academy Delius, Co-op Academy Southfield, Beechcliffe, Beckfoot Phoenix and Hazelbeck make and star in their own short films which were shown at the premiere.

Pupils on the Comets Pathway at Co-op Academy Delius learnt all about the story of The Cottingley Fairies and worked together to make props including fairies, before learning a poem by Rose Fyleman to help bring the story to life on film.

Students at Co-op Academy Southfield engaged in learning about Eid ul-Adha which is known as the 'Festival of Sacrifice'. Southfield students participated in a carousel of activities linked to this learning and were given the opportunity to explore and experience the celebration and to make links to other religious celebrations.

As part of the Bradford in Film project, students across KS3, KS4 and KS5 produced a short film clip designed to celebrate the rich history, culture and community our students are from, highlighting their perspective of growing up in Bradford.

Pupils, families and special guests were then invited to the premier to celebrate the culmination of all of the pupils' hard work and creativity.

"The atmosphere was electric," continued Aimee, "and we're so proud of our pupils and everyone's hard work. Two of our fabulous Year 6 students from Co-op Academy Delius hosted the entire event, introducing each school's film and keeping the crowd going - they were absolutely brilliant and the feedback from attendees has been overwhelming."

One parent described it as *"a fabulous evening"* extending thanks to *"all involved for their hard work and a special well done to the fabulous hosts, what a great job they did!"*

"We wanted the pupils in our specialist schools to be as involved in the City of Culture celebrations as possible, in the most appropriate way, which led to a creation of a five-topic curriculum, with "Bradford in Film" being a key focus.

Schools worked on the topic in different ways, but the end goal was to make our own films and premier them in Bradford. The Science and Media Museum loved our idea, and offered to host the event in their Pictureville Cinema."

Aimee Helie, Assistant Headteacher at Co-op Academy Delius



Another parent, whose daughter appeared in a film for her current high school after previously attending Delius, said: "We really enjoyed it! My daughter used to attend Co-op Academy Delius and really enjoyed watching everyone and seeing her friends from other schools on the big screen."

"We are so proud of our link with the Bradford Science and Media Museum," said **Aimee**, "they really do go the extra mile to make sure our pupils get the most exciting opportunities and really help us build aspiration in our pupils and their families!"



Scan the QR code and watch the film created by Delius and Southfield.



Co-op Academy Northwood

Our young explorers enjoy a trip to Cannock Chase!

We recently swapped the classroom for the woodland canopy as we took an exciting school trip to Cannock Chase.

Our pupils enjoyed a day of outdoor learning and hands-on science exploration, looking into habitats and food chains.

Other fun and educational activities included:

Catching mini beasts and learning about their roles in the ecosystem.

Playing interactive games focused on the natural world.

Making our own animal prints to take home.

The weather was kind, with the rain holding off, allowing everyone to make the most of the day outdoors.

We were especially proud of how well the children represented our school, showing curiosity, respect and brilliant behaviour throughout the day.

Headteacher **Mrs Glaister** said: *"A big thank you to everyone who helped make the trip possible.*

Our children were a credit to us, and it was a joy to see them so engaged with the natural world."





Co-op Academy Belle Vue

We are a School of Character - official Quality Mark awarded

We are incredibly proud to share that Co-op Academy Belle Vue has officially been awarded the School of Character Quality Mark by the Association for Character Education.



This prestigious recognition celebrates our unwavering commitment to developing the character of every student, both within and beyond the classroom. The visiting assessors highlighted a number of strengths that we are delighted to share with you:

- A whole-school approach to character education that is deliberate, embedded, and fully embraced by staff and students
- Staff who consistently model our CARE values, creating a culture where character, conduct and behaviour flourish
- A clear commitment to recruiting for character, ensuring all staff align with our values-driven ethos
- A well-sequenced character curriculum where students understand, reflect on, and live out our values
- Strong synergy between character lessons, assemblies, and rewards, reinforcing the importance of good character every day
- Students who confidently articulate how extra-curricular activities and leadership opportunities help them grow in character
- The CARE Diploma, which empowers students to develop their character both in school and at home
- Our commitment to making character education visible and central, with shared language and values displayed throughout the academy

We are especially proud of the comment that Belle Vue has created a values-driven culture where staff are “fully on board” and students are clearly thriving.

A special thank you to Miss Drinkwater for her leadership in developing character education and to all our students, staff and families who contribute to our strong, caring community.

This award is not only a recognition of what we’ve achieved, but a reminder of our mission: to help every student become not just academically successful, but a person of strong character ready to thrive in life.





Co-op Academies Trust

Stoke-on-Trent academies celebrate city's centenary

This June, our Stoke-on-Trent academies took part in a range of activities to mark 100 years since the city was officially granted its status by King George V.

From creative writing, researching historical figures to taking part in the People's Parade and celebrating the humble oatcake, the centenary celebrations included a week of learning, creativity and proudly showcasing the city's rich heritage.

At Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent, students embraced the centenary celebrations through a series of imaginative and community focused events.

Students took part in a Creative Writing Workshop at Keele University, writing powerful 100-word stories about Stoke's past which will now be considered for a special centenary anthology.

Each tutor group also dived into the lives of notable figures from Stoke's history and hosted a Family Meal welcoming loved ones into the school for an evening of free food, quizzes and games.

The academy also played a leading role in the city's People's Parade celebrations, with Co-op Young Leaders heading the Tunstall section. Despite the rain, our students beamed with pride as they carried handmade flowers and a giant replica of the Tunstall Clock.

Pupils and staff from Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff also took part in the People's Parade dressed as sunflowers, forget-me-nots, flower queens and "blooming buds" as part of the Blooming Longton section. The group lit up the route with colourful costumes created by local CIC Urban Wilderness. One excited pupil said: *"This is so exciting, I have never done anything like this before!"*

Assistant Headteacher **Mrs Booth** reflected:

"The children in our school have enjoyed learning about the history of Stoke-on-Trent, significant people from the city and the process that was involved in granting city status. The parade was a wonderful way to round off our celebrations."

Meanwhile, at Co-op Academy Glebe, the centenary coincided with their annual Heritage Week, which took on even greater significance this year. Children explored the story of how Stoke's six towns federated back in 1910 and both KS1 and KS2 pupils took part in heritage walks through Fenton, spotting historical buildings including potbanks and cobble stones.

The school celebrated the city's iconic oatcake through poetry and dialect and enjoyed the Stokie delicacy for lunch. A special Friday assembly also gave every child a chance to showcase their learning and creativity, bringing the week to a perfect close.

"It's such a joy to see our children involved in something so meaningful. They are incredibly fortunate to create these lasting memories."

Sara Eyden, Community Pioneer at Clarice Cliff



Co-op Academies Trust

Young poets take centre stage at the annual Primary Poetry Festival

Primary pupils from across Co-op Academies Trust showcased their creativity and confidence at the annual KS2 Primary Poetry Festival.

Verse Adventures: Unlocking the Magic of Poetry, was held on Friday 20th June and organised by Primary Curriculum Directors, Carys MacRae and Lee Mullen at 1 Angel Square in Manchester.

The event brought together schools from all regions in a celebration of poetry and self-expression.

This year's theme focused on creative engagement with poetry, giving pupils the freedom to interpret poems in their own unique ways whether through rap, group performance, home language delivery or original composition.

More than 50 pupils participated in the festival, performing both well-known classics and original poems in front of an audience of peers, teachers and guests.

Schools had the option to perform individually or in groups of up to four across three main categories:

Traditional performance

Rap/storytelling

Home language delivery

Co-op Academy Parkland were named overall winners with a performance of their original poem *ABCDPLAY*. The poem combined rhyme, rhythm and audience participation which won over the judges and the crowd.

Co-op Academy Beckfield earned second place with a confident solo performance of Roald Dahl's *The Crocodile*, while Co-op Academy Grove took third place for a high-energy rap version of *The Highwayman* by Alfred Noyes.

The event not only celebrated the power of poetry, but also aimed to build pupils' confidence, and creativity, key skills that are part of the Trust's wider commitment to providing a rich and balanced education.



"The Poetry Festival this year was a huge success. To see the excitement and enjoyment on the children's faces as they performed a range of traditional and original poems was just amazing.

The theme around creative engagement was clear in every performance, and the preparation and thought behind them was fantastic. Huge congratulations to Parkland for their brilliant poem 'ABCDPLAY'. It really captured the spirit of the festival."

Lee Mullen, Director for Primary Curriculum



Co-op Academy Medlock

Clean Air Day

We shut Wadeson Road this afternoon for Clean Air Day.

We have also been working hard to try and make Wadeson Road a school street making it safer around Medlock for our community.

Each year group got to come outside for 30 minute sessions and experience what it would be like to have a school street.

We were joined by Manchester City Council who got the students involved with planting seeds along with S4B our local housing office.

The children took part in many activities including games, junk building, planting seeds and writing pledges on how they are going to stop climate change with support from our eco councillors.

M13 Youth Project, a youth programme which has been in the community for 30 years this year also came along to do sports games!

Our Community Manager, Daryl, and our Parent Governor, Aisha, came along to help give out hygiene products to the community donated to us from the hygiene bank.





Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op Academies Trust leader receives MBE

Ruth Agnew, Chief Relationships and Engagement Officer at Co-op Academies Trust, has received her Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) at Buckingham Palace.



Following her recognition in The King's New Year Honours for Services to Education, Ruth, was presented with the honour by HRH the Princess Royal during a special investiture ceremony on 26th June.

"It was a real privilege to be invited to Buckingham Palace to receive my MBE from the Princess Royal" said Ruth.

"I felt very emotional walking up the staircase to music from the Duchess of Edinburgh's string orchestra. It felt very different being there as a guest than when I'd visited as a tourist.

"The palace staff were lovely and worked very hard to put us at ease, and there was time to chat to the other recipients before being presented to receive my award.

"Her Royal Highness asked me about the relationship between the Trust and the Co-op and she was very interested in our work to improve communities through excellent education."

"We are all delighted that Ruth has been awarded an MBE in recognition of her outstanding contribution to education through Governance.

This honour reflects her years of dedicated service, expertise and leadership in governance across a range of educational institutions.

Ruth thoroughly deserves this recognition. We're incredibly proud of her achievements."

Dr Chris Tomlinson,
CEO of Co-op Academies Trust





Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op Academy Rathbone joins our Trust

Co-op Academies Trust has welcomed Ernest Cookson School in Liverpool, into its growing network of schools, further strengthening its presence across Merseyside and the North of England.

The specialist SEMH (Social, Emotional, and Mental Health) school, which supports some of the region's most vulnerable young boys, is now officially known as Co-op Academy Rathbone following successful transfer on Tuesday 1st July.

Named after the notable Liverpool-based family, known for their philanthropy and public service, this transfer marks a significant step in the school's journey to securing a long-term, sustainable future while continuing to serve its local community.

"Joining Co-op Academies Trust marks an exciting new chapter for our school. We're proud to become part of a values-driven Trust that shares our commitment to inclusion, care and high aspirations for every pupil.

This partnership will bring new opportunities and long-term stability, ensuring we continue to provide the best possible support for our students, families and wider community."

Sean Jones,
Head of School at Co-op Academy Rathbone



Dr Chris Tomlinson, CEO of Co-op Academies Trust, said: *"We're incredibly proud to welcome Co-op Academy Rathbone into our Trust. This school plays a vital role in the lives of its pupils and we look forward to supporting its continued development."*

"We believe in clusters of local schools supporting one another and this is a powerful example of that vision, making it a perfect fit with our co-operative values."

Co-op Academy Rathbone has become the 38th academy to join Co-op Academies Trust, a growing Multi Academy Trust sponsored by the Co-op Group. The Trust already supports primary, secondary, special schools and a college across Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire, Staffordshire and Merseyside.



Co-op Academies Trust

Over 500 students inspired by Co-op Academies' Reach Programme

Now in its fifth year, our Reach careers programme continues to make a powerful impact.



More than 500 students from all Co-op Academy secondaries have so far taken part in the programme that ensures students develop vital employability skills.

Through direct partnerships with local businesses, students gain first-hand experience of the workplace, benefit from one-to-one business mentoring and work towards up to five AQA Employability Certificates which have been specifically designed for the Trust and not available anywhere else.

Thanks to the support of businesses including Mitie, NIC, Bunzl, Balfour Beatty, Link, GXO, Buro Happold and Link Contracting, students have enjoyed memorable, real-world insights into different industries and roles.

This year's programme culminated in a celebration event at 1 Angel Square, where students were awarded their certificates and treated to an inspiring talk from Luke Askew of Aim A Little Higher, whose work focuses on bridging the gap between education and business while raising aspirations for all young people.

"The Reach Programme is a brilliant example of what can happen when education and industry work together.

It not only gives our students meaningful insight into the world of work, but also helps them to build confidence, develop key skills and raise their aspirations for the future. It also empowers students to talk about their skills from an informed and practical point of view as the work related tasks are designed to incrementally develop essential skills and the employees explicitly point these out.

I would like to extend my thanks to all the fantastic organisations who worked with our students this year and for their time and effort in helping them develop further."

Jo Sykes, Head of Careers



Co-op Academy Hamilton

Look at our brand new library!

We're thrilled to unveil our brand-new library here at Co-op Academy Hamilton.

Our bright, welcoming new library is designed to spark a lifelong love of reading in all our pupils and we can't wait for them to return after the summer holidays to enjoy this new space.

Thanks to the incredible support from the Trust, we've transformed our vision for a new library space into a reality. This beautiful new environment will now give our pupils the opportunity to explore, imagine and enjoy stories like never before.

When we return in September, we'll also be introducing a brand-new pupil leadership role to help support the library.

We'll be launching Library Ambassador roles, giving pupils the chance to lead the way in making reading a key part of school life. These young leaders will help champion reading across the school and make our library the heart of our learning community.





Co-op Academy Woodslee

Woodslee celebrates musical talent

Woodslee was alive with the sound of music today as our pupils took centre stage for a special celebration of music.



Showcasing the skills they've developed over the year as part of their music curriculum, Year 4 pupils showed off what they'd learned on the violin. From holding the bow correctly to mastering melodies, the pupils gave confident performances reflecting their hard work, progress and a growing love for music.

We also held our much-loved annual Summer Piano Concert. Families were welcomed to join us to enjoy the performances as our budding pianists from across the school took the spotlight and shared the pieces they've been practising.

The concert featured a variety of performances, from beginners to more experienced players, all demonstrating great focus and musicality.

Well done to all our talented young musicians!



Co-op Academies Trust

Another successful year for our Co-op Young Leaders

We've had a truly inspiring year delivering the Co-op Young Leaders programme with academies across the Trust empowering their students to become the change-makers of tomorrow.

From fostering essential life skills to championing community initiatives, our young leaders have truly embraced the co-operative values.

The Co-op Young Leaders programme offers a unique blend of engaging workshops and real-world volunteering experiences. It's designed to ignite confidence and a strong sense of community in every participant. This year, the programme has expanded its reach, with a focus on formalising leadership roles and providing diverse opportunities for students' development.

Here is a glimpse into what our remarkable young leaders have been up to across our academies.



Connell Co-op College

From their initial training in October, Connell's Co-op Young Leaders took part in activities that emphasised public speaking, event planning and team collaboration. They became the face of Connell Co-op College at key events, such as the college's Open Day and Interview Evening sessions. Their enthusiasm and professionalism left a lasting impression on visitors, many of whom cited the welcoming atmosphere created by the leaders as a key factor in considering Connell for their further education.



Co-op Academy Delius

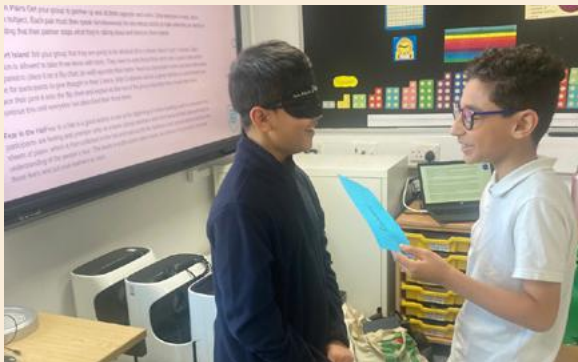
In March, 13 Co-op Young Leaders from Year 5 and Year 6 were trained to take on the important roles of playground leaders. These dedicated students are already making a positive difference during break times, fostering a more inclusive and enjoyable environment for everyone.



Co-op Academy Bebington

Co-op Academy Bebington has made an exciting decision to embed the Co-op Young Leaders programme into the PSHE curriculum for new Year 7 students from next academic year. This will ensure that all students have the opportunity to develop leadership skills from the start of their secondary school journey.

By integrating the programme into PSHE, the academy reinforces its commitment to empowering their students, encouraging them to take on active roles in school life, and preparing them with essential skills for the future.



Co-op Academy Medlock

Co-op Academy Medlock has already successfully trained their first cohort of Co-op Young Leaders, and a second group is set to be trained in July. This means their new Co-op Young Leaders will be fully established and ready to embrace their roles by September of this year, making a significant impact from the very beginning of the new academic year.



Co-op Academy Grove

The school's first cohort is already engaged with 15 school student councils actively involved in assemblies, leading fundraising events and having a real say in changing the school for the better.

Co-op Academy Priesthorpe

Priesthorpe's Young Leaders have particularly excelled as "Young Interpreters," welcoming and supporting new English as an Additional Language (EAL) students and actively engaging in parental engagement and cultural events. A talented group of young interpreters also participated in the "Mother Tongue, Other Tongue" multilingual poetry competition at Manchester Metropolitan University, showcasing their linguistic talents and celebrating cultural diversity.





Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op and Kellogg's serve up an inclusive Sports Day for Co-op Academies Trust

Students from across the Trust come together for a Secondary Sports Day, made possible by a unique partnership between Co-op, Kellogg's and Manchester City in the Community.

The event at Co-op Academy Failsworth was attended by more than 100 students and designed with accessibility and inclusion in mind with students competing in a range of adaptive sports and challenges.

Students enjoyed a wide range of activities including blind football, backward frisbee and the classic three-legged race.

With a focus on teamwork, resilience and fun, the event celebrated inclusion and participation over performance. It was a celebration of community and cooperation, reflecting the values of our Trust.

Year 9 student **Emma** from Co-op Academy Priesthorpe, said: *"It was a really fun day and it was good to work as part of a team with everyone involved. It was nice to be able to see the other students from across the Trust too."*

As well as recognising sporting performance and teamwork, prizes throughout the day were also awarded for resilience and perseverance.

Jo Newsome, Co-op Academies Trust Regional Sports Event Coordinator, said: *"The event was fantastic. It allowed all students involved to be immersed in different and unfamiliar sporting events."*

"This tested their resilience and their ability to support each other in team challenges. It would be brilliant if we could replicate this next year and maybe even meet once a term for even more adaptive sporting events."

The event, facilitated with help from Co-op, was made possible through support from Kellogg's and their partnership with Manchester City in the Community, one of over 70 football club charities Kellogg's supports through its Kellanova social impact work.

Co-op Academies Trust is dedicated to creating enriching, student experiences beyond the classroom that help students build confidence while celebrating cooperation and community.

"Kellogg's were really proud to support the Secondary Sports Day at Co-op Academy Failsworth in partnership with City in the Community."

The students tackled every event with energy and enthusiasm, showing real competitive spirit."

Andrew Ridge, Social Impact and Responsibility Manager at Kellanova



Co-op Academy Woodlands

Year 6 hosts Bank of England Chief Cashier for Banknote Workshop

Excitement filled the air in Year 6 as we had a very special visitor: Victoria Cleland, the Chief Cashier at the Bank of England!

Victoria's visit was part of a fascinating workshop designed to teach our children about the vital role of the Bank of England and to gather their valuable input for the public consultation on new banknote designs.

Our budding economists and artists had been busy preparing. They delved into the intriguing world of banknote design, researching the key criteria that new notes must meet. This included considerations for security features, durability, accessibility for all users, and how the designs reflect British culture and history.

Armed with this knowledge, each child unleashed their creativity, producing their very own imaginative banknote designs, complete with intricate details and thoughtful symbolism.

During the workshop, Ms. Cleland captivated the class with insights into the Bank of England's work. She explained how the Bank works to keep our economy stable, control inflation, and support businesses across the country, ensuring money keeps flowing smoothly.

The children were particularly interested in learning about how the Bank helps to protect our money and maintain public trust in the currency. Ms. Cleland also shared some behind-the-scenes glimpses into the process of creating and issuing banknotes, from initial concept to circulation.

A key part of the session involved the children presenting their banknote designs and discussing the criteria they had considered. Ms. Cleland was incredibly impressed with their innovative ideas and the depth of thought behind each design.

Their feedback and creative contributions will now be fed into the ongoing public consultation, giving our Year 6 students a real voice in the future of our currency.

It was a truly inspiring and educational experience for everyone involved. The children left the session with a much deeper understanding of the Bank of England's work and the complex process behind the money we use every day.

A huge thank you to Victoria Cleland and the Bank of England, for such an engaging and memorable workshop!

"Victoria showed us a picture of the gold bars that The Bank of England have. It was so cool!

I loved the experience, and we got given a pack of shredded old bank notes, even some £50 notes!

I didn't realise what the Bank of England did! I also learned that a £100million note is called a 'Titan!'"

Co-op Academy Woodlands pupils



Scan the QR code to see the ITV news clip



JULY 2025





Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op and Sure host inspiring Euro 2025 football tournament

To celebrate the UEFA Women's Euro 2025 competition, Co-op and Sure teamed up to host an exciting, Trust-wide girls' football tournament.



The 5-a-side event at Co-op Academy Failsworth brought together more than 90 students from nine Co-op Academies, all taking part in a round-robin competition filled with energy and encouragement.

The tournament on 16th July was delivered as part of Sure's Breaking Limits programme, which empowers young people to overcome barriers and build confidence through movement and sport.

As the first Trust-wide girls' football tournament, the event helped promote inclusivity and teamwork whilst creating opportunities for all students to thrive, celebrating the growing impact of women's football.

After a series of close matches, Co-op Academy Parkland emerged as champions, topping the table with impressive performances on the pitch. Every participant received a medal and football, generously provided by Sure, as recognition of their effort and enthusiasm.

Callum Rodney, Customer Account Manager at Unilever, said: *"Partnering with Co-op and Co-op Academies Trust ahead of the 2025 Women's Euros, Sure aimed to create a fun and inclusive environment where students could be inspired by the power of women's football."*

"This pan-Trust tournament, the first of its kind, was about more than sport. It celebrated diversity and encouraged confidence, teamwork and resilience."

"Movement has the power to break down barriers, both personal and social, and Sure has always championed that belief. It was a real privilege to bring the Breaking Limits Programme to life with Co-op Academies Trust this summer."



Co-op Academies Trust

A Cut Above: Talented students deliver killer production of Sweeney Todd

Ten Manchester-based Co-op Academy schools came together this July to deliver an unforgettable production of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*.

Running from 9th - 12th July at Co-op Academy Manchester's theatre, the show thrilled audiences and celebrated the incredible talent and collaboration of students and staff from across the Trust.

Following months of rehearsals and preparation, students from Co-op Academy Belle Vue, Broadhurst, Failsworth, Manchester, Medlock, New Islington, North Manchester, Swinton and Walkden took to the stage for this ambitious retelling of Stephen Sondheim's dark masterpiece.

With support from an 18-piece live orchestra, professional-standard technicians and a team of dedicated staff volunteers, the production was a shining example of the Trust's commitment to collaboration and excellence.

Leading the cast, Michael delivered a powerful and brooding performance as Sweeney Todd, while Amy brought wit and wickedness to the role of Mrs. Lovett. Both captivated the audience with their talent and command of Sondheim's demanding score and were a real joy to watch perform.

The whole cast was equally impressive, with students from across the Trust demonstrating talent and stage presence far beyond their years.

The production was co-directed and produced by Regional Director **Steve Brice**, who praised the students' dedication and professionalism. He said: *"This show is musically complex, emotionally intense and very technically ambitious but our young cast and crew rose to every challenge.*

"I was so impressed by the cast's talent and maturity and can't thank colleagues enough for dedicating their time to supporting our production. It's a phenomenal demonstration of what can happen when we strive for excellence and succeed together."

This year's Trust production of Sweeney Todd was testament to the dedication, creativity and teamwork of students and staff alike. It was, without doubt, a cut above.

"Sweeney Todd is such a challenging show to mount and yet our talented cast, crew, staff and volunteers showed what can be done when we succeed together.

It's incredibly humbling to witness all the time energy and dedication which went into producing this musical.

Full credit should go to the inspiration behind it all, Regional Director, Steve Brice. His dedication to the Arts as a tool for empowering young people is visionary. I could not be more proud of all the team and the support we received from Dr Chris Tomlinson and our Central colleagues. Thank you each and every one of you."

Philip J. Hindle, Director





Co-op Academy Parkland

Parkland celebrates first 'Good' Ofsted in 20 Years

Co-op Academy Parkland is celebrating a historic milestone after being rated 'Good' in all areas by Ofsted for the first time in more than 20 years. The new rating follows an inspection in June where inspectors described the school as a "haven" in the community.

Since joining the Trust in 2018, Parkland has undergone significant transformation with Ofsted now praising the academy for its strong leadership, inclusive ethos and the positive impact of its ambitious curriculum.

Inspectors noted that the school's Co-op values 'Do what matters most, Be yourself always, Show you care and Succeed together' are lived daily by staff and pupils alike.

These values are woven through the curriculum and the wider culture of the school, and were credited as driving both academic improvement and a caring, respectful environment.

Ofsted said: **"The enthusiasm and dedication of the whole school community to make the school the best it can be is palpable."**

Parkland is described as a **"calm, welcoming place"** where relationships are **"warm and respectful."** From the early years, inspectors noted that pupils benefit from an environment rich with learning opportunities with access to a curriculum that is **"thoughtfully designed"** to meet the needs of all pupils.

The school was also commended for its inclusive provision, with the report noting: **"The school identifies and supports the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities very well."** Tailored support and close involvement of parents and effective partnerships with professionals ensure all pupils can learn with confidence.

Ofsted also praised the academy's **"tenacious determination to raise standards"** and found that support for teachers is **"strong and effective"**, helping pupils achieve more.

Headteacher, **Charlotte Wierzbianski**, said: *"We are absolutely delighted that Ofsted has recognised the hard work and dedication that exists across our school community. This is a proud moment and it's all down to the commitment of our staff, the positivity of our pupils and the unwavering support of our families."*

"This report is a reflection of the journey we've been on since joining Co-op Academies Trust in 2018 and the strong values we live by every day. The future is very exciting for Parkland."

Dr Chris Tomlinson, CEO of Co-op Academies Trust, added: *"This inspection marks a powerful moment of recognition for Co-op Academy Parkland after years of hard work and determination from staff, pupils and the wider community."*

"The school's last inspection in 2023 acknowledged that improvements were underway. This latest report confirms that they have now taken hold. This 'Good' in all areas judgement marks a significant and well-deserved turning point for a school that has worked tirelessly to improve outcomes for every pupil."

"Huge congratulations to the leadership team, staff, Academy Community Council, pupils & families for achieving this milestone. Together, they've created a school the community can be truly proud of."



JULY 2025





Co-op Academies Trust

Term Three sports round-up

As the weather warmed up, students from across Co-op Academies Trust laced up their trainers and gave it their all in a brilliant celebration of sport and teamwork.



Co-op Academy Stoke hosted pupils from Years 3 to 6 from Co-op Academy Clarice Cliff, Friarswood and Glebe who took part in a range of sporting activities from track to field. Year 4 and 5 pupils showcased their throwing skills in a cricket ball challenge, with Glebe coming out on top. Later, Year 4s returned for a long jump competition, impressing staff with their leaps with some pupils even jumping to bronze and silver standards for Year 7! This time, Clarice Cliff took first place, with Glebe securing second.

Meanwhile, Year 6s from Clarice Cliff and Friarswood faced off in some fast-paced rounders mini games, with Clarice Cliff clinching the win.

In West Yorkshire, our special schools brought joy and inclusivity to life with their very own Sports Weeks. At Delius, students competed in fun and accessible games all week, proudly representing house teams Fire, Water, Earth and Air. The week ended on a high with a fabulous closing ceremony where parents and siblings joined in the fun and even took part in races. At Southfield, students took part in a special Colour Run, raising funds for Overgate Hospice and showing how movement can make a difference beyond the playground.

At Co-op Academy Priesthorpe, students led the way at a golf partnership day for feeder primary schools, showing their leadership skills. Priesthorpe also hosted 20 Year 5/6 pupils from Parkland for a cricket taster session, while their Year 7 and 8 boys took part in a cricket match with Co-op Academy Grange emerging as the winners.

The term rounded off with two Trust-wide highlights at Co-op Academy Failsworth in Manchester. First, our Secondary Sports Day brought together more than 100 students from across the Trust for an inclusive, accessible event supported by Co-op, Kellogg's and Manchester City in the Community. Then, in celebration of the UEFA Women's Euro 2025, Co-op and Sure teamed up to host our first ever Trust-wide girls' football tournament. More than 90 girls from nine academies took to the pitch in a friendly, fast-paced 5-a-side competition powered by Sure's Breaking Limits programme, which aims to break down barriers to movement and build confidence through sport. Co-op Academy Parkland were crowned champions, with every player receiving a medal and football for their effort and passion.



Success Stories 2025

A message from our CEO

Dear Year 11 and Year 13,

On behalf of the entire Co-op Academies Trust,
I extend a heartfelt congratulations to our 'Class of 2025'.

Your strong results are a reflection of your perseverance and resilience. We, along with your families and friends, applaud the dedication you have shown to reach this milestone. We know that success is a team effort, and I must also express my sincere gratitude to our remarkable staff whose commitment has been instrumental in guiding you on your journey.

As you look towards the future, remember that your time here was about more than just academics. The sports you played, the art you created, the trips you embarked on, these experiences have equipped you with skills and memories that will last a lifetime.

To our departing students, I encourage you to carry our 'Ways of Being' with you in all that you do:

Show you care

Be yourself, always

Succeed together

Do what matters most

These principles will serve as a strong foundation as you step into a world of new opportunities.

Within the following pages, we celebrate a selection of our exceptional student achievements. While we cannot feature everyone, we are incredibly proud of you all.

Congratulations once again on your fantastic achievements.

We wish you every success for the future.

Warmest regards,

Dr Chris Tomlinson

CEO, Co-op Academies Trust

As you look towards the future, remember that your time here was about more than just academics. The sports you played, the art you created, the trips you embarked on, these experiences have equipped you with skills and memories that will last a lifetime.

Dr Chris Tomlinson
CEO, Co-op Academies Trust

Co-op Academy Bebington



Aimee

Aimee is an outstanding young woman who is determined to achieve her goal of joining the NHS and becoming a midwife following study at the University of Chester. She embodies all of our Sixth Form values and has become a strong role model to the lower school, as such, she was appointed to the position of Head Girl following an extensive selection process.

Aimee participates in our Dance Club and performs in our annual dance show, as well as receiving numerous awards in dance competitions outside of school. She has also regularly participated in whole school events such as open mornings and evenings, guiding and speaking to prospective parents. Additionally, Aimee is an ambassador for the Meningitis Trust and she has helped to raise more than £9500 for the charity.

To further her application to university, Aimee completed work experience at Church Drive Primary School, Wirral, helping to set up lessons and assisting students in the transition to high school.

An additional placement at Rock Ferry Children's Centre allowed her to take an active part in breast feeding training courses. She has also accompanied midwives on health visit appointments which has made her more determined to become a midwife and appreciate the rewards such an important vocation can present.

Mr Johns, Director of Sixth Form, said: *"Aimee will make a strong contribution to both her community and wider society. The NHS is in safe hands with young people like Aimee actively contributing."*

Co-op Academy Bebington



Barbara

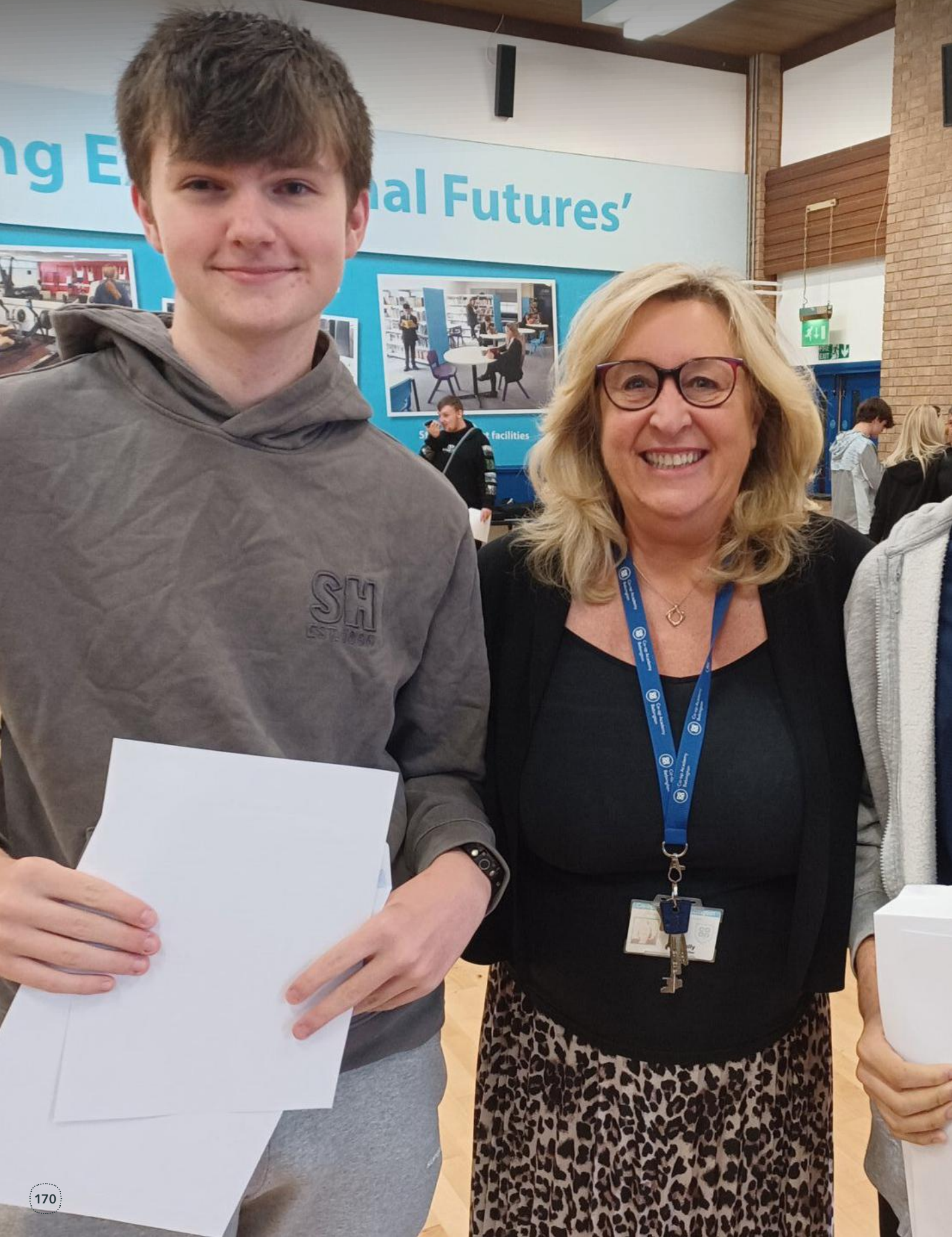
Barbara only began her education at Co-op Academy Bebington in December 2024, having moved from Brazil to live with her sister. Arriving with limited English and naturally shy, she faced the daunting challenge of adjusting to a new culture, language and school environment.

Staff were inspired by her determination and saw her navigate her way around the school making friends and finding her footing. Staff and peers also used Google translate with her on a daily basis to ensure she was receiving the correct information and understanding. Fast forward six months and Barbara has flourished. She has taken Maths, Spanish, Portuguese and Art at GCSE which is an unbelievable achievement having only been at the school a short time.

A very driven and resilient young lady, Barbara has attended extra maths and science lessons to deepen her knowledge. She hopes to continue her education at Co-op Academy Bebington for sixth form, with aspirations of working in the biochemistry industry.

Barbara said: *"I came from Brazil and met very generous people who have supported me at school. Today, I can say that I have more confidence in myself and I believe in my future."*

Mrs Phillips, Head of Year 11, added: *"It is remarkable that Barbara has developed herself very quickly at Co-op Academy Bebington. She has been a committed student and has proved that her future looks very bright."*





Connell Co-op College



Mia

Mia came to Connell from Co-op Academy Failsworth. She is studying the triple BTEC Sport and Exercise Science course and is hoping to get three D*s.

Mia has accepted a place at Manchester Metropolitan University to study BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise Science and needs DDM to get onto the course.

When she graduates, Mia wants to become a PE Teacher - something she's wanted to be since a child. Alongside her course, Mia has participated in volleyball enrichment classes and she currently coaches primary school aged children in a range of different sports. Becoming a teacher is the next natural step and this experience has cemented her love for the profession even more.

On her time at college, **Mia** said: *"The teachers here make us feel so welcome and we have such a good relationship with them. The course is great too, it allows you to have an insight into different career areas in Sport and different units for the future."*

"I would recommend Connell because there are loads of good opportunities and lots of trips to universities to help you make a decision about your future."

Nick Power, Curriculum Lead for Sport, said: *"Mia was always driven by a clear ambition to succeed in the sports industry and consistently aimed for the highest possible grade. Her work ethic never wavered over her two years at college. She embraced every opportunity to grow, volunteering to gain valuable experience in both sports coaching and rehabilitation. Mia then applied these skills in real-world settings, coaching in primary schools, before taking the next step towards university."*

Connell Co-op College



Wahab

Wahab joined Connell from MEA Central and is currently studying A Levels in Maths, Physics, and Chemistry. He's applied to The University of Manchester to study Aerospace Engineering, aiming for an A*, two As, and needing at least two As and a B to secure his place. The course combines aerospace and mechanical engineering with hands-on projects like designing and testing small aircraft. Wahab also plans to pursue a Master's degree and a career in sustainable aviation.

At Connell, Wahab has been a Student Ambassador and an active member of the Student Council, driven by a desire to improve the college experience for everyone.

Wahab's Physics teacher also recommended he join the Flight Crowd engineering project - an educational not-for-profit air mobility community that engages and inspires the public on the future of flight in order to increase employability within the sustainable aviation sector.

Wahab enjoyed this experience to communicate and present, learn about sustainability in helicopter aid and saving lives.

Catherine Radcliffe, Chemistry Subject Lead, said: *"Wahab is one of the most motivated and determined young people I have ever had the opportunity to teach. His unwavering thirst for knowledge is something to be in awe of, and his striving for success will see him go far. Wahab is a kind and wonderful young man who will only ever brighten the day of those he engages with. I wish him all the very best for all the adventures that life has in store for him."*





Co-op Academy Failsworth



Marcelina

During her time at Co-op Academy Failsworth, Marcelina has shown extraordinary resilience in the face of both personal and academic challenges. From the start of her secondary journey in Year 7, Marcelina struggled with her mental health, which was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The uncertainty and disruption caused severe anxiety, making it difficult for her to attend school regularly. Marcelina also faced additional personal challenges that affected her wellbeing and led to extended periods of absence.

In Year 9, her attendance dropped to just 34.4%, making it hard for her to keep up with her studies. However, with extensive support from both the academy and external services, Marcelina has made a remarkable turnaround. By the end of Year 11, her attendance had risen to an impressive 81.8%. Not only has she re-engaged with her education, but she has also shown incredible dedication in preparing for her GCSEs, where she is predicted to achieve excellent results.

Marcelina's determination and commitment to self-improvement have been truly inspiring. Despite her own struggles, she remains polite and positive and will always put others before herself.

"I am extremely proud of Marcelina and how she has turned her attendance around." said **Megan Bardsley**, Head of Year 11. *"She has overcome huge personal and academic barriers with strength and a smile. Her resilience will carry her far."*

Reflecting on her journey, **Marcelina** shared:

"I'm really proud of how far I've come. School helped me improve my attendance and mental health and I've always felt supported. I'm really going to miss it."

Co-op Academy Failsworth



Summer

Summer has been a true asset to both the SEND department and the wider school community. When she joined Co-op Academy Failsworth in Year 7, she was incredibly shy and anxious, especially in the classroom environment. She found it difficult to speak up in lessons, despite her strong work ethic and desire to succeed.

With consistent support from staff, Summer gradually began to build her confidence. Over the years, she has blossomed into an independent and determined student. She now approaches her studies with assurance and is on track to achieve excellent GCSE results.

Maths, once a major source of anxiety for Summer, has become one of her proudest achievements. From needing significant reassurance to confidently sitting the higher-tier GCSE Maths paper, her progress in the subject is a reflection of her growth and resilience.

Alongside her academic journey, Summer has built strong, lasting friendships and formed excellent relationships with staff across the school, including the SEND team, class teachers and pastoral staff. These positive connections have played a vital role in her development.

Now, with a newfound confidence, Summer has applied to study Performing Arts at college, something she never believed possible in Year 7 and a true testament to the confident young woman she has become over the past five years. We will miss Summer but we have no doubt at all she'll go on to achieve amazing things.





Co-op Academy Grange



Ted

Ted has shown outstanding growth and character throughout his time at Co-op Academy Grange. Despite facing personal challenges, Ted has flourished, excelling academically, musically and personally.

A talented multi-instrumentalist who has regularly performed at the school showcases, he has grown to also become a resilient and dedicated student, embodying kindness and humility along the way. He's known for his selfless support of school charity events, always volunteering to help others. With a maturity beyond his years, Ted has remained focused on his goals and consistently demonstrated strong leadership skills alongside his work ethic.

His Maths teacher, **Mr Mahmood**, praised his commitment: *"Ted's proactive approach, including attending interventions, has helped him make great progress."* In English, **Mrs Lilley** highlighted Ted's exceptional progress: *"He wrote countless practice essays, responded to feedback with maturity and moved up three grades in two years. Ted is the epitome of humility and hard work."*

Ted's journey is not just one of academic achievement but of perseverance and personal integrity. Reflecting on his journey, **Ted** said: *"Being part of a Co-op school means you're encouraged to stretch yourself and take on challenges that help you grow. No matter your background or school, you can be anything and everything, so long as you work for it."*

Ted is a great example of what it means to be a Co-op Academies student. His future is undoubtedly bright.

Co-op Academy Grange



Zara

At Co-op Academy Grange, we are proud to celebrate Zara, an exceptional Year 11 student whose journey embodies compassion and determination.

Despite facing significant personal and medical challenges that required time away from school, Zara has remained committed to her education and personal growth.

Teachers across the academy consistently praise Zara's academic drive, empathy and her unwavering work ethic. Her contributions go far beyond the classroom.

In gratitude for the support her family received, Zara organised multiple bake sales, raising hundreds of pounds for the neonatal unit at Sheffield Children's Hospital in an incredible act of selflessness and initiative.

Zara's Psychology teacher, **Ms Mirza**, said: *"Even during difficult times, Zara remained focused and proactive, always eager to learn and succeed."*

Her English teacher, **Mrs Garner**, recalled how Zara attended parents' evening alone when her family had an emergency, asking for feedback to be recorded so she could share it at home which shows a powerful reflection of her independence and motivation.

Reflecting on her journey, **Zara** said: *"Co-op Academy Grange is where I laughed, learned, stumbled and grew. If this school has taught me anything, it's that education is a privilege. Even with setbacks, you have the power to write your future. Be courageous enough to get back up and try again."*

Zara has grown and flourished into a compassionate and capable individual. We wish her every continued success as she leaves us.

Co-op Academy Leeds



Iftinan

Iftinan is a shining example of the values we nurture across Co-op Academies Trust. Beginning her journey at Co-op Academy Woodlands and then thriving at Co-op Academy Leeds, she has consistently shown a deep commitment to personal and academic growth.

Since Nursery, Iftinan stood out at Woodlands for her thoughtfulness and sense of fairness. Her classmates recognised her as a natural leader, electing her to the Pupil Parliament several times. Always principled, she would even remind staff to acknowledge her achievements using the correct RESPECT values. Even during the first COVID-19 lockdown, Iftinan remained dedicated, completing every online task with care and determination.

At Co-op Academy Leeds, Iftinan continues to lead by example. Her passion for learning is matched by her talent across many areas, whether it's physics practicals, badminton or poetry. She is admired not just for her academic excellence but for uplifting others and embracing the diversity and opportunities within the school community.

Miss Barnett, said: *"It's been a privilege to teach Iftinan over the past five years. Tenacious, committed and inspiring, she will achieve anything she sets her mind to."*

As Iftinan now looks ahead to her A Levels, we are proud to celebrate her achievements. She is a true role model and a testament to what can be achieved through hard work and passion.

Co-op Academy Leeds



Thomas

Thomas is an exceptional student whose drive, humility and academic excellence make him a standout member of Co-op Academy Leeds. He has consistently achieved at the highest level, even earning a place on a prestigious residential programme at Oxford University, where he explored his academic passions among the country's brightest young minds.

Whether representing the school in sports or supporting peers, Thomas always leads by example. His kindness and willingness to help others make him a natural role model. In his own words:

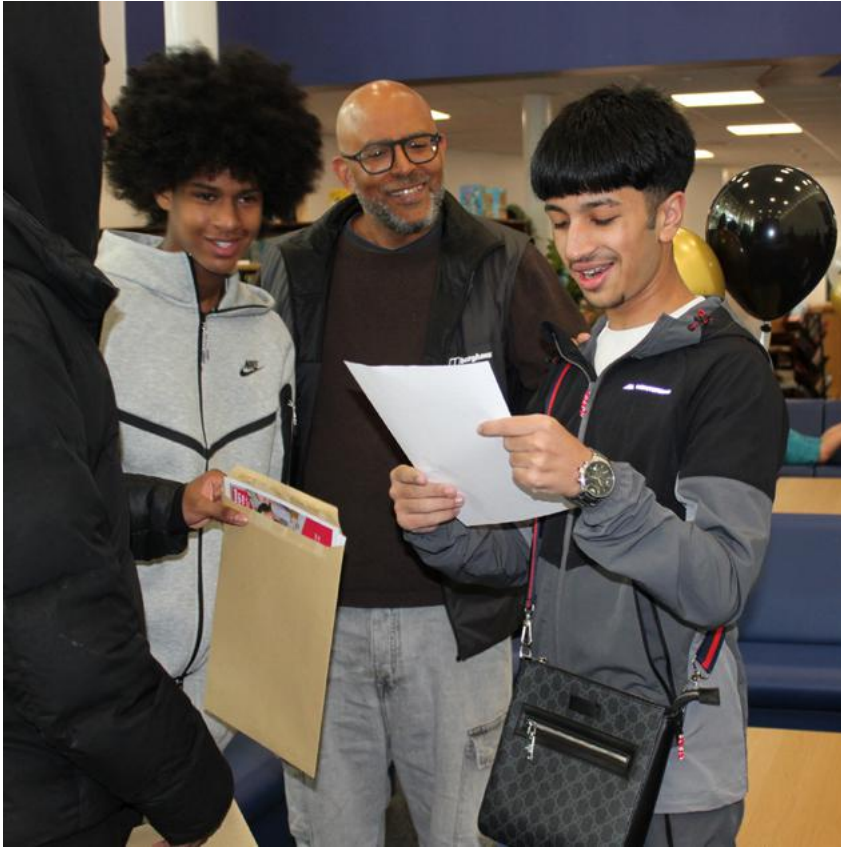
"I realised that surpassing my expectations only took a leap of faith, faith in my growth, the lessons hidden in failure and the strength that came from striving to be different."

What truly defines Thomas' journey at secondary school is his mindset. His sharp, inquisitive mind and ability to examine complex issues from multiple perspectives are frequently praised by teachers.

Whether designing algorithms or exploring global politics, Thomas approaches learning with depth and curiosity.

He credits the academy with giving him the support and inspiration to pursue his ambitions with clarity and confidence.

While Thomas remains open-minded about his future, he is particularly inspired by STEM subjects for their potential to drive real-world change.



ASS OF
2025



Co-op Academy North Manchester



Michael

Since joining Co-op Academy North Manchester in Year 7, Michael has made an outstanding impact both inside and outside the classroom.

A passionate and creative student, he has played a central role in the award-winning Friday Night Band, using his musical talent to bring the school community together. He's also dedicated countless hours to school productions, most recently taking the lead role in the Co-op Academies Trust production of Sweeney Todd.

Michael's contributions extend into STEM, where he has led the Robotics Club to regional success. He has also raised vital funds hosting events to ensure the club continues to grow and inspiring younger pupils to get involved, leaving a lasting legacy.

Michael will go on to study Maths, Further Maths, Physics and Computer Science at Loreto College, with ambitions for a future in STEM where he can continue to innovate and inspire.

Reflecting on his time at the academy, **Michael** said: *"Co-op Academy North Manchester has helped me achieve things I never thought possible. The support during lockdown and the encouragement from teachers and peers have made all the difference."*

Principal, **Tabitha Sloper-Russell**, added: *"Michael's dedication, talent and leadership across music, drama and STEM truly embody the spirit of our academy. We are incredibly proud of him and know he'll continue to achieve great things."*

Co-op Academy North Manchester



Ruby

Ruby has consistently contributed to academy life, since joining us in Year 7. She has held a number of pupil leadership roles throughout her time here, most recently, becoming a Year 11 Prefect, setting a strong example for younger pupils.

A passionate performer, Ruby has a keen interest in the performing arts and has spent countless hours outside of lessons preparing for and starring in our annual school productions.

Ruby has taken on a number of standout roles, including the formidable Mrs Trunchbull in *Matilda* and the vibrant Tamatoa in *Moana*, bringing energy, humour and professionalism to every performance.

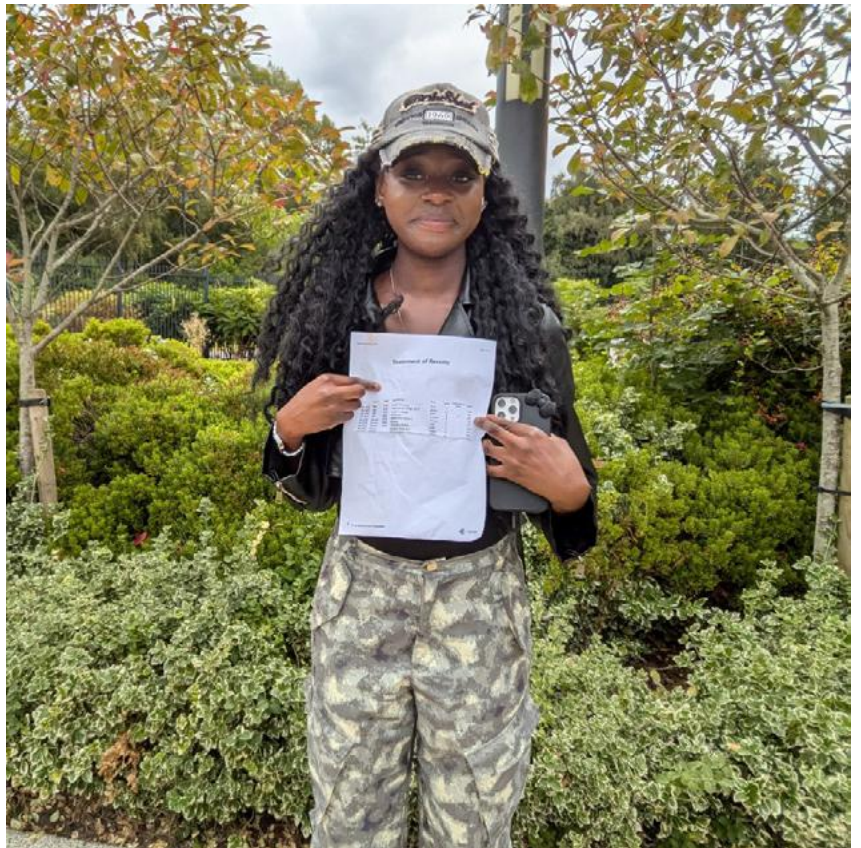
Ruby's commitment, both on and off the stage, reflects her enthusiasm and drive to make a difference. She has embraced every opportunity to be involved, making a lasting impact on the academy.

After leaving Co-op Academy North Manchester, Ruby will be continuing her studies at Oldham College, where she will pursue Health and Social Care, with ambitions to become a midwife, a natural next step for someone with such a caring and community-focused outlook.

Principal, **Tabitha Sloper-Russell**, said: *"Ruby is an outstanding example of a pupil who truly lives our Co-op values. Her dedication to leadership, her phenomenal talent in the performing arts and her unwavering commitment to supporting her peers have enriched our academy in countless ways. We are incredibly proud of her accomplishments and know she will make a profound difference in her future studies and career in midwifery."*

RESULTS DAY 2025, CO-OP ACADEMY MANCHESTER (LEFT)
AND CO-OP ACADEMY NORTH MANCHESTER (RIGHT)





Co-op Academy Priesthorpe



Dua

At Co-op Academy Priesthorpe, our Sixth Form is proud to foster ambition, resilience, and personal growth. One student who has truly embodied these values is Dua, whose journey over the past two years has been nothing short of remarkable.

Since joining in September 2022, Dua fully immersed herself in academy life. Alongside her academic studies, she took part in enrichment activities including Sign Language and Makaton, First Aid training, bake sales and mentoring younger students.

One of her standout achievements was leading her team in the LEAP Business Enterprise project, where they competed against 20 schools across Leeds and won multiple awards for innovation and teamwork. Her natural leadership shone through, and she initially set her sights on a career in Medicine.

However, during a university open day in October 2023, Dua suffered a serious knee dislocation that required hospitalisation and further surgery.

The injury disrupted her studies and caused her to miss crucial university interviews. Despite the pain and setbacks, she showed extraordinary determination, continuing with her A Levels and achieving C grades in summer 2024.

Knowing she could achieve more, Dua made the bold decision to retake Year 13. She returned in September 2024 to study Biology, Religious Studies and the Extended Project Qualification, while privately funding Chemistry tuition due to timetable changes.

Dua is now preparing to study Pharmacy at university, and her journey stands as a powerful example of resilience, courage, and ambition. She is one of the most inspiring students to have passed through our academy, and we are incredibly proud of all she has achieved and all she is yet to accomplish.

Co-op Academy Priesthorpe



Sam

Embodying all four of the Co-op Ways of Being, Sam has been a fantastic ambassador for Co-op Academy Priesthorpe throughout his five years at the academy.

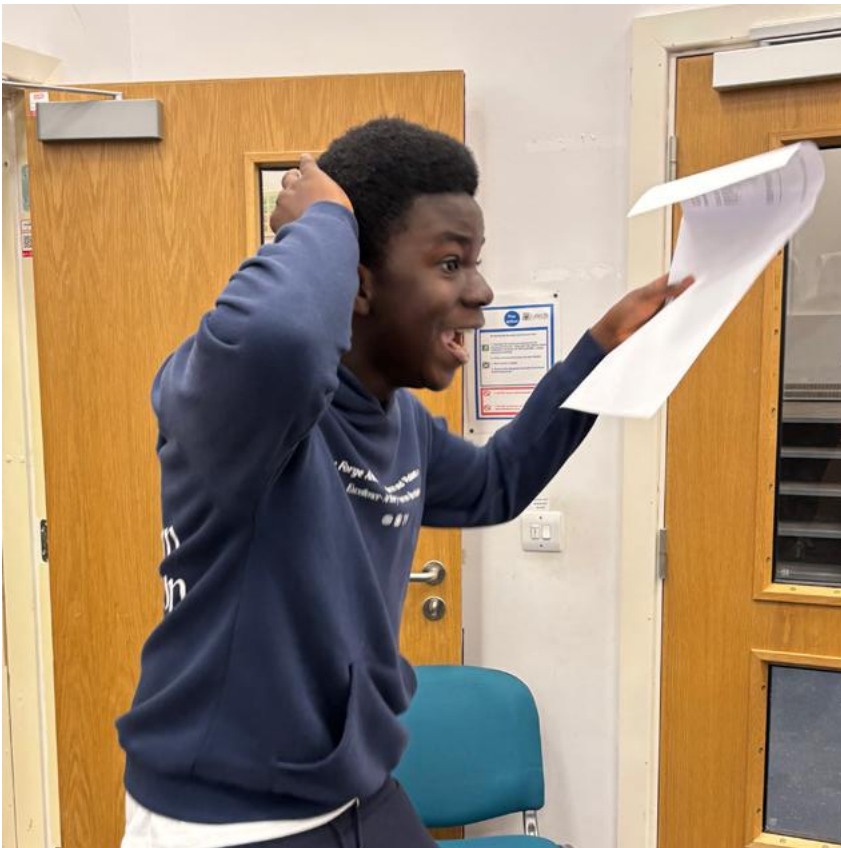
Sam's kind and caring nature, his mature and responsible approach to his studies and his impeccable manners have made him a standout role model not only to his peer group, but to the younger members of our school community as well, especially those who like Sam, have autism.

In addition to his dedicated attitude in the classroom, he has been a star of the stage, most recently as Daddy Warbucks in the school production of Annie. His calm demeanour helped to reassure more nervous participants so they could give their best performances, too. This was all the more pleasing to those who have known Sam since he started at Priesthorpe, as his struggles with confidence in his younger years would have made this a dream rather than the impressive reality that audiences were treated to.

Sam has been not only a diligent student from an academic perspective, but has taken advantage of the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer, ensuring he will be leaving us with a portfolio of qualifications and skills that will set him in good stead for the future.

Sam is planning to head to Leeds College after the summer to study acting. His commitment to personal as well as academic growth will serve him well.

Leeds College are extremely fortunate to be gaining him as a member of their community and we wish him all the best in his future studies.



RESULTS DAY 2025, CO-OP ACADEMY PRIESTHORPE

LEAVERS





Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent



Kevin

Co-op Academy Stoke-on-Trent student Kevin has been offered a place at Eton College as an Orwell Award holder for his Sixth Form studies. The Orwell Award is a Sixth Form scholarship programme that offers fully funded places to talented boys from state schools.

Kevin went through a rigorous application and interview process, competing against students from across the country, to gain a place at the prestigious school which has educated former British Prime Ministers, members of the Royal Family and some of Britain's most famous actors and writers.

He is hoping to study Physics, Computer Science, Maths and Further Maths.

Headteacher, **Shane Richardson**, said: "We know that our students are as talented and capable as the very best. Kevin is the ultimate exemplification of that. It is also one of our core stated aims to make sure that we do everything we can to enhance the life chances of our young people."

"Kevin is an exceptional young man who personifies the very best of us: he's got a ferocious work ethic, a relentless determination to be successful and also incredible humility. I'm delighted that with exceptional teaching and tremendous support, we've been able to do our bit to give a phenomenal young man the opportunity to go to one of the great institutions in our country to study for his A-Levels."

"I'm delighted that we're growing an alumni that will have studied at Eton, Wellington College, Durham School, Pangbourne, Stowe, Dean Close and Woodhouse Grove. It's another cause for optimism in a city that has some of the most exceptional young people."





Co-op Academy Swinton



Chloe is a fantastic example of the values we cherish at Co-op Academy Swinton. As Deputy Head Girl, she's a role model students can really look up to. But Chloe's involvement goes beyond just her studies, making her a well-rounded and accomplished young woman.

Outside of school, Chloe is actively involved in cadets, showing her commitment to discipline and service. This is further supported by her completion of the Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award. She also dedicates her time to supporting other students with their Duke of Edinburgh journey, offering guidance and encouragement. This peer support highlights her leadership skills and her genuine desire to empower others.

Chloe is also deeply connected to the local community. She attends many events, proudly representing the school. Her dedication has provided her with the opportunity to work alongside the ceremonial mayor, contributing to local initiatives and gaining valuable experience in public service.

Whether she's leading her peers, supporting younger students, or collaborating with community leaders, Chloe consistently demonstrates a commitment to excellence and a passion for making a difference. Her journey is an inspiration to our entire school community, and a testament to her dedication and leadership. Chloe has high aspirations and is determined to achieve well in all that she does. We have no doubt she will achieve her goals.

Co-op Academy Swinton



Tejiri

Tejiri is a wonderful example of how hard work and a good attitude can really pay off.

Even though Tejiri only joined our school in April 2024, he's already made a big difference and become a fantastic part of our community.

One of the most impressive things about Tejiri is his commitment to his learning. He goes to every revision session possible, demonstrating his want and dedication to improve and develop his understanding of a subject.

Tejiri has especially excelled in maths, achieving a Grade 9, an incredible achievement only afforded to those who go above and beyond in their learning.

Besides his studies, Tejiri has fit right into our school. His friendly and approachable manner has made him a universally liked character across the school with many students commenting that it feels like he's been with us since Year 7.

Tejiri also shows signs of leadership culminating in his role as a student prefect. He works independently to mentor other students and leads by example earning the respect of his peers as well as the staff at Co-op Academy Swinton.

Tejiri really represents the values we embody in our school. His quick progress and positive attitude make him a real asset to our school, and we can't wait to see what he achieves in the future.

Co-op Academy Walkden



Lujain is one of Co-op Academy Walkden's shining stars who is on track to achieve top grades across all her GCSE subjects. Her academic excellence is the result of natural curiosity and an exceptional work ethic which drives her to succeed in everything she sets her mind to.

Ambitious and self-motivated, Lujain approaches her learning with a maturity beyond her years. In English, she has gone above and beyond, regularly completing additional practice work and actively seeking feedback to improve. Her consistent effort and desire to progress have set her apart as a model of determination and resilience.

In Spanish, Lujain has shown a deep commitment to the subject. She doesn't just absorb information, she takes personal accountability for her learning, engaging fully with the subject matter and ensuring she understands it on a deeper level. This approach and her independent study habits have contributed significantly to her success.

Lujain exemplifies the values celebrated at Walkden. She sets high standards for herself, supports those around her and demonstrates daily what hard work and dedication can achieve. We are incredibly proud of everything she has accomplished so far and are confident she will continue to thrive in the future.

Co-op Academy Walkden



Sophia

Sophia has had an exceptional year in Year 11, excelling both academically and in extracurricular activities. In the classroom her commitment to learning and strong work ethic has made her a standout pupil. Beyond academics, Sophia has also thrived in the cadet program, where her leadership skills and discipline have been key to her success

Sophia has shown remarkable progress, taking on increasingly important responsibilities, earning the respect of peers and instructors alike. Whether through team-building exercises, community service, or personal development, Sophia has embodied the values of the cadet program, making significant contributions while gaining invaluable experience.

Her teacher, **Mr Green**, said: *“Throughout her time in the cadets, Sophia’s commitment and integrity were a pleasure to witness, she is the very definition of leading by example. The courage she demonstrated led to her being recommended to apply to be part of a cadets trip to Canada.*

“The selection process was rigorous but Sophia passed with flying colours and represented CCF Walkden and Greater Manchester on this amazing experience. She then returned to share her experiences with a fantastic presentation to the entire contingent.

“Sophia will be a real loss to Walkden CCF when she leaves but I know she will take the skills she has learned with her to achieve success in whatever field she chooses.”

Sophia has proven to be a resilient, inspirational student who always goes the extra mile in her lessons and beyond the classroom. This dedication is reflected in her academic achievements and her ability to lead and inspire others. We have no doubts she will continue to excel in her future endeavours.

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Academies Trust