

Issue 23 Spring 2026

# DesignEd

A Central Region Schools Trust Publication





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# Meet the Team...

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### Matthew Purslow

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### Angela Crawley

Trust Lead for Primary Co-Design & Oracy

### Claire Round

Trust Director of SEND

### Carol Newman

Trust Lead for EYFS & Phonics

### Teresa Wilson

Trust Lead for ITE & Early Careers (Teach Central)

### Dean Salisbury

Trust Lead for Writing & Primary School Improvement Lead

### Danielle Duignan & Angela Crawley

Trust Leads for Reading

### Scott Crane

Trust Lead for Safeguarding

### Niall Brennan

Trust Lead for Digital Learning Network & Trust Attendance

### Maryellen Homer & Francesca Stanley

Trust Leads for PSHE/RSE

### Francesca Stanley & Daniel Wright

Trust Leads for Professional Development

### Michelle Martin

Trust Lead for Creative Arts

### Danielle Hale

Trust Lead for Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs)

### Ellie Meredith

Trust Lead for Enrichment

### Hayley Farnell

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### Gemma Loveridge

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Secondary: Jenny Lewis & Hattie Hayhurst

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Secondary: Nick Whitehouse

### Geography

Primary: Catherine Chivers  
Secondary: Hannah Weynberg

### Modern Foreign Languages

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Primary: Dean Salisbury  
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Primary: Sarah Barrett  
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Secondary Food Technology: Dawn Salter

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Secondary Performing Arts: Chloe Burke

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Claire Round

### Safeguarding

Scott Crane

## CENTRAL TEAM LEADERS

### Ashley Burbridge

IT Services Lead

### Rita Patel

Head of Governance

### Bryan Tait

Estates Strategic Lead

### Joanne Clark

People Operations Administrator

*a note from our*

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Welcome to the Spring 2026 edition of DesignEd, our trust-wide magazine that is now in its 8th year of publication.

This edition offers a timely opportunity to reflect on what has been another full and purposeful term across our Trust. The pages that follow capture not only the breadth of activity taking place in our schools and at the centre, but also the shared commitment, care and professionalism that underpin everything we do. Together, these continue to make a genuine difference to the lives of our children and young people, and to the communities we serve.

This term has been marked by both growth and connection. It has been a pleasure to formally welcome Matchborough First School Academy into the Trust, further strengthening our community in Redditch. Alongside this, events such as the Early Career Teachers and Achievement Assistant conferences, our Reading Conference, and the wide range of professional development opportunities reflect our ongoing commitment to developing our people at every stage of their career.

You will also see throughout this edition examples of the rich and varied experiences we provide for our young people – from World Book Day and Commonwealth Day, to subject-specific learning such as Ancient Greece at Church Hill, and wider opportunities including sport, sustainability and careers-related learning. These moments matter. They help to build belonging, curiosity and aspiration, ensuring that our young people are not only successful in their learning, but confident in the world beyond the classroom. There is also much to celebrate in the way our Trust continues to look outward. The launch of RSA8 2026, contributions to national work such as the Royal Society Science Book Judging Panel, and our role in wider system leadership all speak to the strength of our collective expertise and the difference we are able to make beyond our own schools.

As ever, this publication is a reflection of our people. I would like to thank all colleagues who have contributed to this edition and, more importantly, to the daily work it represents.

I would also like to take a moment to highlight the work of one individual, giving a personal perspective in addition to the article on page 29 about this amazing man – Bryan Tait, whose long-standing contribution to our Trust is rightly acknowledged in this issue as he moves into retirement.

Bryan has had a positive impact on tens of thousands of young people, and on countless colleagues. I first met him in 2010 when I began my second headship at what was then Arrow Vale Community High School, where he was Business Manager. Alongside colleagues including Ian Mellor and Mat Rash, we worked first to improve Arrow Vale and then to establish the Trust in September 2012. One of Bryan's early successes was overseeing a major environmental improvement grant at Arrow Vale, showing just how far £150,000 could be stretched. The impact was transformational and even featured on live Midlands Today! Since then, Bryan has led estates across the Trust, shaping the environments in which learning happens every day.

I often joke that Bryan can usually be found in a hi-vis jacket on a car park somewhere – not technically his job. While true, this is also deeply unfair. His strategic contribution has been phenomenal: from condition strategies and capital planning to compliance, rebuilding programmes and major projects. His leadership is humble and largely unseen, quietly enabling our mission through places, people and processes, and making a monumental difference to young lives across the West Midlands. If you are looking for Bryan, you might just as easily find him on a corridor hanging a picture. That is the joy of him: a rare combination of strategic expert and sleeves-rolled-up practitioner, truly “down with the kids”, doing whatever it takes. An extraordinary blend of strategy and operation.

To mark his retirement, Trustees presented Bryan with a whisky decanter (he does enjoy a drop) engraved with the words ‘Mind the flagstones’. Bryan understands the in-joke. It reflects his belief that attention to the smallest details enables the whole to be at its best – a lesson to us all. We will miss you, Bryan (although I am hoping you might still feature in the legendary fire training videos – retirement does not extend to that part of the role!).

Thank you, Bryan, for 21 years of service at Arrow Vale and across the Trust. And thank you to every colleague across CRST who aspires to leave such a positive legacy, as together we continue to drive forward our mission of social justice through exceptional schools.

*Amy Shears*

Chief Executive Officer



Hand holding a black pen, positioned over the map.

Hand holding a pencil, pointing to a specific location on the map.

Desc  
the Journey of African  
frants to Europe

Resident Migration  
Handwritten notes and diagrams on a piece of paper.

# A Warm Welcome to Matchborough First School Academy



The Central Region Schools Trust (CRST) family is absolutely buzzing with excitement as we extend our warmest welcome to Matchborough First School! Nestled within the Redditch pyramid, Matchborough's integration into our Trust marks a significant and incredibly exciting milestone: we can now proudly offer a strengthened 'all-through' learning experience, guiding children seamlessly from Nursery right through to Sixth Form within the local community.

This is truly fantastic news, embodying our commitment to social justice through exceptional education. With Matchborough joining us, we're strengthening our ability to provide every single child in the community with a consistent, high-quality, and richly layered educational journey. We're excited to embed our knowledge-rich curriculum and KASE framework (Knowledge, Attributes, Skills, and Experiences) from the very earliest years, fostering critical thinking, oracy, and metacognition right from the start.

## *Building Our Redditch Learning Journey!*

To kick off this exciting new chapter, pupils from Matchborough First School recently enjoyed a wonderful day of collaboration, joining forces with students from Ipsley Middle School! Together, they embarked on a fantastic creative project, constructing a magnificent 8ft square collage. This truly embodied the spirit of our developing all-through learning journey, allowing younger and older pupils to build connections, share ideas, and work side-by-side. It was a brilliant example of creativity and community in action, fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose across our Redditch schools, and providing those rich experiences we champion through our KASE framework.





Matchborough First School will now benefit from, and contribute to, our collaborative approach to pedagogy, driven by excellence and creativity. Their pupils will enjoy our Enrichment Guarantee, opening doors to diverse experiences that spark curiosity and broaden horizons. Meanwhile, Matchborough's dedicated staff will become an integral part of Teach Central, our renowned ITT and CPD provision. They'll have access to programmes like Research Disciplined Inquiry (RDI) and the upcoming Reflective Teacher Programme, ensuring career-long professional growth and a culture of continuous improvement – truly upholding our value of integrity in practice.

This expansion reinforces our core values of respect, building an even stronger community across our schools, and ensuring every child feels seen, supported, and challenged to achieve their very best. We look forward to a vibrant future with Matchborough First School, shaping future generations of confident, resilient, and insightful learners. Welcome aboard!

Thank you to Noah from Ipsley for the photography.

**ANGELA CRAWLEY**  
TRUST EXECUTIVE PRIMARY PRINCIPAL



W E L C O M E





**MATCHBOROUGH  
FIRST SCHOOL ACADEMY**

# ECT Conference: Building Confidence, Collaboration and Classroom Practice

The recent Early Career Teacher (ECT) Conference was met with overwhelmingly positive feedback, highlighting its strong impact on professional development, wellbeing and classroom practice across the Trust.

A key strength of the conference was the opportunity for ECTs to network and collaborate with colleagues. Participants valued the chance to share experiences, discuss challenges, and explore practical strategies together. These conversations not only fostered a sense of community but also supported the development of shared approaches to teaching and learning.

The SEND-focused sessions were consistently praised for their clarity and relevance. ECTs reported a deeper understanding of different needs, alongside practical tools and adaptive teaching strategies that can be applied directly in the classroom. The emphasis on inclusive practice reinforced a shared commitment to ensuring that every child matters.

Wellbeing was another central theme, with sessions offering important reminders around setting boundaries, managing workload and prioritising effectively. ECTs appreciated the recognition of workload pressures and felt better equipped to balance their professional responsibilities while maintaining their own wellbeing.

In addition, sessions on questioning, adaptive teaching and workload management were highlighted as particularly practical and impactful. ECTs left with strategies they could immediately implement, enhancing both their confidence and effectiveness in the classroom.

The overall structure and delivery of the conference were also highly regarded. Sessions were described as clear, well-organised and aligned with expectations, providing a supportive environment that encouraged open discussion and reflection.

As a result, the conference has had a clear and positive impact, strengthening professional networks, improving confidence in SEND and inclusive practice, supporting staff wellbeing, and enhancing classroom teaching. Most importantly, it has helped ECTs feel more confident, connected and supported as they continue to develop in their roles.

**TERESA WILSON**

TRUST LEAD FOR EARLY CAREERS





# WASELEY HILLS: THE FUTURE OF LEARNING TAKES SHAPE

Through the Department for Education's School Rebuilding Programme, Waseley Hills High School is being rebuilt. The project will replace the entire school with a modern, highly sustainable 8,493m<sup>2</sup> campus designed for more than 1,000 pupils.

Visitors to the school will have seen swift progress, with construction taking shape around the daily life of the school community. Phase One opened in September 2025 and its impact is already evident: brighter, well-ventilated spaces that are safe, suitable and sustainable have created a calmer, more focused learning environment.

The redevelopment includes a dedicated SEND department, specialist Science labs, Design & Technology rooms, Art studios, a Drama space, and enhanced dining and social areas. The wider campus is also being upgraded with high quality sports facilities, including a sports hall, gymnasium and fitness suite, activity studio and a full size MUGA.

Sustainability sits at the heart of the project. Phase One already operates as a net zero carbon building, supported by extensive solar PV, natural ventilation and high-performance materials. Once Phase Two completes in January 2027, Waseley Hills will become a fully Net Zero Carbon school, reducing long-term running costs while supporting the Trust's environmental goals.

Work on Phase Two continues at pace. Demolition of the former school buildings has now taken place, and the newly erected steel frame shows the outline of the new teaching block. Waseley Hills moves closer each month to becoming a fully modern, sustainable and inspiring place to learn – a school built for its community and built for the future.



Completed Phase 1



Phase 2 Steel Frame



Stephen Morgan MP

## IAN MELLOR

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



**Waseley Hills**  
High School



# INSPIRING A LITERATURE-RICH FUTURE

On 12th March, Reading Leads from across the Trust came together at Assay Studios for a dedicated Reading Conference, joined by education expert and author, Mary Myatt.

The session offered a valuable opportunity to reflect on the power of a literature-rich, story-filled curriculum and the profound difference it can make to pupils' lives. Through a blend of insight, discussion, and shared expertise, colleagues explored how high-quality texts and carefully crafted narratives can deepen understanding, broaden horizons, and foster a lifelong love of reading.

There was a strong sense of collective purpose throughout the day. Reading Leads engaged in thoughtful professional dialogue, considering how best to embed rich literary experiences across their schools and ensure that every child, regardless of background, has access to exceptional education.

The conference was both affirming and inspiring – highlighting the strength of collaboration across the Trust and reinforcing a shared commitment to placing reading at the heart of learning.

**SAM MCMONAGLE**

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT



# World Book Day

## DAY



Even Royalty enjoys doing schoolwork at Matchborough



World Book Day at Abbexwood



WBD Assembly at Oak Hill



Abbexwood's very own Shrek and Princess Fiona making a special appearance



Year 4 Pyjama Day at Sutton Park



Oldbury Park pupils' costumes



Church Hill Best Dressed



Sutton Park pupils reading their favourites



Church Hill Character Crew



Year 6 Pupils at Sutton Park reading in the sunshine



Year 4 at Church Hill - 'Cosy, calm and completely absorbed in a good book.'



Multiple sightings of Wally and Wenda at Holyhead



Sutton Park Reception's Author Visit



KS2 staff bringing the Crayola box to life at Oak Hill!



Golden tickets at Abbeywood



If reading were a crime!

# From Page to Picture: Year 2 Meet Petr Horáček



Year 2 at Oldbury Park had an exciting visit to St. John's Library where they met the author and illustrator Petr Horacek. The children listened eagerly to all his stories about his life and the inspirations for his work. Petr demonstrated his illustrations and asked the children for their help in creating the designs and adding colour. The teachers were very excited to take the signed illustrations back to school to add to the library decoration!

To end the visit, the librarian very kindly gave all the children one of the World Book Day titles to take home and enjoy!

OLDBURY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

## MORE THAN A BOOK DAY: CELEBRATING THE POWER OF WORDS

World Book Day came alive on Thursday 5th March 2026, with Holyhead celebrating reading, creativity and student voice. A highlight of the day was a powerful visit from Matt Windle – “Poet with a Punch”, who captivated students with his journey from professional boxing to spoken word poetry. Challenging stereotypes, Matt showed that words can be as powerful as physical strength, thrilling students when he freestyled a rap using Year 7 names on the spot. He later led creative workshops exploring reading, spoken word and writing, inspiring students to find confidence in their own voices.

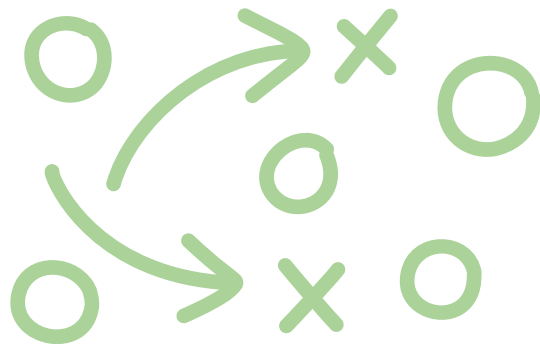
The celebration extended beyond the day itself into a “World Book Month”, with activities including book bingo, library hunts and peer recommendations encouraging wider reading. Alongside dress-up, book talk and creative classroom activities, these initiatives helped build a strong, inclusive culture of reading – reinforcing that literacy is an enjoyable and ongoing part of everyday school life.

**K JOHAL**

LITERACY LEAD AT HOLYHEAD SCHOOL



# Inter-Trust Sport: Competition, Collaboration and Community



Inter-Trust sporting events continue to play a vital role in bringing students together across the Trust schools, providing opportunities to compete, collaborate and represent their schools with pride. Recent football and basketball tournaments have showcased not only sporting talent, but also teamwork, resilience and sportsmanship across the Trust.

## Football

The Inter-Trust Football Tournament at Arrow Vale School saw six schools from the CRST compete in boys' and girls' competitions for Year 8 and 9 students. High standards of play, commitment, and skill were evident throughout, with closely contested matches showcasing the strength of football across the trust. Arrow Vale claimed victory in both tournaments through impressive teamwork and organisation. The event celebrated sporting achievement and fostered collaboration among schools.

## Basketball

The Inter-Trust 3v3 Basketball Tournament at Waseley Hills High School featured fast-paced games for Year 8 and 9 students. All six schools displayed skill and enthusiasm, with every player actively involved. Ipsley won the boys' competition, while Waseley Hills triumphed in the girls', making use of the school's new sports hall. The event highlighted growing talent and celebrated teamwork and achievement.

## Looking Ahead: What's Next on the Calendar

The Trust's sporting calendar continues with the Rounders Tournament at Gospel Oak School on 20th May, followed by the CRST Athletics Games at Abbey Stadium on 26th June. These events promote participation, competition, and teamwork, strengthening collaboration across the Trust.

**JOSH PRENTICE**

TRUST CHAIR FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION CO-DESIGN



# Investing in Apprentices: Developing Talent Across Central Region Schools Trust



At Central Region Schools Trust, we are proud of our strong commitment to apprenticeships, recognising them as a vital pathway for developing talented, skilled professionals across all areas of our organisation. With 29 apprentices currently working across the Trust, our approach reflects a clear belief: investing in people is key to supporting social justice through exceptional schools.

Our apprenticeship offer spans a wide range of roles, ensuring that colleagues in both educational and operational teams are supported to grow and succeed. We are particularly proud of our partnerships with Be Ready, who support our SEND provision, and Baltic Apprenticeships, who deliver high-quality IT training. These collaborations ensure that our apprentices receive expert guidance, combining practical experience with specialist knowledge.

In February, we celebrated National Apprenticeship Week at our Assay base, bringing apprentices together to recognise their contributions. The event provided an opportunity for colleagues to hear directly from leadership, with Guy Shears, Executive Principal (CEO), and Ed Cooper, Head of Operations, highlighting the importance of apprentices within the Trust and the impact they make every day.

Our commitment to apprentices has also been recognised externally. Sutton Park Primary School was nominated for the 'Best Apprenticeship Provider' category at the Thrive Best Practice Network Awards, reflecting the dedication of staff in supporting colleagues at all stages of their careers.

Through our continued investment in apprenticeships, Central Region Schools Trust is not only developing great people but also strengthening the future of our schools and communities.



**ED COOPER**  
HEAD OF OPERATIONS

**MATTHEW PURSLOW**  
HEAD OF CRST PEOPLE  
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

# Bringing the Moon to Our Trust

On 4th and 5th February 2026, students from across the Trust took part in an extraordinary space science experience, delivered in partnership with CRST, The Ogden Trust and the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC).

Between 1969 and 1972, six Apollo missions returned 382 kilograms of lunar material to Earth. Through STFC's long-standing loan scheme, a selection of these preserved lunar samples, alongside meteorites and other significant rocks, are made available to schools nationwide. Arrow Vale High School successfully secured the artefacts, with Harriet Hughes leading the application and working alongside Jen Lewis and The Ogden Trust to create a Trust-wide enrichment event.



The impact was immediate. As one Year 3 pupil said: *"I can't believe that rock has actually been on the Moon. It makes space feel real."*

A Year 6 student reflected:

*"I didn't realise how much physics you need to get to space – it's maths, gravity and problem solving."*

For older students, the experience supported aspiration: *"Seeing real lunar samples made me think about studying physics at A level. It suddenly feels more interesting."*



Alongside the Moon samples, students experienced The Stardome, delivered by Dr Scott Walker – an immersive, inflatable planetarium providing a 360-degree theatre experience. Sessions were carefully adapted for pupils from Year 2 through to Year 12, ensuring clear links to National Curriculum content while highlighting careers in physics, astronomy and engineering.

Over 260 pupils and more than 25 staff attended across the two days, creating a shared scientific experience spanning all phases.



Events such as this demonstrate the power of partnership in raising aspiration, strengthening scientific understanding and making abstract concepts tangible. For many pupils, this was their first encounter with authentic space artefacts and for some, it may mark the beginning of a future in STEM.

**JENNY LEWIS**

LEAD PRACTITIONER FOR SCIENCE  
(THE OGDEN TRUST)



The  
Ogden  
Trust

School  
Partnership

# Partnerships That Nourish: Supporting Healthy Food and Nutrition

At Central Region Schools Trust, we've been placing a strong emphasis on food and nutrition as part of our wider commitment to pupils' wellbeing and long-term life chances. Over the past year, we've begun working more closely with organisations that bring specialist knowledge, local insight and practical support to help us keep improving the experience of food across our schools.

A key partner is Evesham Vale Growers (EVG), a local organisation whose values around sustainability and high-quality produce align closely with our own. Through their support, our primary schools are taking part in Veg Power's Growing to Love programme and the national Eat Them to Defeat Them campaign. These initiatives give pupils positive, hands-on experiences with vegetables, helping them understand where food comes from and building early habits that support healthy choices. Scan the QR code to watch our EVG video.

We are also developing our partnership with Chefs in Schools, a national charity dedicated to supporting school catering teams. Their work is very much about upskilling and empowering our existing staff. Chef Trainers spend time in our school kitchens offering guidance, training and practical feedback to help teams strengthen their approach to food preparation, menu development and day-to-day kitchen practice. It's a thoughtful and respectful model that builds on the strong foundations already in place across our schools.

Our strategic thinking is further shaped by the insight of Shaleen Meelu, an internationally recognised specialist in food systems and nutrition. Shaleen brings a helpful blend of global expertise and local experience, ensuring our approach remains both evidence-informed and rooted in what works for our communities.

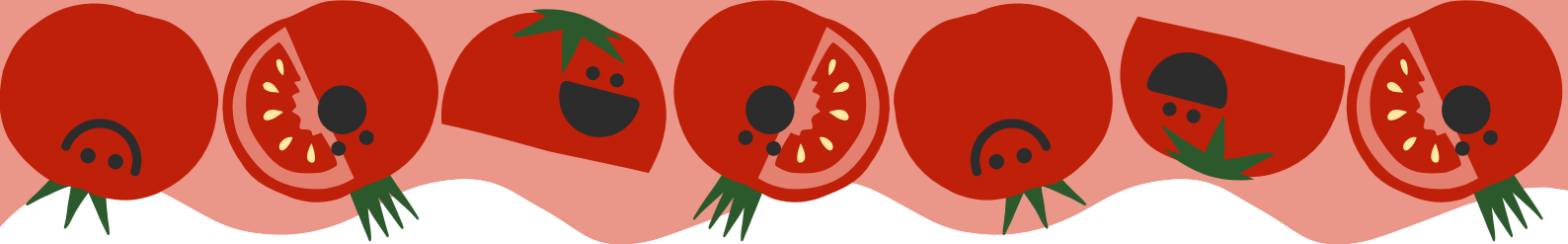
We've also started early-phase work with School Food Matters (SFM) through a DfE funded programme. This is beginning with a small number of schools before being rolled out more widely. The focus is on strengthening leadership around food, improving consistency across schools and supporting catering teams with practical, high-quality training. As the programme develops, we'll be learning from the early adopters and shaping the rollout together.

These partnerships are an important part of our Food and Nutrition Strategy. By bringing together local producers, national charities, expert advisers and our own talented staff, we're building a more ambitious and joined-up approach to food across our Trust. This work is helping pupils develop healthy relationships with food and supporting them to make confident choices that benefit their wellbeing now and in the future.

**ED COOPER**  
HEAD OF OPERATIONS

SCAN QR CODE





# Growing Partnerships: Sustainability, Food and Futures

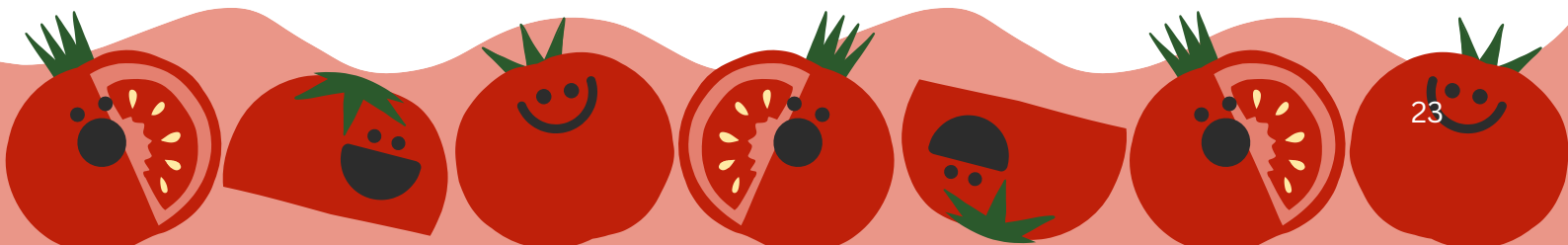
As part of our commitment to sustainability and improving food and nutrition for young people, I recently visited Evesham Vale Growers (EVG) to explore the innovation and leadership behind large-scale, sustainable horticulture. Meeting with Paul Faulkner, Director, and Robert Farthing, Manager of the Tomato Nursery at La Serra Ltd, the visit offered valuable insight into how modern food production balances quality, scale and environmental responsibility.

Discussions focused on EVG's organisational direction, the role of innovation in sustainable food systems, and the challenges of shaping culture at scale. EVG's long-term vision and values closely align with our own priorities as a Trust, particularly our focus on sustainability, responsibility and future-focused thinking.

Improving food and nutrition outcomes extends beyond access to healthy food. It also involves helping pupils understand where food comes from and why sustainability matters. Through its involvement in initiatives such as Veg Power's Eat Them to Defeat Them and Growing to Love Tomatoes, EVG supports positive engagement with food, nutrition and environmental awareness.

This partnership sits at the heart of our Food and Nutrition Strategy and wider sustainability agenda, with future opportunities to strengthen curriculum links, careers education and pupil understanding of pathways within the horticultural sector.

**GUY SHEARS**  
EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL (CEO)





CHURCH HILL  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

# Step Into the World of Ancient Greece

Year 5 pupils enjoyed an exciting and immersive Greek Day, designed to deepen their understanding of Ancient Greek mythology as part of their history topic.

The day began with a captivating theatre production delivered by the talented team from Past Productions. With a clever blend of historical accuracy, humour, and modern twists, the performance brought to life famous myths such as Daedalus and Icarus, Theseus and the Minotaur, and Pandora's Box. A special well done to the student volunteers who took to the stage, helping to set the scene and bring the stories to life with enthusiasm and flair. All students showed our kindness value and showed immense respect and kindness to our guests.

Following the performance, the children took part in a series of engaging workshops that extended their learning in creative and hands-on ways. In one session, pupils designed their own Greek-style plates, drawing inspiration from the iconic artwork and storytelling found in ancient pottery. Another workshop encouraged students to collaborate in groups to invent their own mythical tales, crafting imaginative characters and narratives in the style of traditional Greek legends.

Alongside this experience year 5 have worked relentlessly to design and craft their own Athenian helmets to immerse themselves with the culture and training experienced by those within the warring city-states of Athens and Sparta. This activity helped support our community spirit here at Church Hill by showcasing our school values through practical and purposeful avenues. A huge well done for your kindness, resilience and hard work with creating these across the week. It was great to witness the entire year group working collaboratively, developing relationships and showing effective communication skills to ensure each student has their own Athenian helmet.



The day was a fantastic success, filled with learning, laughter, and memorable moments. Both staff and students thoroughly enjoyed the experience, which not only enriched their knowledge of Ancient Greece but also sparked a genuine excitement for history. A big thank you to everyone involved for making it such a special and inspiring day!

CHURCH HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL



# CRST's Feature in **SCHOOLS WEEK**



We were recently featured in Schools Week, highlighting the incredible work taking place at Holyhead School in Birmingham. The article offers a powerful portrait of Holyhead as a school rooted in its community – one defined by joy, respect and inclusion – and challenges outdated narratives about the area by showcasing a vibrant, welcoming environment where pupils thrive.

Through the lens of a visit to the school, the feature reflects on long-term trust leadership, school improvement and the importance of strong culture in challenging contexts. It captures how Holyhead School exemplifies CRST's commitment in supporting social justice through exceptional schools. Scan the QR code below to read the full Schools Week article.



Read the full article

# Celebrating Lunar New Year at Gospel Oak



This term, our school community came together to celebrate Lunar New Year, an important cultural event observed by millions of people around the world. As part of the celebrations, I worked with Vivian (Year 10) and Harvey (Year 12) to deliver assemblies to Years 7, 8 and 9, helping to raise awareness and understanding of the significance of the occasion.

During the assemblies, Vivian and Harvey spoke confidently about how Lunar New Year is celebrated within their families and communities. They shared key traditions, including enjoying special foods, giving red envelopes as symbols of good luck, cleaning the home to welcome a fresh start, and the importance of spending time with family and respecting elders.

Vivian offered a personal insight into her family's traditions and explained the symbolism of the dragon, representing strength, power and good fortune. Harvey made a thoughtful connection between Lunar New Year traditions and our school values, highlighting themes of kindness, respect and community. It was wonderful to see students learning directly from their peers and engaging so positively.

To mark the celebration across the school, students were given fortune cookies, while Key Stage 3 pupils created paper lanterns in art lessons, adding colour and vibrancy to shared spaces. Our catering team also provided a themed lunch, allowing students to explore new flavours linked to the celebration.

Staff were invited to take part in an appreciation activity, writing notes to colleagues which were shared in red envelopes alongside chocolate coins and fortune cookies. This simple gesture helped create a warm and positive atmosphere across the school.

Events like this play an important role in celebrating diversity and fostering inclusion. Thank you to the students who led the assemblies with such confidence, and to all staff who supported the celebrations.

**ALKA MISTRY**  
COMMUNITY STRATEGY LEAD



# THE POWER OF MIDDLE LEADERSHIP: DRIVING EXCELLENCE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE



Middle leaders are the backbone of every successful school. They bridge the vision of senior leadership with the daily experiences of staff and students, ensuring that strategy translates into action in classrooms and communities. At the Central Region Schools Trust, we recognise the pivotal role that subject and pastoral leaders play in shaping exceptional education, and our programmes are designed to support both aspiring and new-to-role leaders in developing the skills and confidence they need.

Strong middle leadership drives high-quality teaching, fosters collaboration, and builds professional capacity. Subject leaders ensure that curriculum design, teaching practice, and assessment are cohesive, evidence-informed, and adapted to the needs of all learners. Pastoral leaders, meanwhile, champion wellbeing, equity, and inclusion, guiding students and staff in creating safe, supportive, and inspiring environments. Together, these leaders play a central role in promoting social justice through education, ensuring every child is seen, supported, and challenged to reach their potential.

Our leadership programmes at the Trust cover a wide range of topics, from coaching and mentoring to adaptive teaching, workload management, and leading change, providing practical tools that make a real difference. By investing in middle leaders, we empower them to influence school culture, strengthen staff development, and drive improvement across every phase. Leadership, at its heart, is not just about management – it's about shaping opportunity, fostering fairness, and inspiring excellence.

At the Central Region Schools Trust, we know that exceptional middle leadership is integral to creating schools that are not only successful but socially just, inclusive, and transformational for every learner.

**MATTHEW PURSLOW**  
HEAD OF CRST PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE



# Latest Events



Fabulous cake sale organised by the Ipsley Student Council and Mrs Lamb to raise money for charity week!



Spelling bee finalists at Holyhead.



Students celebrating Culture Day at Gospel Oak School



Arrow Vale Year 9 Girls who were crowned WINNERS of the Year 9 7 a side District Football Tournament!



Trustees' Education & Standards Committee Visit to Oldbury Park



Head of Operations, Ed Cooper, taking to the hot seat following his presentation on AI strategy development across MATs at UoW.





# Oldbury Park

## BONNETS



# SANDWELL POLICE MEETING TAKE OVER

in partnership with SHAPE



On 18<sup>th</sup> March, two of our Year 10 Gospel Oak students, Ronnie and Tom, attended Police Takeover Day at West Bromwich Police Station, working alongside Chief Superintendent Kim Madill and the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

They spoke with confidence, sharing honest views about issues affecting young people in our community. Topics included knife crime, racism, online safety, peer pressure, and feeling unsafe in local areas.

They also highlighted concerns about parks, antisocial behaviour, and recent incidents locally. Importantly, they suggested ideas to improve safety, such as better lighting, more police presence, CCTV in public spaces, and stronger links between schools and the police.

We are extremely proud of how they represented our school. They showed maturity, courage, and a real commitment to making their community safer.

**ALKA MISTRY**  
COMMUNITY STRATEGY LEAD



## SHAPE

Organised via Sandwell Council's SHAPE program, the event allowed young people to hold senior officers accountable, share views on police priorities, and discuss local issues like stop-and-search panels.



# *Celebrating 21 years of service:* **MR BRYAN TAIT**

After 21 years of remarkable service, we celebrate the contribution and unmistakable character of Bryan Tait – a proudly Scottish colleague from Fife, keen historian, loyal royalist, and familiar face in the local Starbucks. Bryan’s stories, humour and dedication have left a lasting mark on our trust.

Bryan began at Arrow Vale over two decades ago as School Business Manager and played a central role in the trust’s journey, including its founding in 2012, helping to establish the systems and culture that CRST continues to build upon today. His contribution has reached thousands of young people and colleagues across the West Midlands. As the trust grew, so did Bryan’s collection of ID badges - a badge for each school, all worn at once, and a true Bryan trademark!

One of Bryan’s fondest memories was the visit of Princess Anne, President of the RSA, to officially open Ipsley and Arrow Vale. A committed royalist, Bryan threw himself into organising the event: ordering a thousand Union Jacks, positioning pupils in formation, and personally coaching staff on the correct pronunciation of “Ma’am – like jam.” The now famous twist came when Princess Anne turned to our CEO and asked, “What am I going to say now, Guy?”, revealing that the beautifully prepared Union Jacks were, in fact, upside down. Apart from this minor (and laughable) blip, the day was a triumph!

Beyond major events, Bryan contributed to countless moments of joy and culture to school life. His CRST Health & Safety videos became a source of great amusement among colleagues, featuring comical scenes such as Bryan “vaping” in the toilets for a safety demo or wielding the world’s smallest hammer with complete seriousness. A true reflection of Bryan’s ability to mix essential messaging with humour that all could relate to.



He also consistently went above and beyond for the school community. This even included personally delivering copies of Arrow News around the local area to help boost pupil numbers, and supporting numerous school trips, including a particularly memorable visit to Alton Towers where he threw himself in at the deep end and braved an intense roller coaster to the delight of pupils and colleagues.

As a keen historian, Bryan regularly delivered assemblies at Ipsley, sharing stories and historical anecdotes with pupils. These sessions were a genuine gift – a way for Bryan to give back, passing on his passion for understanding where we come from and why it matters. Away from the world of estates, Bryan is also a keen runner. During the warmer months, he was a familiar figure jogging around the school playing fields of Redditch and occasionally Arrow Valley Country Park. More recently, he even invested in a membership at a high-end local gym to keep up this commitment.



As Bryan moves on, he leaves behind school environments that are stronger and safer because of his leadership. He has also played a pivotal role in developing estates leaders, ensuring the trust is in safe and capable hands moving forward. He should feel immensely proud of the impact he has had and the legacy he leaves behind.

On behalf of everyone at Central Region Schools Trust: thank you, Bryan, for your 21 years of dedication, humour, history lessons, and unwavering commitment to our schools and communities. May your retirement be full of joy, fulfilment, and the same energy you gave so generously to others.



*Thank you, Bryan.*

# 100 Heroes

## 100 Heroes: Recognising a Trust-Wide Commitment to Giving Back

Central Region Schools Trust was proud to be invited to the Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital Charity '100 Heroes' Awards, held on Sunday 22 March at the Library of Birmingham. The event recognised organisations and individuals whose fundraising efforts have made a meaningful difference to the hospital and the families it supports.

The invitation marked an important moment for the Trust, reflecting the collective commitment of 14 CRST schools that have worked tirelessly to support Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital Charity (BCH). Through a wide range of fundraising activities led by pupils, staff and school communities, CRST schools have raised over £22,000 to date, with further fundraising planned throughout 2026.



The Trust was represented at the awards by Sam McMonagle, Director of School Improvement, and myself as Trust Lead for Central Sixth Form. We were joined by Olivia and Maisie, sixth form students from Waseley Hills High School, who accepted the award on behalf of all CRST schools involved.

Their presence reflected the central role that young people play in shaping and leading charitable activity across the Trust. From student-led initiatives to whole-school events, fundraising for BCH has been driven by a shared sense of social responsibility and a strong desire to support children and families at their most vulnerable.

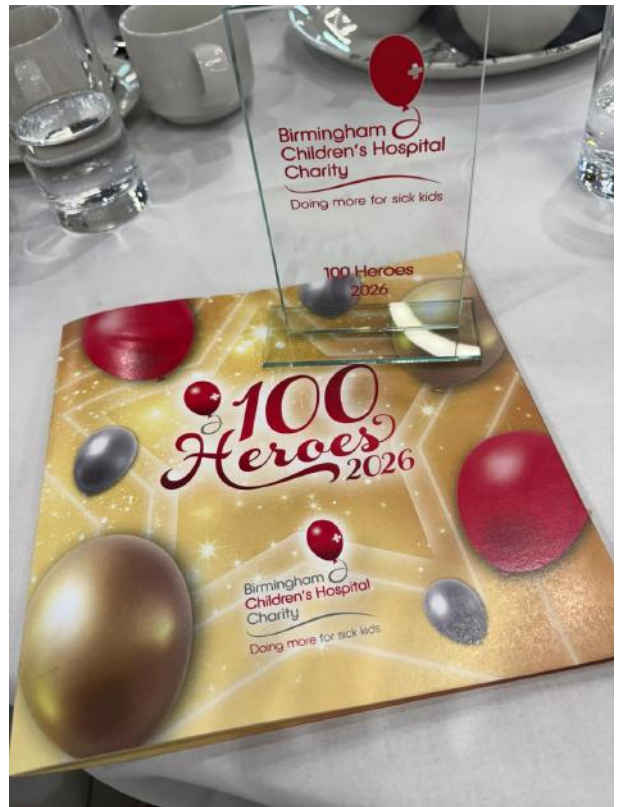


Being recognised as one of BCH's 100 Heroes is a powerful acknowledgment of what can be achieved when schools work together with purpose. It celebrates not only the funds raised, but the values underpinning the work: compassion, community and a commitment to making a positive impact beyond the classroom.

As CRST continues its fundraising journey into the coming year, this recognition stands as a reminder of the difference that collective action can make and of the role schools play in developing socially conscious, community-minded young people.

**GEMMA LOVERIDGE**  
TRUST LEAD FOR SIXTH FORM





# Growing Our People, Shaping Futures: Spring CPD with Teach Central

The current teacher training programme continues to demonstrate strong performance across all key areas, with trainees making solid, expected progress and developing the skills, confidence, and professional understanding required for effective classroom practice. Trainees are engaging well with both the academic and practical elements of the programme, showing increasing independence in lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment. Mentors report that trainees are responsive to feedback and are successfully translating theory into practice, which is reflected in the quality of teaching observed during placements.

A particularly positive outcome is that many trainees are now securing their first teaching positions. This reflects not only their individual commitment and capability but also the strength of the training programme in preparing them for employment. Schools have responded positively to trainees, recognising their readiness to contribute effectively from the outset of their careers. This is a strong indicator that the programme is aligned with current school needs and expectations.

Recruitment activity for the next cohort is also progressing well. There has been a steady flow of applications, with a noticeable number of high-calibre candidates expressing interest in the programme. Applicants are demonstrating strong subject knowledge, clear motivation to teach, and a genuine commitment to working with young people. The selection process is running smoothly, with interviews providing a valuable opportunity to identify candidates with the right blend of academic ability, interpersonal skills, and professional potential. Feedback from interview panels indicates that applicants are well-prepared, enthusiastic, and eager to begin their training journey.

School experience visits have been particularly successful and continue to play a crucial role in the recruitment process. Prospective trainees are benefiting from first-hand exposure to classroom environments, allowing them to gain a realistic understanding of the profession. These visits are well-organised and positively received, with many participants reporting that the experience has strengthened their decision to pursue teaching. Schools involved in hosting these visits have been supportive and engaged, further enhancing the quality of the experience.

Overall, the programme is maintaining a strong trajectory. Current trainees are progressing well and transitioning successfully into employment, while recruitment efforts are attracting capable and motivated applicants. The combination of effective training, supportive partnerships with schools, and a robust recruitment strategy ensures that the programme continues to develop high-quality teachers who are well-equipped to meet the demands of the profession. Continued focus on maintaining these standards will be key to sustaining this success moving forward.

## THE TEACH CENTRAL TEAM



Teach  
Central



# RSA8 2026 Launch

Founded by the Royal Society of Arts, CRST has a long-standing commitment to education that goes beyond academic outcomes to develop character, leadership and social responsibility. That legacy continues through the Trust's RSA programmes, including RSA4 and RSA8 – youth social action initiatives that empower pupils to become active citizens and agents of positive change. RSA8, our flagship programme for Year 8 students, brings together young leaders from across the Trust to develop the confidence, skills and social awareness needed to identify real-world issues and take meaningful action within their communities.

On Wednesday 11 March 2026, we were proud to launch the RSA8 2026 programme at Waseley Hills High School, welcoming student leaders and staff from across the Trust for an inspiring and purposeful morning.

The launch event brought together Year 8 student leaders from six CRST schools, providing a valuable opportunity for pupils to connect, collaborate and begin their RSA8 journey together. From the outset, students demonstrated professionalism, maturity and confidence. Immaculately presented and thoughtful in their contributions, they represented their schools superbly and were a real credit to their communities.



Throughout the morning, students showed passion and enthusiasm as they began exploring how they could lead their own social action projects within their schools and local communities. Supported by colleagues facilitating sessions, pupils engaged in meaningful discussions about issues that matter to them, while developing the leadership, teamwork and communication skills needed to drive positive change.

Students listened attentively to guest speakers, asked thoughtful questions, and conducted themselves with confidence and professionalism. Their engagement reflected the core purpose of RSA8: to prepare young people for the world beyond school and empower them to make a positive contribution to society.

The launch marked just the beginning of the RSA8 journey for 2026. Over the coming weeks, students will continue developing their ideas within their schools, before coming back together in April to share how their projects have evolved. We look forward to seeing how this cohort of young leaders will champion positive change within their communities.

**ELLIE MEREDITH**  
TRUST LEAD FOR ENRICHMENT



# Abbeywood and Church Hill Pupils Judge Royal Society Science Book Prize

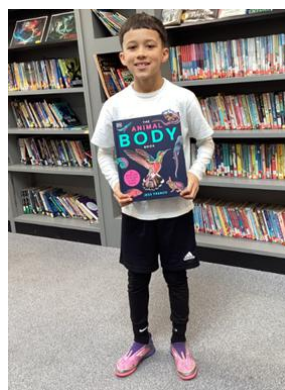
Abbeywood First School and Church Hill Middle School were delighted to be selected as part of the national judging panel for the Royal Society Young People's Book Prize, an annual event celebrating the very best science books written for young readers.

Six pupils from each school had the exciting opportunity to read a selection of brand-new books from the competition's shortlist. As part of the judging process, the children shared their thoughts on the story, illustrations and overall enjoyment of each book, discussing what made them engaging and easy to understand.

The final judging event took place in Church Hill Middle School's wonderful library. During the session, the older Church Hill pupils read excerpts from their favourite shortlisted books and explained why they believed their chosen titles deserved to win.

Meanwhile, the younger Abbeywood pupils enjoyed watching the presentations, listening to the recommendations – and enjoying a few well-earned cookies as they did so.

The experience gave pupils from both schools a fantastic opportunity to explore science through reading, develop their confidence in sharing opinions and celebrate their love of books together



A special thank you goes to Rosie Pretty, Charley Casey and Rachel Wilson for helping to organise the event and making this wonderful opportunity possible for our children.

**JENNY LEWIS**  
LEAD PRACTITIONER FOR SCIENCE  
(THE OGDEN TRUST)










Central Region  
Schools Trust  
Founded by the RSA

CRST  
People  
Development  
Institute

# Putting People First: Growing Educators Across the Trust This Spring

-  A Term of Growth: Driving Excellence Through Collaboration and Innovation
-  Building Brilliance: A Transformational Spring for Staff Development and Leadership
-  From Practice to Impact: A Spring Term of Professional Growth and Innovation
-  Empowering Educators: A Season of Collaboration, Research and Leadership
-  Stronger Together: A Spring Term of Learning, Leadership and Impact

The Spring Term has been a highly successful and productive period for the Central Region Schools Trust and the People Development Institute (PDI), marked by a wide range of impactful professional development opportunities and collaborative events.

A standout highlight was the Achievement Assistant Conference, which celebrated the vital role of support staff and provided practical strategies to enhance classroom impact.

Similarly, the ECT Conference brought together early career teachers from across the Trust, fostering collaboration, strengthening professional networks, and building confidence through focused sessions on SEND, wellbeing and effective classroom practice.

Professional learning was further strengthened through NPQ events in Leading Teaching and Leading Teacher Development, supporting colleagues to deepen their expertise and refine their leadership practice.

The Trust also proudly hosted National Apprenticeship Week celebrations, recognising the importance of apprenticeships in developing future talent and creating sustainable career pathways.

A particular highlight of the term was welcoming leading education expert Mary Myatt to the Trust's Reading Conference. Her insights inspired colleagues and reinforced the importance of curriculum, literacy and high-quality teaching.

Alongside these events, a series of subject conferences and primary network meetings provided valuable opportunities for collaboration, enabling staff to share best practice and strengthen subject knowledge across schools.

The term also saw the successful launch of trust-wide, cross-phase subject and pastoral leadership programmes, designed to build leadership capacity and ensure consistency and excellence across all settings. In addition, it has been particularly encouraging to see the development of exciting RQT research projects, driven by evidence-informed practice. These projects are already beginning to influence classroom approaches, supporting reflective practitioners and contributing to a culture of continuous improvement.

Collectively, these initiatives reflect a strong commitment to professional growth, collaboration and delivering the very best outcomes for pupils across the Trust.

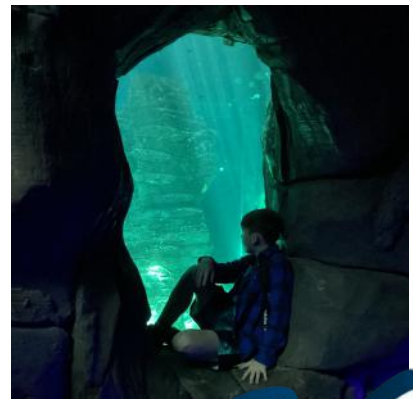
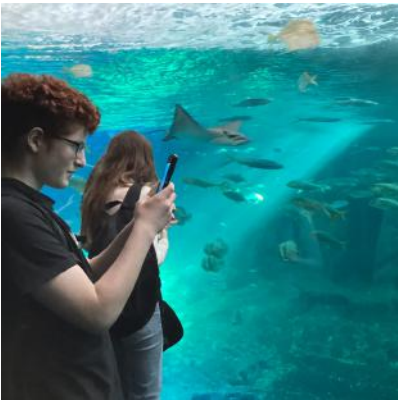
**MATTHEW PURSLOW**  
HEAD OF CRST PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE



# France

## CHURCH HILL'S RESIDENTIAL TRIP

Our Year 8 students enjoyed a fantastic four-day residential in France, where they experienced a rich variety of cultural activities and had plenty of opportunities to practise speaking French with the locals. Highlights of the trip included tasting snails, making traditional apple juice, exploring an authentic chocolate factory, and discovering the wonders of the Sea Life Centre. The visit also included time on the beautiful French beaches, offering students the opportunity to play, explore and collect seashells. The children demonstrated impeccable behaviour throughout the entire visit, representing the school with maturity, kindness and enthusiasm in every setting.



# Holyhead Students Shine at Commonwealth Day Celebration



On Monday 9th March 2026, students from Holyhead School were honoured to perform at the Hyatt Hotel in Birmingham as part of the Commonwealth Day celebrations, hosted by the Birmingham Commonwealth Association. Our students were outstanding ambassadors for the school, demonstrating exceptional talent, professionalism and enthusiasm throughout the evening.

## Student reflections

Tobius shared: "I initially underestimated the scale of the Commonwealth event. For the performance, the band chose three songs: "For Sure" by Miguel, "It's not perfect but it might be" by Olivia Dean, and "Folded" by Kehlani. I enhanced the bass on "For Sure" with a 'vibrato' technique, creating an ethereal effect. Before and during the opening, I felt immense pressure. However, seeing the audience's positive reaction allowed me to relax and enjoy the performance. The sense of pride after the show replaced all my fears."

Chyna added: "Entering the fancy, clean hotel was shocking; my friends and I immediately took pictures. The staff were very helpful, taking us 'backstage' and carrying our equipment, and were polite, complementing our sound during rehearsal. The room was perfectly set up, giving the band and dancers space

The slight echo was perfect for hearing our performance clearly. Initially nervous, we enjoyed the stunning night view with its bright lights. We worked together as a team, resulting in a very successful performance that the audience clearly enjoyed based on their applause. This made me feel confident and proud, confirming that our worries were unnecessary and the countless hours of practice were worthwhile."

Commonwealth Day celebrates unity, shared values and the achievements of Commonwealth nations. The students performed at the Birmingham Commonwealth Association's annual dinner in front of distinguished diplomats and community leaders. A message from His Majesty The King was read by Deputy Lieutenant Jenny Loynton.

## Distinguished guests included:

The Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Zafar Iqbal MBE; Deputy Lieutenant Ms Jenny Loynton; High Sheriff of the West Midlands Mark Smith; Police and Crime Commissioner Simon Foster; Anita Bhalla OBE; Mr Muff Murfin; and Keith Stokes-Smith.

## Our performers

- Band members: Alexandra (11D), Chyna (11D), Jannat (11D), Tobius (11H)
- Holyhead Di Shaan: Preety (11A), Harjinder (10A), Mangat (10B), Rhea and Suraiya (ex-students)

We are incredibly proud of all the students involved. Guests praised their confidence and professionalism, describing the performances as inspiring. Thank you to Mr Dobbs for his work with the Year 11 band, and to Mr Lane for supporting the students throughout the evening.

## ALKA MISTRY

COMMUNITY STRATEGY LEAD



# Achievement Assistants at the heart of Inclusion

*Reflecting on a Trust-wide conference that strengthened practice, identity and impact.*



On 5th January, colleagues from across the Trust gathered for the Achievement Assistant Conference at Arrow Vale High School – a bespoke professional development event designed to recognise, empower and strengthen the practice of Achievement Assistants working with our pupils across a wide range of additional needs. Our excellent keynote speaker – Hannah Hall, alongside Workshops from our own SENDCo's and external professionals (ADHD, Autism, Parent/Carer Forum, SENDIASS, and Trauma Informed Relationship Based Play) The response was unequivocally positive.

Based on nearly 200 responses, the evaluation data paints a compelling picture of a highly impactful day. The quality of the event was rated at 3.8, the keynote at 3.9, and the structure of the day at 3.8 on a four-point scale – reflecting not just engagement, but genuine professional value.

Feedback consistently described the conference as “engaging, inspiring, informative and empowering”. What set this event apart was its deliberate emphasis on lived experience, relational practice and relevance to real classrooms. Achievement Assistants valued training that went beyond theory, grounding learning in authentic voices, practical strategies and a clear moral purpose.

Speakers with lived experience of Dyslexia, Autism and ADHD were repeatedly cited as the most powerful aspect of the day. Hearing directly from individuals who live with these diagnoses and their successes as adults, challenged assumptions, deepened empathy and transformed understanding.

Staff reflected that these perspectives made learning meaningful and memorable, reframing behaviour not as defiance but as communication, and highlighting why inclusive strategies matter, and that we must always be ambitious for any child or young person with any additional need.

*“Hearing from people with Dyslexia, ADHD and Autism made the training far more powerful and real.”*

The conference significantly increased confidence and understanding around neurodiversity, trauma, autism, ADHD, behaviour, the language around learning and regulation. Achievement Assistants described gaining clarity around how neurodivergent brains work, how needs present differently across ages and settings, and how everyday classroom practices can either support or hinder pupils' ability to engage.

Many noted that the training prompted reflection on their own practice and helped them better understand pupils they currently support – including those without formal diagnosis. Importantly, this learning was seen as practical, accessible and relevant across all phases, aligning strongly with attendance, nurture, pastoral and SEND provision.





A defining strength of the conference was its practical focus and strategies that would enable immediate impact. Workshops on ADHD, Autism, and trauma informed relationship-based play provided clear, usable strategies that staff felt confident implementing immediately. Play therapy games, regulation strategies, understanding sensory and cognitive overload, behaviour scripts and relational approaches were highlighted as particularly valuable – especially for one-to-one support, small groups, nurture provision and early intervention.

*“The training felt genuinely relevant to my role and gave me strategies I can use straight away.”*

This emphasis on what works ensured the conference prompted meaningful reflection and action, rather than surface-level generic training.

A powerful and recurring theme was the sense of validation and professional identity experienced by the Achievement Assistants. Many reflected that CPD is not always tailored to their role, and that this event made them feel seen, valued, professionally recognised, respected and invested in. They valued the explicit acknowledgement of the impact Achievement Assistants have on pupils' lives and outcomes. Several commented that the conference reinforced their professional judgement – particularly around advocating for reasonable adjustments, inclusive practice and SEND / additional needs adaptations.

*“I felt valued as an AA – this training recognised the impact of our role.”*

This sense of recognition contributed to increased morale, confidence and renewed motivation, reinforcing Trust values and a shared moral purpose around ‘social justice’. Attendees also welcomed the clarity around the Trust’s inclusion values and expectations.



The alignment between SEND, behaviour, relationships, language and learning was clearly understood, reinforcing a shared culture grounded in kindness, compassion, consistency and high aspirations for all pupils. The message that ‘every child needs a champion’ resonated strongly, strengthening the determination for a collective responsibility across all schools.

The opportunity to connect and network with Achievement Assistants from across the Trust was highly valued. Staff appreciated sharing experiences, reflecting together and feeling part of a wider SEND community. This sense of belonging contributed to the positive atmosphere of the day and strengthened professional identity and collective collaboration.



Crucially, feedback demonstrates clear intent to embed learning into daily practice – from inspiration to implementation. Achievement Assistants reported increased confidence, stronger SEND knowledge and a renewed focus on regulation, inclusive language, advocacy and consistency.

### Priority areas for implementation included:

- ADHD-informed practice, with a shift away from consequences towards regulation and understanding
- Autism-informed strategies, including slowing interactions, reducing verbal load and adapting environments
- Relationship-based play and de-escalation, using trauma-aware and attachment-informed approaches
- Adult self-regulation and language, recognising the importance of calm, predictable responses Advocacy and reasonable adjustments, with staff feeling more confident to champion pupils' needs
- Many described a mindset shift alongside acquiring new techniques – recognising that pupils do not need fixing but understanding.

Looking ahead we aim to sustaining impact as feedback strongly supports the continuation and expansion of this model of bespoke CPD. Achievement Assistants expressed a clear desire for regular, practical SEND training delivered consistently and supported by leadership.

There was a strong message that training is most effective when Achievement Assistants, teachers and leaders receive the same core messages, ensuring consistency of language, expectations and inclusive practice across all our 14 schools.

The Achievement Assistant Conference demonstrated the power of purposeful, inclusive professional development. Bespoke CPD that recognises expertise, values lived experience and prioritises relationships. The overwhelmingly positive feedback confirms that when Achievement Assistants feel informed, confident and valued, the impact reaches far beyond the day itself, strengthening SEND and additional needs provision, improving pupil outcomes and reinforcing a culture of inclusion across the Trust. This event did more than deliver training. It affirmed identity, strengthened practice and reminded us that inclusion and any additional need is everyone's responsibility.



*With thanks to:*

- ♥ All our Achievement Assistants and SEND Support staff / SENDCOs across the CRST Trust
- ♥ Hannah Hall – Education Consultant / School Improvement Adviser
- ♥ Alison Stanton & Hazel Shaw – Parent Carer Forum & PINS Project WCC
- ♥ Sally Lindley – SENDIASS
- ♥ Jordan Round – Songwriter & Audio Post-Production Editor
- ♥ Jordan Day – Inclusion Mentor, St. Margaret's Primary School / Act for Autism
- ♥ Kelli Robinson – Vice Principal & SENDCO – Holyhead School
- ♥ Jayne Winterborn – SENDCO – Oak Hill First School
- ♥ Helen Worrall – CRST Lead SEMH Practitioner

**CLAIRE ROUND**  
DIRECTOR OF SEND



# Inspiring Visit from Jasmine Gardosi

As part of National Literacy Week, we were excited to welcome Jasmine Gardosi, a talented poet, performer and former Birmingham Poet Laureate, to deliver a special assembly to Year 7 at Holyhead.

Jasmine's assembly was full of energy, creativity and important messages about resilience, confidence and self-expression. They spoke about their personal journey and how, when they were younger, they found reading out loud in class difficult and often felt nervous. However, instead of giving up, Jasmine kept practicing and slowly built their confidence over time. This showed students that even when something feels challenging, you can improve with determination and effort.

Jasmine also explained how long it took them to achieve their goal of becoming Birmingham Poet Laureate, a role they held from 2022 to 2024. They shared that it didn't happen overnight – it took years of hard work, performing at events, and believing in themselves. This was a powerful reminder that success often comes from patience and persistence.

One of the most exciting parts of the assembly was when Jasmine demonstrated how they use beatboxing in their performances. By creating rhythms and sounds using just their voice, they brought poetry to life in a fun and engaging way. Students were amazed to see how poetry can be combined with music to create something unique and expressive.

Overall, the assembly was not just about poetry, but about finding your voice, being brave and never giving up. Jasmine inspired Year 7 students to keep trying, express themselves creatively, and believe in their abilities.

We are very grateful to Jasmine Gardosi for visiting our school and making the assembly a memorable and inspiring experience.

**ALKA MISTRY**

COMMUNITY STRATEGY LEAD



# Our Staff Behaviours

## Developing Our Distinctive Culture – People

We know and understand the powerful role we have in intentionally fostering Our Distinctive Culture through our behaviours and mindsets. These shape our thinking, communication and actions. We all encourage and empower others by being respectful, positive and optimistic.



**Integrity**



**Excellence**



**Creativity**



**Community**



**Respect**

The following behaviours will enable us to live out this vision and fulfil our mission of supporting social justice through exceptional schools.

### **Prioritise the success of our young people at all times**

All members of our community advocate on behalf of pupils/students and make decisions with them at heart. We have the highest expectations of all pupils/students and understand the importance of showing them how to achieve the habits that will lead them to success.

### **Be a role model**

We are ALL responsible for building our culture, trust and credibility. All members of our community need to walk the talk - all of the time. We all lead by example.

### **Communicate effectively**

Our staff are direct, honest, act with integrity and communicate appropriately all of the time. We use honest, timely and professional face to face communication as a priority.

### **Keep your promises and stick to your organisational commitments**

We see the importance of professional integrity and aim to keep our word around our organisational commitments.

### **Commit to the development of others**

Our community members are our most valuable asset. We all commit to our own professional growth in order to improve the outcomes for pupils. We see line management commitments as a priority and fully engage in the process.

### **Have a solution focused approach**

Our community have a positive can-do mindset and seek well thought through and appropriate solutions to problems. We are proactive and aim to prevent issues. We are committed to continually improving and seek constructive feedback.

### **Demonstrate full commitment to the bigger picture**

Our colleagues demonstrate loyalty to the Trust. We challenge each other appropriately and support each other at all times. We show flexibility and a willingness to be adaptable or, where necessary, compromise.



# HOST YOUR NEXT AWAY DAY IN THE HEART OF BIRMINGHAM

Our central training space in Birmingham City Centre offers a professional, flexible environment for away days, training sessions and conferences.

The space accommodates up to 32 delegates, with optional breakout rooms, access to a shared kitchen, and communal areas with tea and coffee stations - designed to support focused discussion, collaboration and connection.

#### Interested in booking?

Contact the CRST team at [info@crst.org.uk](mailto:info@crst.org.uk) or call 0121 270 3117 to find out more.



# FOLLOW

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"Supporting social justice through  
exceptional schools."

Community | Creativity | Integrity | Excellence | Respect



Central Region  
Schools Trust

*Founded by the RSA*



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