Academy Transformation Trust

Transforming LIVES

March 2022

‘Pupils’

Welcome from Derek Trimmer

National Education Director

Welcome to this term's *Transforming Lives*, and an opportunity to share in the amazing successes and diversity of educational experiences across our family of academies.

I want to begin by thanking all the incredible colleagues across our Trust who have performed as absolute heroes through the most challenging of times. I am in awe of the resilience you have demonstrated, day after day, in maintaining such a high quality of education, despite the incredible mounting pressures caused by the impact of covid and the way it has ripped through our communities. Your commitment to keeping academies open, even if it means going above and beyond with combined classes taught by senior leaders, Principals, and others, has provided security and consistency for our most vulnerable learners. It has also meant that we have been able to maintain high attendance rates for our academies and enable our pupils to thrive and continue to make the progress they need.

This term has seen further successes in our Ofsted performance. We have 5 academies visited since September 2021 with judgements to be proud of; **Bristnall Hall Academy** in November 2021 was judged as *Good with Outstanding Features*, now awaiting a return inspection against the outstanding criteria; The Dukeries Academy, seen in October 2021, was judged as *Good*; The Nicholas Hamond Academy, inspected in November 2021 with a full section 5, achieved a *Good*, the first in the academy's history; Pool Hayes Academy, visited in January 2022 with a section 8 monitoring visit, was judged as *Taking Effective Action*, and received one of the strongest positive letters of visit I have ever read.

Finally, Ravens Academy, which received a monitoring visit in February of this year, achieved a note of visit that confirmed the academy is *Taking Effective Action for the Removal of Special Measures*. We congratulate all the colleagues who have worked tirelessly over the last year to achieve this validation of their work. We await the next batch of visits with eager anticipation.

In the news this week, the government has just produced a new *White Paper* on education, and we are excited by the opportunities for levelling up that it provides. As a Trust, ATT is well placed to make a demonstrable impact in helping achieve these noble aims; we welcome the challenge as we move to centre stage.

But this publication is about so much more than raw Ofsted outcomes or government policy. It is about the celebration of work going on across our family of academies outside of what we would describe as the core curriculum. It is the shop window into our vision and our values. So sit back and enjoy- and colleagues, feel proud as you prepare for your hard earned Easter break.

Thank you all, and have a lovely Easter.

Derek Trimmer

Culture of Caring

We're always proud to see our learners displaying their initiative in acts of kindness and compassion. Learners across our trust engage in amazing charity and community work in their local areas and beyond. This term, students in many of our academies have organised collection appeals in benefit of Ukraine; we're thrilled to see how readily the local community is engaging and donating, and incredibly proud of all the learners involved.

ATTFE College does incredible charity work, this term organising an exciting fundraiser for the *Rossendale and Pendle Mountain Rescue Team*. This is in addition to continuing their work to reduce food poverty in the local area, through food parcel initiatives and community engagement.

Kingsmoor Academy also took part in the MacMillan Coffee Morning this term, organised by their wellbeing team. Staff got involved by baking delicious treats and donating generously, raising over £127 for the charity. Feedback from staff was extremely positive; they all enjoyed a chance to get together for a cup of tea, a chat, and a slice of delicious cake!

A Wealth of Opportunities

The students outside Westminster Abbey

On Monday 14 March, students from **Bristnall Hall Academy** travelled to London to join 600 young people from across the UK in celebration of Commonwealth Day at Westminster Abbey, at a service attended by members of the royal family.

The Royal Commonwealth Society encourages schools to explore and engage with the core Commonwealth values- important principles of human rights, rule of law, democracy, and stewardship of the environment. This Commonwealth Day was a particularly special one, marking the Platinum Jubilee of the Society's patron, the Queen, and her seventy years' service to the commonwealth.

Highlights included an Address by Bishop Sentamu, former Archbishop of York, a reflection by Queen's Young Leader Elizabeth Kite, and the world premiere of 'Beacon of Brightest Light', created by acclaimed composer Debbie Wiseman OBE.

The event also featured performances by Mica Paris, Members of the Whānau London Voices, Emeli Sandé and the London African Gospel Choir, and a collaboration between celebrated poet Imtiaz Dharker and sitarist Jasdeep Singh Degun.

Guests of honour among the congregation included senior politicians and dignitaries from across the UK and Commonwealth, Society Ambassadors Geri Horner, David Walliams, Alexandra Burke and Lewis Pugh, alongside High Commissioners, ambassadors, dignitaries, and faith leaders.

Bristnall Hall Principal Kully Uppal said "It was an immense privilege to be invited to this prestigious event, where the very make-up of our Commonwealth allows true cultural diversity to be celebrated".

World Book Day

Thursday 3 March marked the 25th anniversary of *World Book Day*. Our academies got into the spirit of the event with a range of exciting events and activities. Learners and colleagues alike were excited to take part in the traditional celebration of dressing up as their favourite book characters. We're impressed by the incredible quality and creativity of some of this year's costumes! **Hathaway Academy** elevated their already impressive costumes with some nifty photo editing, whilst participating in reading themed activities like book recommendation bingo and a reading escape room. At **Ravens Academy**, the *Harry Potter* series was still a firm favourite for costumes, 25 years after the release of the first book. The children were thrilled to have a photo of their costumes retweeted by the series' author, JK Rowling, and have requested *The Philosopher's Stone* as their next Book Club read!

Pupils at **Great Heath Academy** joined in the fun with a craft project, constructing tiny and intricate dioramas of scenes from their favourite books, as well as decorating their classroom doors as the covers of classic children's books.

At **Pool Hayes Academy**, languages students had great fun translating well-known fairy tales from Spanish to English. Students who've been working hard on their literacy skills were also awarded 'golden tickets' and a chocolate treat for their efforts. Both **Iceni Academy** and **Sutton Community Academy** challenged students to 'Get Caught Reading' in unusual places as part of an initiative to encourage reading for pleasure. Iceni's *Book Swap Breakfast Feast* was also a great success, with lots of reading done, and not a sausage or slice of toast leftover!

Lots of learners were excited to redeem their World Book Day tokens- pupils at **North Walsall Primary Academy** were so eager to get reading that they took a class trip to the local Waterstones to choose their new books. **Kingsmoor Academy** celebrated both reading and writing in their newly revamped library, aiming to publish their own book as part of their *We are Writers* project. **Jubilee Academy** is excited to be taking part in Puffin Books' *World of Stories* project, receiving colourful resources and 400 new books to help get their pupils engaged in reading!

> "There is a positive relationship between reading frequency, reading enjoyment, and attainment"
>
> -Education Standards Research Team

A diorama made by a pupil at Great Heath Academy

NWPA pupils ready to redeem their book tokens

Spring Learning...

Iceni Hockwold pupils enjoying the sunshine and exploring local history in Hunstanton

As winter retreats and the days are becoming ever warmer and brighter, the spring sunshine is affording pupils across our academies valuable opportunities for outdoor learning. Pupils at **Iceni Hockwold Academy** have been exploring science, geography, and history outside. They've learnt about both the recent and ancient history of their village, visiting war memorials and a local Roman settlement. As well as participating in a workshop on life cycles with RSPB Lakenheath, pupils in the Eco Club took advantage of the sunshine to explore signs of spring in the school's garden whilst picking litter, sowing wildflowers and feeding the birds.

At **Star Academy**, the damp weather didn't put a dampener on the nursery's visit to Peak Wildlife Park, where they got excited about practical learning and were even allowed to stroke the wallabies. Despite the rain, the pupils had great fun and learnt a lot about the animals.

At **Great Heath Academy,** Year 1 pupils have been inspired by *Out and About Poems* by Shirley Hughes to write their own plein air poetry. The children enjoyed a walk around school, on a frosty morning, to collect adjectives for their writing.

Learners on **ATTFE College**'s horticulture course have been in their element in the spring sunshine. On a visit to Alfreton Hall, they've been learning about sunflowers, the national flower of Ukraine.

Iceni pupils learning about local nature with the RSPB

Pink sky, crunching leaves
icy snow, cold hands
pink noses, freezing toes,
crackling fire, warm bed

-A Year 1 Great Heath pupil's 'Out and About' Poem

Further Education learners enjoying the outdoors at Alfreton Hall

Iceni's Eco Club gets mucky whilst searching for signs of spring in the school garden

...and spring cleaning!

Pool Hayes Academy have been getting behind another spring tradition- spring cleaning! Whilst decluttering their archives, staff were pleasantly surprised to uncover several albums and articles detailing the school's rich history, including logbooks dating back to the early 1900s, photo albums from the 1970s and newspaper articles from the 1990s.

The *Golden Book of Short Heath Senior School*, dated from 1951, was reunited with former pupil Bob Rushton, the Chair of the Willenhall History Society. Short Heath Senior was merged with Pool Hayes Academy when it first opened in 1964. Images from school trips as early as the 1960s were also submitted to the archives of Dudley Zoo. The academy is putting together a display to proudly show off the found documents and history of their school.

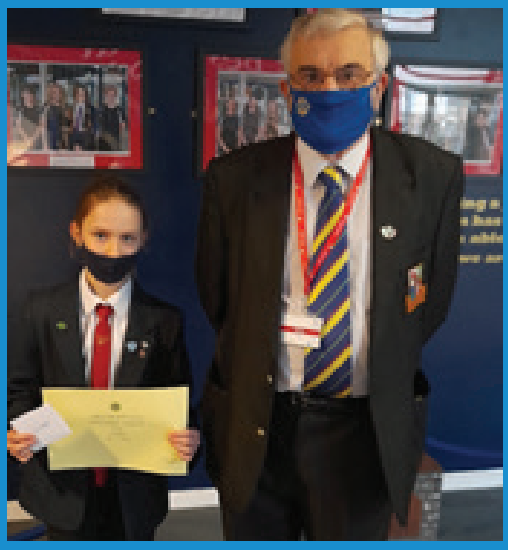
Principal Tom McDowell presents ex-student Bob Rushton with the Golden Book

Raising Ambitions

We're proud of the enrichment opportunities offered by our academies. Pupil achievement is never limited by the boundaries of their school curriculum; we encourage pupils to engage with creative initiatives and external competitions, and we're excited about the ambitious things learners across our Trust have been up to this term.

Year 7 students at **The Nicholas Hamond Academy** had the opportunity to enter a literacy competition organised by the Swaffham Lions. Entrants submitted a piece of creative writing either in the form of a poem, essay or section of prose under the theme of 'What can I/we do to help'? The winner, chosen by representatives of the Lions, was Briar, whose submission epitomised kindness to others.

Pool Hayes Academy were delighted that four of their students were chosen from over 300 entries as finalists in the Wolverhampton Young Authors' Prize. Year 11 student Emily did amazingly well, placing second in the 14-16 category. The WYAs' Prize is an annual creative writing competition that challenges young people, aged 8 to 16, to write an original, short story in no more than 400 words, and this year's theme was 'The Journey'. Each finalist was commended on the quality of their individual stories and thoroughly enjoyed the awards event; they met authors Jenny McLachlan and Ben Davis, and were also judged 'best' in the school teams' collaborative story challenge. Presented with a box of 3 items, they were tasked with writing a collaborative 100-word saga that featured all items within the box. Ben Davis commended their story for its originality and creativity. The academy are extremely proud of #PHAntastic pupils Layla, Aiden, Emma and Emily!



"To help we can make people happy,
We can only call them nice names,
To help we can make people joyous
We can include them in all of our games".

"To help we can make people feel welcome,
we can greet them with a friendly "hello",
To help we can make people excited
We can stop them from feeling 'so low'".

An extract from TNHA student Briar's winning poem

Pool Hayes' shortlisted young writers

Second place 14-16 young writer Emily

12 ambitious students have represented **Iceni Academy** at the Norfolk Schools Games Partnership Panathlon Bowling Event in Brandon this March. Competing against other local academies, the students formed two enthusiastic teams of 6, collaborating and supporting each other brilliantly. Their advice and encouragement to one another as well as towards other the schools demonstrated fantastic sportsmanship. Iceni Academy earned medals for the Year 7 team, who performed amazingly. The Year 8-10 team came away with the *Gold Medal Winners Trophy,* and awards for *Most Strikes and Spares* and *Highest Score*! The students had an amazing time and were a credit to their academy- and they can't wait for the next event!

Iceni Academy's brilliant bowling team!

The Dukeries Academy had an amazing turnout of students running for the Newark & Sherwood district at the Cross Country County Schools Championship in February. After being successful at their district qualifying event earlier this year at Sherwood Pines, the students ran amazingly well in difficult conditions. Year 7 student Sam, who finished third overall in the county, will go on to represent Nottinghamshire at the National Championship.

Dukeries cross country star Sam

Our Colleagues

As well as celebrating the improvements of our learners, we're also proud of the successes of our incredible colleagues. Our Trust is committed to professional development, exemplified in the amazing work of our ATT Institute.

Liz Barett OBE

This January, Liz Barrett, Principal of **ATTFE College**, was awarded the OBE for Services to Education. This is an exceptional achievement, and one for the whole community to celebrate. Liz has worked in Adult Education for almost 20 years, and has been Principal at ATT FE since 2016. She is dedicated to developing and delivering the highest quality lifelong learning to equip the local community to lead fulfilled and enriching lives.

Also at **ATT FE College this term**, Curriculum Co-Ordinator Tasha Price presented ESOL Tutor Sarah Brooke with an award for *Around the World Learner Impact*. Sarah has continuously gone above and beyond to support people in the local community to develop their English-speaking skills, support them with seeking employment and life opportunities.

Sarah Brooke (Right)

North Walsall Primary Academy has celebrated the success of Assistant Principal Sabrina Khera, who completed her National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership with an astounding grade and amazing feedback. Her assessor said her work was 'inspirational' and "an absolute dream to mark", specifically commending the "depth of [her] research […] passion, and commitment to school improvement". Sabrina's colleagues at NWPA, and across the rest of our Trust, are all incredibly proud!

Sabrina Khera

Health & Wellbeing

This term, **Sun Academy** dedicated a day to learning about positive health and wellbeing. Workshops have allowed pupils to explore how creative activities can help to support their wellbeing. Each learner used clay to craft a unique leaf or flower, all of which will be displayed around the school. A range of exciting PE activities helped the children understand how exercise can support our physical and mental wellbeing. All the children had an amazing day, recognising and discussing how they can use these strategies to help support themselves.

At **Phoenix Academy**, art therapist Candice has been running a Wellbeing Art Club at lunchtime. Pupils have created some beautiful pieces of art, whilst learning the benefits of a calm space and stress-free activity to help them regulate and recharge for the afternoon.

A key element of wellbeing is learning about how we can support each other. **Star Academy**'s pupils were encouraged to celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Week in February, both at home and at school. Many parents got in touch to share the kind things their children had done at home to help. The academy has also engaged a local initiative, Diamond Families, to deliver workshops on resilience, teaching the children about emotional strength and how to support themselves through difficult situations.

Iceni Hockwold has celebrated *Children's Mental Health Week* this term. Their pupils have partaken in yoga workshops, learning how to stretch, breathe and balance. The children have also been learning to support each other and work together through the example of yoga; after practising the *tree pose*, they all came together to make a 'forest' of mindfulness.

ATT FE College are continuing their Wellbeing Wednesday initiative, sharing wellbeing resources and information (and occasional treats!) with colleagues, learners and their wider community on a weekly basis. They've also marked their *Celebration of Learning Week* this month with certificates, awards and prizes for their hardworking learners. The learners are encouraged to reflect on their learning journey, the goals that motivated them to start and the things they enjoy about their courses, helping to keep them inspired and aspirational for their future.

Iceni's yoga workshop

Phoenix Academy's Wellbeing Art Club

Sun pupils practicing therapeutic arts and crafts

An FE learner enjoying Celebration of Learning Week.

International Women's Day

Sutton Community Academy students at the PL Changemakers event

We have the highest aspirations for **all** our learners and colleagues, so we were proud to see our academies celebrating International Women's Day on Tuesday 8 March. Students from **Sutton Community Academy** represented the Nottingham Forest Community Trust at a *Premier League Changemakers* workshop focusing on female leadership, hosted by the AVFC Foundation. At **ATT FE College**, adult learners have been researching and developing projects on inspirational women throughout history and in their own lives. The *'FE'nominal* colleagues also wore pink, red, and orange in celebration.

At **Westbourne Academy,** an appreciation board allowed students and staff to dedicate a personal message of thanks to a special woman in their life; a mother, relative, friend, partner, teacher, or someone they looked up to. Other activities included writing acrostic poems and a quiz on inspirational women.

Celebrating Culture

MCA's Collective Council pose with visiting speaker Samuel King

Mildenhall College Academy has been celebrating cultural differences through its *Collective Council* student initiative. The council participates in sessions to learn and educate around issues of identity, representation, and belonging. This term, they've been taking part in workshops, reading diverse literature, and recently hosted an event with poet and motivational speaker Samuel King.

TNHA have opened an *International Language Café* over lunch breaks, encouraging students to develop a keen interest in learning about languages and cultures. The sessions are supported by Student Language Ambassadors and native speakers. Those who attend are introduced to some of the basic conversational vocabulary, as well as some of the cultural aspects of each country. There is a wonderful array of languages on offer- German, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Latin, Finnish, Arabic, Romanian, Turkish, Korean, Spanish, Russian, Lithuanian, Italian and Mexican!

In our Communities...

TNHA's community planning workshop

The Nicholas Hamond Academy
Swaffham Regeneration Project

A scheme announced by Breckland Council & Historic England includes a range of projects with the aim of protecting the historic high street and to look at how it can be further enhanced for residents and visitors in the future. Following a survey canvassing their views on the future of Swaffham, a group of students from TNHA have been working hard on a one such project with architects *Urban Symbiotics*. The objective of the first workshop was to design an aspect of Swaffham with a team including an architect, urban designer, landscape architect and heritage consultant. The second session, which will take place in a few weeks, is to formulate a poem for the future of Swaffham which will be developed into a commissioned poem by the poets who visited, using material from the workshop.

Bristnall Hall students were interviewed by the BBC after a talk from the project directors

Bristnall Hall Academy
Sandwell Aquatics Centre

Commonwealth Games Aquatics Centre Project Director Chris Jones, alongside Sandwell Community Engagement Officer Ashley Richards, delivered an update to Bristnall Hall Academy on the expected legacy of the project. Pupils Sabaa, Kim, and Aurona were recently interviewed by BBC news about the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games, as well as the world-class aquatics centre that will be constructed less than 1km from the academy in Sandwell. As well as being an incredible facility for professional athletes, the venue has also been designed for the local community's long-term use; the local area has traditionally had low participation in swimming and other water-based activities. Kim, a member of a swimming club in Birmingham, said it would be inspirational to be able to compete in the same pool as the professionals. Aurona spoke about the non-aquatic facilities, while Sabaa believes that plans to have private, women-only sessions in gyms and pools will persuade more participation from some of the local communities. Students are looking forward to the Birmingham Commonwealth Games this summer and having amazing sports facilities on their doorstep!

Sandwell's new world class aquatics facilities will be available for use by local residents, including Bristnall Hall Academy

...and beyond

For the past three years, Kingsmoor Academy has been coordinating an *Erasmus+* project involving schools from across Europe. The project, *Back to Nature, Further into the Future*, aimed to get children, staff and parents back in love with the great outdoors. Schools from Italy, Turkey, Romania and the UK worked together to create a book of exciting outdoor activities with links to science, maths, literacy and arts and crafts.

Final feedback from the British Council awarded Kingsmoor with the highest score of *Very Good*, deeming it a very successful project that not only remained in line with its original objectives, but also achieved some unintended results that exceed initial expectations. The council credited "*the motivated partnership between schools that were all eager to boost the professional development of their teachers and the wellbeing of their pupils*". Kingsmoor Academy would like to thank all of the staff and pupils who helped make this project such a success.

Schools across Europe took part in the project

What's on Offer?

We're pleased to see that an impressive range of educational trips and workshops has been taking place across our academies this term.

Students at **Westbourne Academy** were invited to visit St Catherine's College, part of Cambridge University, as part of the University's secondary school outreach programme. The group joined students from three other Ipswich high schools, taking part in a thought-provoking, interactive lecture by an Art History undergraduate discussing whether video games can be considered art. This was followed by tour of the college grounds and chapels, and a seminar on higher education, UCAS, and career pathways with the college's students. The visit was an invaluable experience for students and accompanying staff that demystified the UCAS application process. It gave students the inside track on qualification criteria, personal statements, finance, student loans, and a straight-forward explanation about how to choose the right degree course and university. **Sutton Community Academy**'s Year 9 ambition cohort also visited Cambridge, on a motivating and educational trip to the university's Pembrook College. As well as touring the campus, the students recieved a taster lecture on immunology.

At **Star Academy**, pupils enjoyed interactive, futuristic displays at the National Space Centre, and explored local history at the Hanley museum.

Pool Hayes Academy's dance students took part in a masterclass with professional dancers Stefanno & Roseann from Avant Garde Dance Company, learning contemporary techniques, improvisation skills, and developing a performance piece. The company were so impressed by the students that they were invited to perform in the company's curtain raiser performance at Walsall Arena & Arts Centre.

Year 5 pupils at **Great Heath Academy** were visited by local author Danny Pearson who has written a book about life in the Mildenhall Workhouses. Danny shared his knowledge and research with the children as part of their topic on the Victorians. The children were fascinated with their local history, asking lots of brilliant questions. Danny kindly donated a signed copy of his book to the academy, which now has many more aspiring authors amongst its pupils!

SCA and Westbourne visited Cambridge Uni

PHA's avant garde masterclass

Author Danny Pearson at Great Heath

Dukeries' hardworking Sports Leaders

A glimpse into some of the Queen Elizabeth Academy's wide range of clubs and extracurricular activities

Our academies also offer an incredible range of clubs for learners to participate in. **The Queen Elizabeth Academy** is particularly proud of their extensive offer for extracurricular learning; this includes developing some unique skills in the likes of the Yoga Club, Circus Club and Young Artists Club, as well as more traditional activities in sports leadership, creative writing and performing arts. In the STEM club, budding scientists have explored a range of topics including *Engineering in a Pandemic*, where they made a model virus and a face mask testing machine, *Robotics*, in which they built robots to enter into a competition, and *Sewing Bee*, which has kept them very busy; first they made bags for GEH Breast cancer care, then moved on to other designs including pencil cases, gift bags, and even christmas stockings. For the TQEA Young Reporters, what started as a weekly article in the student newsletter has grown rapidly. The reporters have established TQEA Talks, a broadcast designed to showcase amazing work and opportunities happening at the academy.

Pupils at **Iceni Hockwold Academy** also have the opportunity to learn some unique skills in the samba drumming club, ukulele club and model making club. Meanwhile, secondary students in Iceni Methwold Academy's new tech club are exploring different skills and knowledge each half term. This term has included a woodwork project, constructing a 5-sided trinket box with a rotating lid, and developing skills in measuring, sawing, joining and construction. The club's current project is *Mechanics and Movement*; students are building a working motor from scrap materials.

After the roaring success of their Christmas pantomime *What if Christmas Happened Today*?, Iceni's drama club are aspiring to new heights with a summer musical. After much deliberation, they voted on Grease to be the first of many annual summer musicals. The team of nearly 40 students and staff are fundraising tirelessly to buy the rights of the production; through events such as sponsored walks, bake sales and raffles, they hope to achieve the goal amount of £1500 before the end of the term.

Mildenhall College Academy has been encouraging students to get creative this term, with some of their future painters and sculptors submitting work to the Royal Academy's Young Artists Summer Exhibition. Other students from the academy have participated in the Suffolk Rotary Public Speaking Competition, developing essential and transferable life skills in confidence and preparation.

The fantastic **Dukeries Academy** sports leaders have also continued to support the PE department with excellent planning, officiating, and leadership skills, in a variety of events. They have been invaluable in helping run Sports Hall Athletics events for local primaries and officiating a 90-student inter-school basketball tournament. In the next few weeks, they will also be running a multi-skills festival for primary students, completely independently. The academy is proud of their professionalism, confidence, and warm, encouraging manner towards the young children they are working with, all of which has prompted positive feedback from the local community.

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