

OUR TRUST

CHILD FIRST, ASPIRE, CHALLENGE, ACHIEVE

APRIL 2020 | ISSUE 12



THINKING
SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST



TRANSFORMING LIFE CHANCES



THINKING
SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST

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WE ARE ONE

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Welcome to our Easter 2020 edition of Our Trust.

What a historic term it has been, none of us could have imagined that as we returned

to school in January we would be facing a global pandemic and countryside shutdown before the end of the Easter term.

In the final weeks of the Easter term, our schools reacted to almost daily changes in expectations and then closure. I would like to thank all our staff for their efforts during these extremely challenging times their flexibility and commitment has been fantastic.

In this edition of Our Trust we have been able to remind ourselves of the amazing work we do in more “normal” pre-pandemic times as well as celebrating the release of the fantastic #BeKind video.

What has come through in these times of lockdown is the growing realisation from society of the value of schools and the challenge of teaching.

These pages show that in addition to developing student’s academic skills and knowledge schools also fulfil a critical function in young people’s broader growth and success.

As we try to look ahead the only certainty appears to be uncertainty, however, I am confident that as a Trust of schools we will continue to support our students and each other to deliver the best possible distance learning experience.

Stay safe,

Stuart Gardner

Stuart Gardner, MSc, NPQH, NLE
Chief Executive Officer

Search for Thinking Schools Academy Trust and you’ll find us on



It’s never too late

Our last edition of ‘Our Trust’ was indeed a bumper edition. It was so full of news that there were some great stories that we just couldn’t fit in.

FLUENT Public Speakers at Holcombe Grammar School were highly commended for their speeches when they took part in the Medway Rotary Club ‘Youth Speaks’ public speaking competition during late November.



Benjamin, a Year 10 pupil, spoke about the impact of sport and Samuel, from the Year 8 cohort, spoke about anxiety. The pupils represented Holcombe at the competition along with the majority of Medway schools taking part. There were an array of talented speakers on show in both the Under 14 category and the 14-17 years group.

Benjamin was highly commended for his fluent speech about Sport in the older category and Samuel who delighted the judges and audience with his polished speaking performance about anxiety emerged as the Under 14 winner.

Samuel displayed skilled use of tone, emphasis and gravitas at the lectern to triumph. Talking about his success Samuel commented, “Although the nerves were killing me I am delighted my speech went so well”. He added, “I have discovered if you keep practicing and trying hard, you will achieve your goal”. Samuel’s rehearsal sessions definitely paid dividends. He honed his speech down to ensure clarity and dramatic feeling was evident in the final presentation.

Holcombe Grammar School thanked both boys for taking part and the support that their parents gave.

ONE of the parents at Meon Junior School hosted a fundraising event for ‘Myeloma UK’, a bone cancer charity, at the school. There was a cake sale, a raffle, face painting as well as the chance to enjoy a cup of coffee. One of many great charities that parents and carers always support. The total amount raised including online donations was over £774.



THINKING SCHOOLS CELEBRATE WORLD THINKING DAY

Pupils and staff at schools across the Thinking Schools Academy Trust have taken part in a variety of activities to mark World Thinking Day.

World Thinking Day, celebrated every year in February, was an opportunity for schools throughout the high-performing Trust, to celebrate its unique ethos based on “Thinking about Thinking”, which underpins Thinking Schools’ pioneering approach to education.

Every school held special activities and themed lessons as part of the celebrations for World Thinking Day. These included competitions, designing thinking hats, quizzes, debates, their own versions of the TV game shows “the Cube” and “Who dares wins” and lessons based around themes such as “Community” and “Thinking Globally and locally”.

Children at Izzie’s Nursery experienced practicing the habit of persistence in their purple zone.

In all its schools, Thinking Schools’ seeks to harness cognitive education and metacognition to create highly effective thinking and learning communities. Throughout the activities organised to celebrate World Thinking Day, pupils were encouraged to use the thinking tools and strategies they learn and use day to day at school and to think about what it means to be a “thinking school”.

Thinking Schools Academy Trust’s cognitive approach to education has helped to drive improvement across all its schools. This success of this approach was demonstrated earlier this month, when the Trust was ranked by the Government as the highest performing academy Trust in the South East for GCSE results.

Schools within the Trust work towards achieving Thinking School Accreditation from the University of Exeter. 10 of the 17 schools within the Trust are currently accredited as Thinking Schools, with three of these having achieved Advanced Thinking School accreditation.

One of the three schools who hold advanced accreditation is The Portsmouth Academy who took the opportunity to announce to staff and celebrated during World Thinking Day that they had achieved their advanced status as well.



Cedar Children's Academy



The Victory Academy



The Gordon Children's Academy



Holcombe Grammar School



New Horizons Children's Academy



New Horizons Children's Academy



The Portsmouth Academy

“

Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive Officer, Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said:

Our ethos of “thinking about thinking” and cognitive approach to education is central to achieving our aim of improving the life chances of all our children and young people. All our schools seek to nurture confident and successful children who can think and act independently and become the masters of their own destiny.

World Thinking Day was a great opportunity for all our pupils, staff and the wider school communities to celebrate what makes us unique as a Trust and what it means to be a Thinking School. There were a huge amount of exciting activities taking place and it was wonderful to see all our schools and pupils getting involved.

”



The Rochester Grammar School



All Faiths Children's Academy



Goodwin Academy



Penhale Infant School



Newbridge Junior School

Thinking Schools Academy Trust's students in harmony as they call for all to

#BEKIND

Students from all 17 schools across the Thinking Schools Academy Trust sung in harmony as they called for all to #BeKind through a special performance of This Is Me from The Greatest Showman.

The performance recorded across all 17 schools and cut together into one video, spread positivity and the importance of being kind. It was orchestrated by Head of Performing Arts at The Victory Academy, Sasha Sherwood, and Director of Education for Chatham, Mandy Gage.

The prominent vocals in the video were produced by students from The Victory Academy in their recording studio in Chatham. They were supported by choirs from both The Rochester Grammar School and The Gordon's Children's Academy, as well as the whole of All Faith's Children's Academy that has a signing choir.



Pupils from Isambard Brunel Junior School in Portsmouth created a dance routine that features in the video, while all children at Meredith Infant School, which is shortly to merge with Isambard, preformed the song in assembly.

The song This Is Me from The Greatest Showman is about the importance of self-acceptance and how it is okay to be yourself. The performance aims to demonstrate this, as well as spreading the importance of being kind to others. The Be Kind hashtag was popularised following the death of Love Island presenter Caroline Flack.

Thinking Schools Academy Trust, a family of 17 high-performing schools with hubs in Medway, Portsmouth and Kent, encourages all its students to #BeKind, and supports positive thinking and promotes wellbeing across the whole Trust.



Think of the ripple effect that can be created when we nourish someone. One kind empathetic word has a wonderful way of turning into many.

“

Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive Officer, Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said:

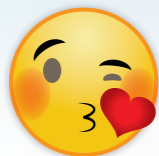
It is truly wonderful to see the hard work of all the students – from our very youngest in infant schools to our sixth-formers - staff and wider school community come to fruition in such a heart-warming and moving performance. The video shows the many talents they have – but also, and more importantly, how they are thoughtful, kind people. Yes, school is about getting good grades but first and foremost it is about growing as a person.

The importance of being kind and looking out for one another is as great now as it has ever been and I hope this video encourages everyone to spread the positive message far and wide.

”

#BEKIND & THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMENTS

What a wonderfully uplifting video.



The young lady who did the signing was amazing. Awesome video.

Amazing and the perfect message right now.

What an inspirational video.

This actually made me cry my heart out seeing all the children doing such a lovely thing at this terrible time.

Well done to the children!

Very emotional and very well done.



Fantastic!

That was incredible well done everybody.

Great video! Stay safe everyone and Be Kind.

So amazing, good timing too.



Well done TSAT for putting this together!



Well done everyone! Lovely to see them all smiling.

The importance of being kind and looking out for one another is as great now as it has ever been.

Well done to everyone involved and especially at this hard time showing how we need to #bekind.



You are all amazing so proud to say my daughter is part of The Victory Academy.



Well done to all the kids, this is amazing!

Brilliant, well done everyone.

Think you better watch this, it's so lovely.

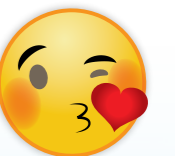


What a lovely video! I feel so privileged and proud to have been part of the process.

Fabulous work everyone. Well done.

That's emotional xxx great video.

Absolutely brilliant! Really did put a smile on my face this morning, thank you everyone.



So incredibly proud! Thank you to everyone who has supported this. We are one!



THE PORTSMOUTH ACADEMY RECOGNISED AS ADVANCED THINKING SCHOOL

Students and staff at the Portsmouth Academy (TPA) are celebrating the Academy's accreditation as an "Advanced Thinking School" by the University of Exeter.

The Academy, which is part of our high-performing Thinking Schools Academy Trust, is one of only seven schools in the country to receive the prestigious Level 2 "Advanced Thinking School" accreditation.

The report by the University of Exeter's Graduate School of Education, issued as part of the accreditation process, noted that attainment has "steadily increased" at TPA, since its initial accreditation as a Thinking School – demonstrating the positive impact of its cognitive approach to education.

The Portsmouth Academy was rated Outstanding for effectiveness of leadership and management and Good overall by Ofsted in 2017, was previously accredited as a Level 1 "Thinking School" in 2016.

Our Trust is a family of 17 high-performing schools with hubs in Portsmouth, Medway and Kent, which pioneers an innovative "Thinking School" approach to develop students' cognitive skills and learning habits.

10 of the 17 schools within the Trust are currently accredited as "Thinking Schools", with three of these having achieved "Advanced Thinking School" accreditation.

The University of Exeter's report highlights a wide range of other strengths, including:

- "A strong programme of staff development is in place throughout the school, which is rooted in the Thinking School ethos."
- "Students are confident in using the Thinking Tools effectively to help scaffold their own learning."
- "Thinking Skills are fully embedded in the school's teaching and learning ethos, which is clearly visible in the standard of student work."
- The Academy has "extensive links with other schools in the Trust, as well as with the Portsmouth Teaching School Alliance".



Rachel Grey, Principal at The Portsmouth Academy, said:

"I am hugely proud that the efforts of all our staff, pupils, parents, governors and wider community have been recognised. I would like to thank everyone for their hard work and dedication, which has played an integral role in our journey to becoming an Advanced Thinking School and we will continue to push for even greater heights."

Sarah Musson, a Year 11 student, who leads the Thinking Schools Student Drive Team said:

"Using all of the thinking tools, especially the thinking hats and thinking maps, has greatly aided me in my development and learning. Being on the Thinking Drive team is something that I am really proud of and gaining the advanced status is a real achievement for us all."

Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive Officer at The Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said:

"We are delighted that The Portsmouth Academy has achieved "Advanced Thinking School" accreditation.

"This is a testament to the hard work of all the fantastic staff and pupils and their commitment to our cognitive approach to education and embedding thinking skills in the life of the school. TPA also plays a key role in sharing best practice across the Trust and with other local schools in Portsmouth to foster an open, critical learning environment."





WORDS INSPIRE WORLD BOOK DAY

Pupils and staff at schools across the Thinking Schools Academy Trust have taken part in a variety of inspiring activities to mark World Book Day.

World Book Day, a charity event held annually in the United Kingdom and Ireland on the first Thursday in March, was an opportunity for schools throughout the nationally recognised high-performing Trust, to celebrate and take part in creative activities and indulge in a world of imagination and reality through printed words leading them on a journey of discovery.

From Kent to Portsmouth, pages were turning as pupils and teachers swapped books and shared stories, where staff read extracts from books that made them fall in love with reading.

Many schools' pupils and staff dressed up as fictional and non-fictional characters, taking part in fancy dress competitions and parades. Mr Still and Mr Claessens, teachers at Holcombe Grammar School, dressed in their Where's Wally costumes to promote the Where's Wally 10K charity run for the National Literacy Trust that they will be taking part in. Pupils at Holcombe looked at biographies of aspirational figures and took inspiration from their stories. Cedar Children's Academy and Meredith Infant School wore cosy pyjamas while reading bedtime stories, with Meredith pupils coming in after school to enjoy a cup of hot chocolate while they listened and read.

All Faiths Children's Academy held a 'Read for Good' sponsored readathon where during the day the bell rang four times and the whole schools stopped to read a book for 20 minutes. Older pupils also buddied up to read to their younger peers. Sponsorship money raised will help children in hospitals to gain access to books while 20 percent of the amount raised will provide new books for the school.

Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive Officer, Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said:

World Book Day presents a wonderful platform to demonstrate not only what takes place in our 'Thinking Schools', but also emphasises the importance of reading to developing writing and speaking skills and to inspire imagination.

It is so pleasing to see first-hand and hear of the many amazing activities that have taken place during World Book Day within our Trust. These activities provide pupils with a wealth of experience that they will continue to use during the course of their education.

Thank you to the commitment and dedication of staff and pupils who go above and beyond to make these nationally recognised days memorable.

Evie, Rhea and Lexie, pupils at Meon Junior School, held a 'Bring and Buy' sale to raise money for their school library and were grateful for those who donated unwanted books.

Newbridge Junior School worked on a project where each class wrote a paragraph that followed on from previous paragraphs, with pupils having the opportunity to introduce twists and turns along the way. A magnificent story where nobody would know the outcome until the final paragraph was complete. Many schools had lessons where pupils developed their writing skills by creating their own pieces of written work.

Activities included building themed displays, quizzes, bookmark creating, book cover and spine design competitions, and an extreme reading photo challenge where pupils took photos of themselves in unusual or exciting locations and a scavenger hunt in the library, looking for books with particular words in their titles.

The Portsmouth Academy had a Harry Potter themed day, with Hogwarts styled lessons. English had Defense against the Dark Arts, Science got creative with potions and RE had Muggle studies to name a few.

Pupils received £1 World Book Day tokens to exchange for one of twelve special £1 World Book Day books or used as a discount voucher for a full priced book.

Indulge in a world of imagination and reality through printed words, a journey of discovery

WORLD BOOK DAY GALLERY



TWO 'GOOD' TO BE TRUE



All Faiths Children's Academy in Strood, Rochester has been rated Outstanding for Personal Development and Good overall by Ofsted in a glowing inspection report.

Ofsted praised the academy, sponsored by the high-performing Thinking Schools Academy Trust, for its efforts to enhance pupils' personal development, though an "ambitious", "rich and diverse curriculum". The inspectors highlighted the wide range of opportunities provided for pupils to learn about the world around them and how to become responsible citizens.

In its report, Ofsted noted that the "culture of high expectations" set by the headteacher and leadership team, as part of the academy and Trust's wider commitment to "transforming life chances for all pupils", is helping pupils to succeed.

The academy was described as a "highly inclusive" and "happy, safe place to be", with Ofsted also praising the academy's "particularly strong" provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The inspectors also noted that children "do well" during their time in the academy's Early Years provision, benefiting from a well-planned curriculum and nurturing environment where they "explore new things confidently and curiously".

The inspectors also highlighted teachers' "strong subject knowledge", noting that senior leaders and the Trust have provided them with appropriate training and support.

Cormac Murphy, Headteacher, All Faiths Children's Academy said:

"We are delighted with the outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection. We are particularly proud to see the inspectors recognising the strength of Personal Development, rating the academy Outstanding in this area. Ofsted also acknowledges how the high expectations we set all our pupils are helping to develop them into confident thinkers and learners, able to thrive in the next steps of their education."



Isambard Brunel Junior School has been rated as Good by Ofsted for the first time in over 20 years – with inspectors hailing the "significant" improvements achieved by the academy.

Isambard Brunel Junior School was praised for the quality of education pupils receive, the strength of leadership, and the behaviour and attitude of the children. Every area assessed by Ofsted was graded as Good.

There was particular praise for the Headteacher, Lucy Carroll, and her deputy, who inspectors said were "a very strong and effective team" who have "huge ambitions" for what pupils can achieve.

Ofsted also highlighted the strength of the teaching staff, including achieving rapid improvements in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspectors said that pupils behave well and "really make the most of all the great opportunities they are given to enrich their learning".

Thinking Schools Academy Trust began its sponsorship of Isambard Brunel Junior School five years ago and has steadily improved it, culminating in Ofsted's report. Ofsted praised the support the academy has received from the Thinking Schools for the "significant" progress made since the last inspection.

Lucy Carroll, Headteacher of Isambard Brunel Junior School, in North End, said:

"I am so proud to be the Headteacher of Isambard Brunel Junior School. I feel very privileged to work alongside such an amazing, hard-working and committed team and to be part of the lives of our incredible pupils and families. I would like to thank everyone for their continuous belief and support in us and our journey."

The reports underline how the Trust's ethos of 'Thinking about Thinking' benefits pupils, with teachers encouraging them to use their "thinking skills to think deeply about the knowledge they acquire, for example by 'thinking globally' and 'thinking healthily'".

Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said:

"The work that has been done by everyone involved with the Isambard Brunel Junior School, and which has been led by Lucy, has been phenomenal. It is so rewarding to see that hard work pay off.

"The fantastic result for All Faiths is a real testament to the hard work and dedication of all involved to ensuring that the academy is a place where all children thrive and succeed. It's great to see these efforts paying off and delivering such strong results.

"I would like to pay tribute to both Lucy, Cormac and their teams, to the pupils for their talent and hard work, and to the parents and carers who have always been so supportive."





ECO WARRIORS

During March, Meon Junior School was awarded the Overall Winner of Portsmouth City Council's Recycling Competition 2019. This was in recognition of the many initiatives put in place by the school Eco Council. This is a wonderful achievement as the council is a new group.

As part of the recognition, two of the Year 6 Eco Warriors, Casey and Maggie, travelled by bus to the Lord Mayor's parlour in the Guildhall, Portsmouth to meet with the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. The Lord Mayor, the Lady Mayoress and Environmental and Climate Change Cabinet Member Councillor Dave Ashmore presented the children with the award.

Afterwards, they had tea and biscuits with the other winners and chatted. The Lord Mayor was so impressed with the children that he took them back into his office and gave them both special Portsmouth pin badges. The children both asked very interesting questions and took an opportunity to view the cabinets full of silverware, the keys to the city and a solid silver model of the HMS Victory.



NEWBRIDGE PUPILS PRAISED WHILE BEING AMBASSADORS FOR THE SCHOOL

Newbridge Junior School visited the Mary Rose Museum in Portsmouth during February and were delighted to receive the below email from Mary Kinoulty, Head of Learning at the Mary Rose Trust, praising the Year 4 children for how they presented themselves during the visit.

"Dear Headteacher, as you know Year 4 came to the Mary Rose yesterday on a visit organised by Joanna Teare. I thought that you would be glad to know how deeply impressed we were by all the children. They were simply OUTSTANDING! As you can imagine, we meet many thousands of children from all over the region over the course of a school year. I have no hesitation in saying that Newbridge Junior School children are remarkable for their love of learning! They were fantastically well prepared by their wonderful teachers and were so keen to share their knowledge with the team here. They thoroughly enjoyed learning new things and took part in all the activities with great enthusiasm. It goes without saying that their behaviour was exemplary. They were all extremely well mannered. In short, they were an absolute joy to teach and a pleasure to meet. They are a great credit to the school, their teachers, their parents and themselves. Please pass on our thanks to the children and their teachers. I should add that the teachers and their supporting adults were a key part of the success of the day. They were clearly inspirational as well as providing first class leadership and organisation."



Bite size news

Years 5 and 6 children at Meon Junior School enjoyed a presentation given by the author Amber Lee Dodd, and were able to ask her lots of questions about how she writes her novels. Afterwards, children were able to buy one of her books and have it personally signed.



Year 6 children at All Faiths Children's Academy have won the Pitch IT Focus on Diversity event that took place in Medway, Kent. During morning worship they were presented with their award by The Worshipful The Mayor of Medway Councillor Tejan.



Cedar Children's Academy are very excited by the introduction of their new Studio Cedar. They have their very own green screen wall and green screen technology. The children in the Lunch Club have been having so much fun, hanging out at Hogwarts, swimming with sharks and taking on the world with Lego Batman. Each class will soon be using the technology and Reception are particularly excited that they can go exploring with dinosaurs.



Early Years, at Cedar, organised a sponsored bounce to raise much-needed funds in order to improve the outside area. They were very kindly donated the use of a huge bouncy castle from Marc at Rochester Dance Junction. All the children in the Nursery and Reception got to bounce and see how many jumps they could achieve. The children worked so hard to raise sponsorship money and raised over £1,436. This will be used to purchase 2 new sheds, a new stage area, a reading area and a nature station. The children are very excited to see the improvements in their outside area.



Year 3 children at All Faiths Children's Academy have been working hard all term to build up for the chocolate showcase! The children were extremely proud to share their Golden Ticket stories with their parents and carers as well as presenting some chocolate themed poetry.

They were also able to share some of their incredible artwork in which they had re-designed a candy themed house for poor Charlie Bucket, including using real sweets. The last of which they enjoyed polishing off afterwards!



Bite size news

continued...

Cedar had a Superhero Day with Year 1 diving into their Superhero topic. They set about saving the school by coming dressed as their favourite superhero or a superhero they had created. The children made their own masks and completed a superhero assault course including a web to crawl through. The children then wrote creatively about their experiences being superheroes and what it was like to save the day.



Cedar celebrated Number Day to raise money for the NSPCC and to promote maths throughout the school. They had a day of fun maths activities including a maths trail, which took them around the school. The children had to find the numbers and the right calculation to make the number. The school were so impressed at the complex equations used and impressive number knowledge. The school uses Times Tables Rockstars, so each year group chose a song with a number in it, practised hard and then performed it to the rest of their key stage. Songs such as "9 to 5" by Dolly Parton and "Summer of '69" by Bryan Adams were performed. Everyone absolutely rocked out on Number Day and raised £356 in the process.



Students at The Portsmouth Academy have been working on a Beach project and had the pleasure of a visit and workshop from Clarke Reynolds, a visual artist who is registered as severely sighted with a condition called Retinitis Pigmentosa.

Clarke's style uses sound to inspire his art in which he uses fabrics and textiles so that visually impaired people can interact with a piece through touch.

Year 10 Textile class students learnt about his work and took part in a workshop based on the sounds and textures of the sea.



The Portsmouth Academy were invited to celebrate Portsmouth Museums' 125th Birthday in January with the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth. Students had to submit a short written paragraph about why they wanted to attend the event to Miss Hudson, Curriculum Lead for History. Two students were chosen to attend the event along with Miss Hudson, to represent the Academy.



NEW HORIZONS CHILDREN'S ACADEMY PRAISED BY MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCHOOL STANDARDS

Pupils and staff at New Horizons Children's Academy are celebrating after being praised by Rt Hon Nick Gibb, Minister of State for School Standards, in a letter to the school's Headteacher Jody Murphy.

The letter congratulated Jody, staff and pupils for the high levels of progress demonstrated by pupils in last year's Key Stage 2 assessments. The Academy, which is part of the high-performing Thinking Schools Academy Trust, achieved progress scores of 7.6, 2.8 and 6.5 in reading, writing and mathematics respectively.

The letter highlighted these results stating that the levels of progress made by pupils at New Horizon between Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2 is in the top three per cent of primary schools nationally.

Additionally, an impressive 88 per cent of pupils at the Academy, achieved at least the expected standard in all three subjects – significantly above the national average of 65 per cent. This was the school's first cohort of pupils to take the tests, also known as SATs.

Jody Murphy, Executive Headteacher, New Horizons Children's Academy

"We are incredibly proud that our hard work and dedication to provide pupils with the highest quality education has been recognised by the Minister for School Standards.

"As a school, we are committed to ensuring our pupil's achieve high standards in all areas of the curriculum and providing them with the opportunity to grow. This recognition is a testament to the hard work of our pupils, parents, teachers, staff and Trust."

Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive Officer, Thinking Schools Academy Trust

"This praise and encouragement is most welcome and the achievements by New Horizon Children's Academy have been fantastic. It is wonderful to see the pupils, parents, staff and wider community receiving the recognition they deserve, and I very much look forward to watching them continue this upward trajectory."



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF FLAIR

The Rochester Grammar School performed their 10th annual charity Flair dance show on the 13th-15th February 2020. Over 80 students worked together in numerous roles including choreography, performance, set production and advertising to produce a spectacular show. Flair has been a wonderful opportunity for students to break down their barriers between years groups, allowing friendships to form where there may not normally be the freedom to do so for a great cause.

This year's production raised over £2,900 towards Parkinson's UK. This has made the school's fundraising total from the past 10 years to well over £40,000 for a variety of charities.

ASPIRATIONS BECOME MORE

Every day we experience pupils and staff aspiring to become better at what they do, to progress, to overcome obstacles and to achieve their goals no matter how small or large they may be.

We would like to think that throughout our previous publications and this one, that the articles speak for themselves in showing that everyone has a journey of discovery from nursery through primary and then onto secondary. Constantly developing an understanding of what interests them and what they may like to pursue as their choice of career or further education.

Our primary and secondary schools arrange workshops and visits from those in different careers to come in and share their experiences and knowledge to pupils which really does help them to gain a better understanding of the type of career that they may be interested in.

Therefore, with that in mind, it was great to hear about a couple of schools in Portsmouth sharing what they had been up to with their pupils.

Newbridge Junior School provided an experience where guest speakers came in to talk about their chosen careers. The guest speakers included a police officer and his dog, a paramedic, a pilot, a solicitor, an air traffic controller and a retail manager.

As part of the Portsmouth Aspiration Week, Meon Junior School had some parents volunteer to talk about their careers. The week-long event provides pupils with a chance to start thinking about what they might like to do in the future.

There was also an opportunity for pupils to dress as their 'future selves' at Newbridge Junior School, where they posed in front of a green screen, and with the magic of technology they were transformed into their possible futures.



STEP UP



Anna Webb, currently Headteacher at Newbridge Junior School, has been offered the post of Headteacher of both Newbridge and Penhale schools, with effect from Easter 2020.

Peter Martin, Chair of the Board of Directors for the Trust, Stu McIntosh, Chair of Fratton Regional Governing Body in Portsmouth, Natalie Sheppard, Director of Education and Stuart Gardner, CEO, interviewed Anna and were bowled over by Anna's passion and enthusiasm for bringing the schools together to create an all-through journey from Reception Year to Year 6, and for those children who join in the nursery. Kate Keller, current Headteacher at Penhale who will shortly be retiring, is really pleased to be handing over the wonderful school she has built into Anna's capable and committed hands and that both Penhale and Newbridge will continue to go from strength to strength under her leadership.

After the Christmas break, Anna started to spend time shadowing Kate and from this Easter, she will be based at Penhale for 3 days per week with Natalie supporting Penhale on a Monday and a Friday.

We congratulate Anna and look forward to the seeing the schools continue to go from strength to strength.

Rebecca Martin has taken on the role of Acting Assistant Head of School.

Kira Stewart stepped up to be the Acting PA for Goodwin Academy during Terms 3 and 4.

Dan High has stepped up to become the Director of Service and Performance at the Trust.

Dawn Trimby has become the Acting Head of Finance.

Sam Flynn has moved from HR to become an Executive Business Manager.

Karolina Nowak-Fuell is now a Management Accountant having been an Accounting Technician.

James Fenlon is now the Head of Estates and Health & Safety having been the Regional Facilities Manager for Portsmouth.

Darren Fox is now the Regional Facilities Manager for Portsmouth.

Nick O'Donoghue is now the Head of Digital Strategy and Procurement having been the Operations Delivery Manager.

SPORTING

SUCCESS

On 13 February, 8 children from All Faiths Children's Academy battled their way through a multitude of table tennis games to come 7th in the competition overall. They had to play singles games and held their nerve in order to play their way to the top.



All Faiths Children's Academy

The children and school are very proud that they completed the competition to take the title as the 'Fair Play Winners', which adds to their already fantastic 'Fair Play' points tally across the season.

Cedar Children's Academy's team of children attended the Mini Youth Games tournament as well, having been selected after attending table tennis club sessions. Keen to show off their skills, the children gained so much experience from playing against other schools as well as picking up new skills and tips along the way.

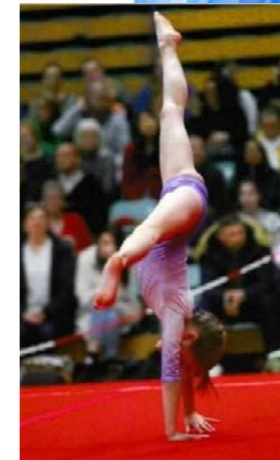


Cedar Children's Academy

Saule, a Year 4 pupil at All Faiths Children's Academy, has won the British Gymnastics South East Regional Floor and Vault Competition 2019.



The competition provides an opportunity to enjoy, challenge and achieve for all ages, from the youngest participants to mature volunteers. Self-discipline, focus, continual training are all required to master the skills of a gymnastic.



Two of Meon Junior School's upper school pupils, Sam and Rhea took part in the Hampshire Cross Country Finals. It was a very muddy course and a windy day in Basingstoke. Both children ran brilliantly and did well representing Portsmouth.



INSPIRED AT THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

Year 11 girls from The Portsmouth Academy had a wonderful experience when they visited the Houses of Parliament that had been organised and funded by the Girls Network. The trip was to celebrate International Women's Day and during the day 8 students from Year 11 had a guided tour, saw the House of Lords and had a Q&A with Steven Morgan MP, which they dominated by asking current, controversial, on topic and relevant questions, all using the Questioning habit of excellence.

Girls Network members from Castle View and Trafalgar schools joined them during the visit. The Girls Network provides one to one aspirational mentoring programmes to build confidence provide greater access to opportunities and develop skills no matter what the girls' backgrounds are.



PERFORMING SENSATIONS

All Faiths Children's Academy's Young Voices Choir from Year 4, 5 and 6 had an amazing day on Tuesday 4 February when they went to the O2 to perform as part of a giant children's choir. There were a staggering 8,497 children singing!

The pupils rehearsed all afternoon and after months of practising, using their retrieval skills to remember words and actions, all of their hard work had paid off. It was a fantastic concert, singing with world famous performers such as Ruti, The Shires and Tony Hadley. The school's seats were so close to the stage that they even had their photo taken with Tony Hadley! An amazing experience for all involved.



BEING A MEDWAY VICTORY SEA CADET

Medway Victory Sea Cadets take part in a wealth of experiences, learning new skills and developing others. They are given challenges to overcome working together in teams and alone, making new friends and gaining confidence with every exercise they step forward to take on.

The following is a diary of activities that have taken place since January and an insight into what you might expect to be involved in if you become a team member of the Medway Victory Sea Cadets.



18th January 2020

Cadets visit Royal Engineers Museum, taking a full and active part in all the activities and paying attention to all the information. Activities at the museum included bridge building and rocket science sessions with one cadet managing to reach the ceiling. The cadets were provided with a two hour tour of the Museum gaining a wealth of knowledge and tried on uniforms of a real Soldier.



1st February 2020

The group of 16 cadets plus S/Lt Eaton and PPO Ward visited the INMARSAT headquarters and Operations Centre. The centre team gave up their Saturday to provide a full, interactive and interesting day. Part of the day involved going on the Ship Simulator that was very realistic and even made people queasy.



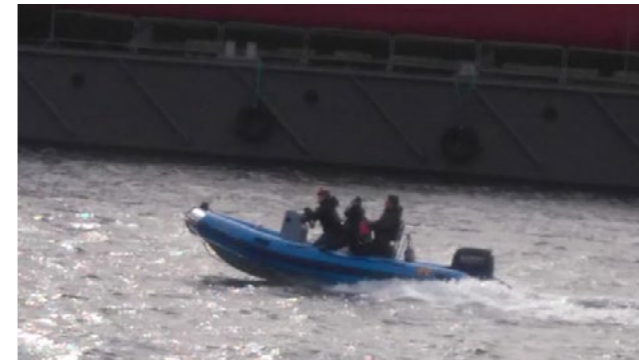
10th February 2020

Medway Victory Sea Cadet Unit, TS Temeraire - A fine Ship's Company. Proud to be part of this Unit. Taking the Sea Cadet Promise is a big thing and each and every New Entry sounded like they meant it. With commitment, cadets should all have long and rewarding membership of the Corps and the Unit.



20th February 2020

TS Temeraire has another first with their first trip to sea with the Royal Navy. Captain (LT Burness-Smith RN) and crew were very hospitable. It was a cold, windy, and wet day, but nothing could dampen the spirits of the cadets lucky enough to get on board HMS BLAZER. The weather restricted what the cadets were able to do, but never the less they had a great time. Thanks also to Lt Cdr Gambell for accompanying and for the tour of the ships and facilities of HM Dockyard Portsmouth.



February Half Term

A group of TS Temeraire cadets qualified in Powerboating and Power Planing. Over 9 qualifications gained at the Sea Cadets Royal Docks boat station. Medway Victory Sea Cadet Unit, TS Temeraire, now have three qualified speedboat drivers as well as the 7 displacement drivers.



28th February 2020

National Junior Indoor Rowing Competition at Copper Box Arena. Fantastic day at the Olympic Park with 17 cadets in attendance. All cadets were brilliant and a credit to themselves, the Unit and the SCC.

Highlights:

- Year 7 Girls - Top Sea Cadet (position 11 overall out of 135 national competitors)
- Year 7 Boys- Top 3 Sea Cadets (position 10th, 12th and 36th overall out of 142 national competitors)
- Year 8 Girls - 2nd placed Sea Cadet
- Year 8 Boys - Top 4 best Sea Cadets
- Year 9 Boys - Top 2 best Sea Cadets



29th February 2020

Cadets worked very hard to keep 2 Concept II Rowing machines going for 8 hours non-stop. Excellent achievement for the cadets who made it for either part or all of the day. Brilliant effort, particularly given that yesterday was NJIRC and tomorrow is Drill and Piping training. Real hard work, Real team spirit - inter divisional competition - and a real 'esprit de corps' fighting to gain places on other teams in the national picture.



14th March 2020

TS Temeraire Drill and piping competition that was actually a display for parents, giving the cadets the chance to show off the skills they have worked on since Christmas. Really good show and the fact that everyone turned out for the practice even though the District competition had to be cancelled due to the developing pandemic. It was a really cold and wet day to be outside marching or piping all day, so a fantastic effort by all.

THE STAGE IS CALLING

Congratulations to The Portsmouth Academy's Year 9 Drama students and Mr Young for putting on their first ever production in front of a live audience.

Year 9 Drama students performed a play centred on themes of friendship, bullying, and storytelling. Having researched their characters, organised their own costumes and memorised their lines, their performances were confident and poised, enhanced by the use of props and music.

A group of Year 8 students were invited to watch the play and Mr Young and the school hopes the performance will inspire students to choose drama as one of their GCSE options.



ABCD AWARDS

ABOVE AND BEYOND
THE CALL OF DUTY



Term 2 (2019-20) Winner
Shana Kwakye
New Horizons Children's Academy

Although being fresh out of an NQT year herself, Shana has been instrumental in supporting others in her phase, particularly an NQT. She has used her own time to do this and has been proactive, always seeking out times she can further support. She does this quietly and without fuss – a real team player!



Term 2 (2019-20) Winner
Anita Perryman
Moorings Way Infant School

Anita has adapted well to huge changes in her role this year and has coped admirably with the challenges of managing the office single-handedly. She has received support from admin staff from other schools and has done a great job in inducting them/supporting them in their new roles. With great knowledge of Moorings Way Infant School, Anita has been very supportive to the Acting Headteacher. She always deals with everything calmly and is a very friendly and helpful member of staff who has built good relationships with staff, parents and pupils. She has a flexible approach and contributes widely to the running of the school doing whatever is required, for example contributing to SLT meetings, mopping floors or helping with after-school events. Anita is a great asset to the school and they feel they are very fortunate to have her.



Term 3 (2019-20) Winner
Emma Johnson
The Victory Academy

Emma, The Victory Academy's Assistant SENCo, is a valued member of the school and is fully committed to the learning of SEND students. She has built a strong team who are equally committed to ensuring the best outcomes for the most challenging and vulnerable students. She has worked above and beyond to extend her own understanding and knowledge to ensure best practice and works incredibly hard to support colleagues within the Academy and the wider Trust.



Term 3 (2019-20) Winner
Richard Denham
Newbridge Junior School

Newbridge Junior School has been trialling Trilby TV and Richard has been very proactive with making sure that photos and information are displayed swiftly and aesthetically. He has a real passion of technology and is always willing to help anyone who is struggling with any aspect of IT. He was instrumental in supporting Thinking Technology with the setting up of new display screens and has joined a working party, researching the use of iPads in the classroom. As a recently qualified teacher, Richard has definitely gone above and beyond the call of duty to help ensure the school's events are celebrated through technology.

WORLD CHALLENGE: STUDENTS TAKE ON SNOWDON

Students from The Rochester Grammar School travelled to Snowdon on Friday 28th February 2020 for their acclimatisation and training weekend for World Challenge. A group of 30 students led by Miss Parry and other staff will hopefully be travelling to Tanzania in July 2020 for their World Challenge expedition.

A group of these students will be climbing Kilimanjaro during their expedition and needed to experience climbing a mountain and camping in challenging

conditions. As most of the students had completed either their Bronze and Silver DofE awards, the expedition leaders were pleased with how they performed despite the gale force winds and almost constant rain.

Unfortunately, due to these weather conditions, the students were unable to climb to the summit of Snowdon but they walked to within 100 m of the summit. We look forward to hearing about their experiences later in the year.



Goodwin Academy Teacher Shortlisted for Education's Oscars

Selected from thousands of nominations, Kirsty Gaythwaite from Goodwin Academy is one of 87 extraordinary teachers, lecturers and school staff who have been entered for the prestigious Pearson National Teaching Awards.

Kirsty was nominated for a Silver Award in the Outstanding New Teacher of the Year category. She initially joined the school as a learning support assistant to help vulnerable pupils, but was quickly identified as having a talent for teaching mathematics. She continued to work at the school while studying in evenings and weekends for her diploma in education, and since qualifying as a teacher has continued to put in immense amounts of work to ensure her students succeed. She has organised lunchtime revision sessions, after school interventions, Easter and May holiday sessions and constant communication with parents, all to make sure her Year 11 students have the best possible chance when it comes to their exams.

Kirsty is in the running to be one of the Silver Award winners. These will then compete to win one of just 14 Gold Awards which will be announced at the televised UK ceremony later in the year, broadcast on the BBC as 'Britain's Classroom Heroes'.

The Pearson National Teaching Awards is an annual celebration of exceptional teachers, founded in 1998 by Lord David Puttnam to recognise the life-changing impact an inspirational teacher can have on the lives of the young people they teach.



Simon Smith, Principal at Goodwin Academy, said:

“ Goodwin Academy is proud to have teachers who are dedicated to transforming life chances of all students. We are ecstatic that a member of our teaching team is a finalist in the Pearson National Teaching Awards and her enthusiasm, commitment and passion has been recognised. ”

Don't forget to send your 'thank you' card to your teachers at:

<https://thankateacher.co.uk/>

THANK YOU TO OUR KEY WORKERS

During this difficult time, our schools have all supported one another and the community around us. Staff and students have shown support to our National Health Service and key workers. Children have been creating artwork for local key workers and staff have been going above and beyond to help local authorities who are strained with resources.



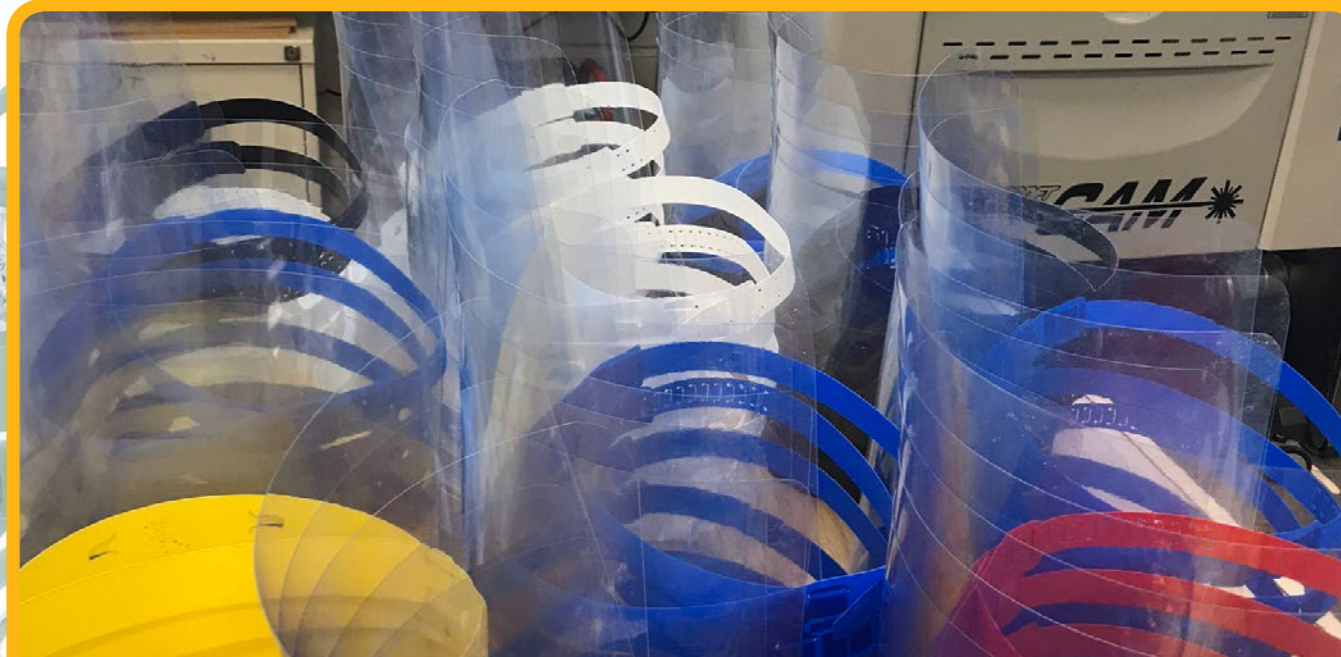
Meredith Infant School



Penhale Infant School & Newbridge Junior



Meredith Infant School



A huge well done to staff at The Portsmouth Academy for making 350 visors for QA hospital, local police stations and doctor surgeries. Staff involved have received a huge thank you from Hampshire Police for their generous donation on Twitter!



Thank you to everyone who has helped delivering Free School Meals, providing half term school clubs and our own key workers who have been providing an excellent education for children whose parents are also key workers.



THINKING
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