

OUR TRUST

CHILD FIRST, ASPIRE, CHALLENGE, ACHIEVE



THINKING
SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST

DECEMBER 2019 | ISSUE 11



SCHOOLS RAISE OVER £6,000 FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

STUDENTS GO SAILING ON THE HIGH SEAS

SCIENCE TECHNICIAN AT THE VICTORY ACADEMY WINS
SALTERS' NATIONAL AWARD

THIRD CPD TRUST DAYS ARE EMPOWERING

TRANSFORMING LIFE CHANCES

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WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Welcome to the Christmas 2019 edition of Our Trust magazine.

As a Trust we know how important it is to recognise the fantastic work of all of our staff and you will see

our ABCD award winners regularly featured in this publication. We are pleased to announce that we have decided to take this recognition to another level by becoming a sponsor of both the Teach Portsmouth Awards and the Kent Teacher of the Year Awards. By sponsoring these Awards, we want to help recognise the amazing work done by staff not only in our own schools but also in all the schools in the communities in which we serve. Kent Teacher of the Year nominations open in January 2020 and I would urge everyone to find a little time to nominate a colleague who inspires them.

It was a delight to see all our Teachers and Teaching Assistants at our first Trust Hub CPD days either side of half term. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with some really useful suggestions on how to make the days even better next year. Building the links between our schools at all levels is critical to supporting our staff and students to 'Be their Best selves'.

Finally, I am very proud to share with you that we now have two Advanced Thinking Schools accredited by Exeter University in our Trust – Newbridge Junior School and Rochester Grammar School. Holcombe Grammar School has also now gained its accreditation as a Thinking School. We remain the only Multi Academy Trust committed to delivering metacognition in all of our schools and continue to make up one in three accredited Thinking Schools in the country. Becoming a Thinking School is challenging and delivering metacognition in the classroom consistently across a school is difficult. However, the rewards of building a common language of learning, of creating a common toolbox of Thinking Tools and of helping students to understand and control their own thinking are clear to see in the success of the students in our schools.

Please enjoy this edition of Our Trust; to see and read about the amazing activities, opportunities and successes that our students have been part of in the last few months is humbling. I would like to thank all our staff for their amazing dedication; it is only through their efforts that we are able to make a difference and 'Transform the Life Chances' of the young people in our care.

Stuart Gardner

Stuart Gardner, MSc, NPQH, NLE
Chief Executive Officer

*Merry Christmas
to one and all!*

NEWBRIDGE JUNIOR SCHOOL & ROCHESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL RECEIVE ADVANCED THINKING SCHOOLS ACCREDITATION

Newbridge Junior School in Portsmouth has become only the third primary school in the country to receive “Advanced Thinking School” accreditation along with Rochester Grammar School being reaccredited for the second time from the University of Exeter.

The report by the University of Exeter’s Graduate School of Education, issued as part of the accreditation process, praised Newbridge for its “focus on the development of the whole child”. It also noted how learning at the school is tailored to student’s individual needs and “developing autonomy and individuality in pupils’ approaches to problem-solving”. Rochester Grammar School’s report, as part of their reaccreditation process, noted that they have “gone from strength to strength in their strive for excellence”. It also noted that the school is very successful in “developing independent and reflective thinkers”.

Our Trust pioneers an innovative “Thinking School” approach to develop students’ cognitive skills and learning habits. More than half of the schools in the Trust have now received this prestigious accreditation.

Newbridge Junior School leads Thinking Schools’ Portsmouth Primary Thinking Hub – a group of schools within the Trust taking a whole school approach to the teaching of thinking, who meet regularly to share best practice and expertise on embedding thinking skills.

Rochester Grammar School was first accredited as a Thinking School in 2009, subsequently achieving Advanced Thinking School Accreditation in 2011

and a re-accreditation in 2016. The school is rated Outstanding by Ofsted and is amongst the highest performing schools in the country for its GCSE, A level and International Baccalaureate results.

Newbridge Junior School’s report highlighted:

- “Questioning strategies are used in alignment with a common cognitive language such that pupils are clear about the demands placed on them”.
- The school is “highly inclusive of all children, regardless of background.”
- The school “receives requests for school to school support from a variety of schools outside TSAT aimed at developing thinking approaches via curriculum development and pedagogical approaches. This is illustrative of the high-quality developmental provision and impact at Newbridge.”
- “There are continuous formal and informal critical evaluations of Thinking Skills, Approaches and Tools... This is a clear indicator of the way in which a culture of thinking has developed within the school.”

Anna Webb, Senior Headteacher at Newbridge Junior School, said:

“I am exceptionally proud that the endeavours of all our staff, pupils, parents, governors and wider community have been recognised. This accreditation demonstrates the thinking journey that we have all been part of, and it is one we will certainly continue to pursue.”



Newbridge Junior School



Rochester Grammar School's report highlighted:

- Best practice sharing “within the school, across all curriculum areas, with all sections of staff participating in regular formal development sessions and more informal staff training events.
- “Students are able to make independent choices for particular thinking tools, dependent on the task ahead and they are able to utilise their thinking skills in a wide variety of contexts.”
- Students “display sophisticated levels of understanding of Thinking Skills, both in terms of their ability to use the wide variety of thinking tools, but also in their awareness of the reasons behind Teaching Thinking.”
- The report also noted that it is “particularly impressive to see staff engaging critically in the exploration and evaluation of new ideas for teaching and learning, as well as with underlying educational and psychological mechanisms such as meta-cognition.”
- The school shares its “extensive expertise and outstanding practice of thinking skills with other schools.”



Joanna Wadey, Acting Head of School at Rochester Grammar School, said:

“We are all very proud to have been reaccredited as an Advanced Thinking School by the University of Exeter, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, and developing pupils into independent, reflective thinkers, with the skills to succeed in the next phase of their education and in the workplace.

This reaccreditation is testament to the commitment of our whole school community – pupils, staff, parents and carers – both to our ‘thinking school’ approach and to realising our ethos of ‘every child achieves’. I would like to thank everyone for their hard work and commitment which made this possible.”

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

“Rochester Grammar School’s reaccreditation as an ‘Advanced Thinking School’ is richly deserved. The school not only leads the way in fostering an open, critical learning environment for its pupils – with fantastic results – but also in promoting thinking skills and best practice across the Trust, working closely with other schools.

Newbridge Junior School being named one of only three Advanced Thinking Primary Schools is an absolutely fantastic achievement and one that all the staff and pupils should be extremely proud of. As the lead school for the Thinking Schools’ Portsmouth Primary Thinking Hub, Newbridge also plays a central role in helping schools both inside and outside our Trust to foster an open, critical learning environment.”

We are delighted that over half of our schools have now achieved this prestigious accreditation. We look forward to continuing to encourage best practice sharing and providing support and expertise to schools across the Trust to help them to do the same.”

GCSE RESULTS

Goodwin Academy has celebrated an improvement in GCSE results across the board. An improvement of 10% in the English & Maths grade 4+ basic score highlighted the progress made by these departments with Maths increasing their grade 4+ attainment by 11% and English grade 4+ by 7% and grade 5+ by 8%.

Students and staff at The Victory Academy are celebrating strong GCSE results again this year – higher than last year’s in every key category. There was a seven percentage point rise from last year in the proportion of students who achieved a Grade 4 or better in English and in maths and a five percentage point increase on 2018 in the proportion who were awarded a Grade 5 or better (defined as a strong pass) in both subjects.

Holcombe Grammar School is delighted with another successful year of GCSE results. Provisional analysis shows higher progress scores for all students, with disadvantaged students achieving an average of half a GCSE grade better than expected when they started at the school aged 11.

Students and staff at Rochester Grammar School were overjoyed to be collecting some brilliant GCSE results – with well over half of all exam results graded 7 or above (equivalent to an A or above). This means the high-performing school has achieved a Progress 8 score of 0.82 – this means that on average the school is adding almost a whole grade per subject to what each student was expected to achieve when they joined RGS aged 11. It makes Rochester Grammar School the top-ranked school in Medway and in the top 2% of all schools in England.

Students and staff at The Portsmouth Academy also celebrated another fantastic set of GCSE results – with praise for their results coming from Schools Minister Lord Agnew. The Year 11 2019 students (40% of whom come from disadvantaged backgrounds), have managed to gain on average in excess of 8 qualifications each, with a quarter of these grades at 7+ (equivalent to A*/A).

It is great to see our schools achieving excellent results in their GCSEs and A levels.



OUTSTANDING A LEVEL RESULTS AT THE TRUST

A level results day was met with excitement and emotions, with many students experiencing excellent results through commitment and dedication to their work.

Students at Goodwin Academy in Deal were very proud when they celebrated their exam results having gained their places at leading universities or on prestigious apprenticeships.

The Victory Academy also celebrated after collecting excellent exam results in A Level and vocational qualifications. The Academy scored highly in A levels and has continued its excellent track record of success in the vocational subjects, with an impressive average grade of Distinction achieved. The Victory Academy also underlined the value it adds to students by scoring exceptionally well in “progress” measures.

Holcombe Grammar School shared the same empowering experience and were overjoyed as they collected their long-awaited A Level results, with a 98% pass rate.

Students at the high-performing Rochester Grammar School have achieved superb Sixth Form results, which have won them places at top universities. The school maintained its track record of success with over two thirds of grades in A levels and IB A* to B or equivalent, and three students managing straight A* or A grades at A-Level. Rochester Grammar School will be offering the International Baccalaureate (IB) exclusively in their sixth form from September 2020. The students' fantastic results have seen them win places at some of the best universities in the country – including Oxford, Birmingham, Cambridge, UCL, Durham, Warwick, Exeter, Surrey, Nottingham, Southampton, Queen Mary's and Loughborough to name a few.

We would like to congratulate every student on their results and wish them every success in their future and thank all of the staff throughout our schools who continue to deliver an education that really does transform life chances.



CPD DAYS

We were incredibly proud to hold our Trust CPD days for the third year this term. For the first time we were able to include all support staff and office staff too. 316 support staff and 445 teachers gathered at The Portsmouth Academy and The Victory Academy for the Portsmouth and Kent respective CPD days.

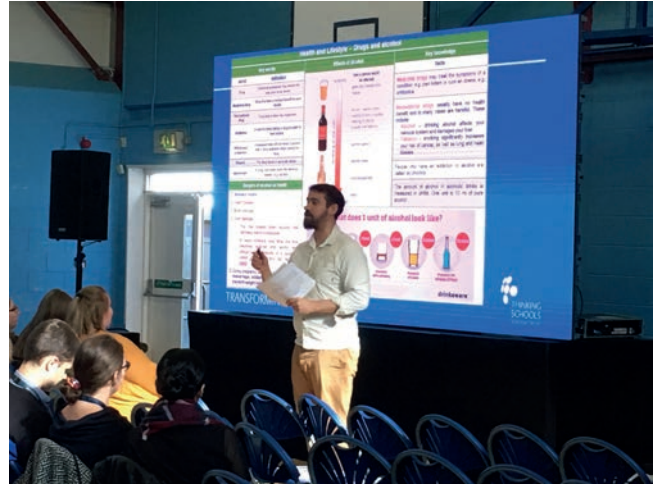
The days followed a similar agenda, allowing staff the opportunity to listen to thought provoking presentations, network with each other and take part in workshops and seminars with their counterparts across the organisation. Our support staff attended 'Customer First' training sessions and discussed the TSAT Values – Trusted, Solution Focused, Approachable and Timely.

The day's activities unfolded with Stuart Gardner, our CEO, taking to the stage to give a welcome address to the attendees with words of passion demonstrating his drive, commitment and belief in everything our Trust stands for, highlighting successes and congratulating staff for their achievements.

Hanna Miller, our Trust Thinking Lead and Assistant Headteacher, introduced 'A Principled Approach to Teaching'. Education support staff in Kent attended sessions lead by Gwynn Bassan, Director of Education for Kent, Jody Murphy, Director of Education for Strood and Jack Jones, our Thinking Lead for Portsmouth, covering how staff can aid teachers with curriculum implementation and how to integrate thinking tools into intervention groups or one-to-one learning with pupils. Meanwhile in Portsmouth, staff attended a variety of workshops including department collaboration, Digital Learning and Delivering Phonics.

The events were our best yet and we thank all of our staff for their contributions, our workshop leaders who designed the sessions and our amazing site teams.





HOLCOMBE GRAMMAR SCHOOL CELEBRATES APPOINTMENT OF EXPERIENCED NEW PRINCIPAL

Holcombe Grammar School in Chatham has announced the appointment of Lee Preston as its new Principal from January.

An exceptional school leader, with more than 12 years' leadership experience, Mr Preston will join Holcombe Grammar School (HGS) at the start of the new term in January 2020.

Mr Preston, born and raised in Kent, has worked in schools in the county throughout his career and is currently Deputy Headteacher at another local school, Thomas Aveling in Rochester, where he has led on school improvement and raising standards, and played an important role in the school being rated Good by Ofsted.



Prior to his current role at Thomas Aveling School, Mr Preston served as an Assistant Head at Hayes School in Bromley and before that, he was an Assistant Head of Year at Cator Park School in Beckenham.

Mandy Gage will continue supporting both Holcombe Grammar School and the Victory Academy in Chatham, in her role as Director of Education, Chatham for Thinking Schools Academy Trust.

This appointment comes at an exciting time for HGS, which has recently been accredited by the University of Exeter as a 'Thinking School'. In their report, the University of Exeter's Graduate School of Education praised the school for "actively seeking opportunities to continuously drive improvements in learning and teaching" and "creating a positive learning culture."

Prior to joining Thinking Schools, the school, then known as Chatham Grammar School for Boys, was rated 'Inadequate' by Ofsted. Since joining the Trust, it has been transformed and is now rated 'Good' by Ofsted, with inspectors noting how the school's "vision to develop pupils' thinking skills was having a positive impact on the quality of learning and teaching."

Lee Preston, incoming Principal of Holcombe Grammar School, said:
"I am delighted to have been appointed as the new Principal at Holcombe Grammar School. I very much look forward to getting started in January and working closely with staff, students, parents and the whole school community, to ensure that the school provides students with the very best education possible and support to students to succeed both academically and personally."

Mandy Gage, Director of Education, Chatham, Thinking Schools Academy Trust said:
"We are delighted that Lee Preston will be Holcombe Grammar School's new Principal. We are confident that Lee is the right person for the role. He already knows the area and local community well and his expertise in driving school improvement, promoting high standards and achievement, will make him a fantastic person to lead the strong team already in place at the school. I look forward to working closely with Lee and the wider leadership team to ensure that the school continues on its strong upward trajectory."

Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive, Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said:
"We are excited to welcome Lee Preston to Holcombe Grammar School. He brings considerable knowledge and experience to the role and we look forward to working closely with him to build on the school's impressive achievements to date."



THE PORTSMOUTH ACADEMY CELEBRATE PUPILS ACHIEVEMENTS AT THEIR AWARDS EVENING

The Portsmouth Academy held its annual Awards Evening on Wednesday 13th November. The school were delighted to have a packed hall full of proud parents, staff and special guests from the Local Authority and community.

Rachel Grey, Principal at The Portsmouth Academy, has written a reflection about the Awards Evening:

Awards Evening is always my favourite school event of the year. An evening of celebration and recognition of our pupils and the progress they have made whilst attending this school is something that is always a joy to be a part of. Seeing how proud all the pupils are to be recognised with an award is always a delight. In fact, my favourite part of Awards Evening is not the presentation itself; it is actually the rehearsal that we do in the morning. This is where I get to spend time with these wonderfully hardworking children, when they get to hear what they have won awards for and they all have great fun in pretending to smile for the imaginary camera and teaching them the life long skill of how to firmly shake someone's hand. The good nature that they all demonstrate on a daily basis is what The Portsmouth Academy is really all about, teaching strength of character and a sense of humour alongside academic and creative skills.

It is always such a pleasure to watch our students perform, coming to life and shining with their talents and they do an incredible job. I am also incredibly proud of our student leadership team and, in particular, our Head Girl who spoke so confidently and passionately about her school and what it means to her.

Once again, our outgoing Year 11s achieved excellent GCSE results with the school being placed second in the city for progress from KS2 to the end of Year 11, with pupils achieving above their expected grades across the board, no matter their starting points.

The school saw another great leap in the number of grade 7 and above (26%) results, this is a phenomenally

high number and the girls deserve another round of applause for this as it is well above national average!

I often hear the phrase "It doesn't matter which school children go to, if they are focussed, they can learn anywhere". This is true to an extent, but I am very proud that at The Portsmouth Academy we support all learners and that we teach them the habits they need to be able to reflect and think about their thinking and the processes behind their learning, which helps us to break down barriers so that children can be their best selves and shape their success. This is something which runs throughout our school, like the letters in a stick of rock: 'Making excellence a habit' is a motto for both our students and our staff. We all believe that we can aspire to personal excellence, but that this must be built on day by day, often with marginal gains, tiny little efforts that build to make a huge difference. This focus on characteristics, of persistence and resilience is what I firmly believe is making the difference here at The Portsmouth Academy and what will make a difference in our students' lives as they progress past the school gates and into the wider community.

No matter which year group they are in, I increasingly see students taking the lead, supporting each other and taking responsible risks in terms of trying new things and having a go. They are embracing the fear of failure as they are beginning to understand that without trying and on occasions failing, they are limiting themselves in their learning, as they need to reflect on where they can improve and then act upon to be successful the next time!

It was fantastic to have Gavin Lumsden, CEO of Essential Teaching UK, to talk to parents and children, echoing the same messages as the school; that hard work and persistence pays off, and that sometimes life can take you in many different directions.

I am looking forward to next year's event already.

PRIMARY SCIENCE MARK

The Gordon Children's Academy has been awarded a Primary Science Quality Mark to celebrate its commitment to excellence in science teaching and learning.

The Primary School Quality Mark programme ensures effective leadership of science, enables schools to work together to share good practice and is supported by professional development led by local experts. It encourages teacher autonomy and innovation while at the same time offering a clear framework for development in science subject leadership, teaching and learning. Schools that achieve PSQM demonstrate commitment and expertise in science teaching and leadership.

Jody Murphy, Executive Headteacher of The Gordon Children's Academy, said:

"It is real testament to the excellence of our Science teaching that we have been awarded this mark, which is a true stamp of approval. As a school we pride ourselves on providing our students with the best possible education across all subjects, and Science is no exception – we are thrilled that our efforts have been recognised."

Jane Turner, PSQM National Director said:

"Gaining a Primary Science Quality Mark is a significant achievement for a school. The profile and quality of science teaching and learning in each awarded school is very high. Children are engaging with great science both in and outside the classroom, developing positive attitudes towards science as well as secure scientific understanding and skills. Science subject leaders, their colleagues, head teachers, children, parents and governors should be very proud."

Gordon Children's Academy has focused resources on building the subject knowledge of staff through its online continuing professional development system, to ensure that pupils are receiving the best possible education and a strong grounding in science. The school has also introduced a number of science-focused initiatives, such as World Space Week, British Science Week and the Great Science Share, to build the science capital of the pupils both inside and outside the classroom, beyond science lessons. The PSQM moderators also noted the positive atmosphere surrounding both the teaching and learning of science in the school.

The Primary Science Quality Mark is led by the University of Hertfordshire, School of Education in collaboration with the Primary Science Teaching Trust.





CHILDREN HARMONISE TO WIN CHURCH CHORAL COMPETITION

Talented singers from New Horizons Children's Academy in Chatham are celebrating after being awarded a prize in a local church singing competition.

The choir from New Horizons Children's Academy, which is part of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust, won the award for harmony and blending in the Sing Off, organised by St Stephen's Church to celebrate 60 years in the parish.

Three local primary schools competed in the Sing Off: New Horizons Children's Academy, Balfour Junior Academy and Horsted Junior School.

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

"Congratulations to the fantastic choir at New Horizons Children's Academy on achieving this award. It is fantastic to see the pupils' hard work and dedication paying off. The choir's success is also a testament to the staff at New Horizons, who so ably support pupils to excel, not just academically, but in the broad range of extracurricular activities on offer at the school."

Commenting on the choir's success, Miss Madigan, a teacher at New Horizons Children's Academy said:

"We were extremely proud of the hard work that our entire choir put into the performance. The children sacrificed lunch times for extra rehearsals, and we were so happy for all the children when they won the award."

**Jody Murphy, Headteacher at
New Horizons Children's Academy,
said:**

"We are delighted that our choir was able to take part in the Sing Off, not only to showcase their talents and hard work, but also to celebrate St Stephen's, which has been a huge part of the community here in Chatham for the last 60 years. The choir are a real credit to the school and this award was richly deserved."

Each choir had to sing two songs – one secular and one sacred. The New Horizon's choir ably sang 'Rather Be' and 'A gift to you', cheered on by proud parents and teachers.

The competition was judged by three local business and community leaders. Prizes were awarded for the overall winner, enthusiasm and for harmony and blending, with the judges awarding New Horizons' the latter.

The children were honoured to perform at the event marking this important milestone for St Stephen's and to celebrate all the fantastic work that the Church has done in the Parish over the last 60 years.

PLAY TIME NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD

New Horizons Children's Academy and Moorings Way Infant School are delighted with their new vibrant play areas that they now have.

At New Horizons the Early Years Foundation Stage now has a wonderfully colourful play area to grow their imagination while play with friends.

Among many other summer projects that took place at our schools, Moorings Way Infant School also had the pleasure of new soft play areas for their children.

During the summer break, you would think that Willy Wonka had been busy at work at both schools, as teams took hold of the spaces and worked their magic to create play areas where children can create music, play games and drift into a world of imagination.

The soft play areas will provide refreshing areas to play and to take part in lessons as education is brought into the open.



Moorings Way Infant School



New Horizons Children's Academy



Moorings Way Infant School



New Horizons Children's Academy



Moorings Way Infant School



New Horizons Children's Academy

Summer 2019 Projects



ROALD DAHL DAY

Children from New Horizons Children's Academy have been dressing the part to remember Roald Dahl's amazing books on what would have been his 103rd birthday on the 13 September.

Roald Dahl has written many amazing books including James and the Giant Peach, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Fantastic Mr Fox, The BFG and Matilda.



REMEMBRANCE

Remembrance is a time of thought, a time to remember those who have put their lives on the line so that we may live.

Each one of us is connected in one way or another to the fallen ones and those who continue to serve for the hope of a safer world in which to live.

During Remembrance our schools have assemblies and lessons that reflect on the history and sacrifices of WWI and WWII and take part in workshops creating poppies and window displays as well as showing respect with the two minutes silence.

It is important to reflect, to understand and to learn from our history so that our futures can become safer for everyone.





Newbridge Junior School



Penhale Infant School



Gordon Children's Academy



Holcombe Grammar School



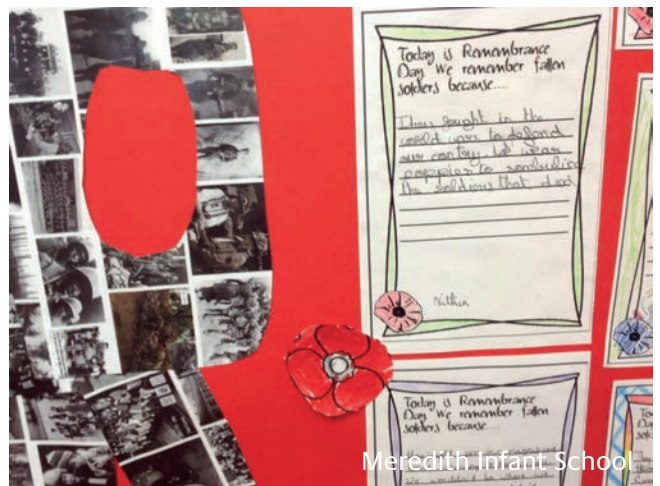
Goodwin Academy



Moorings Way Infant School



New Horizons Children's Academy



Meredith Infant School

THINKING SCHOOLS ACADEMY TRUST LAUNCHES ONLINE PARENTING NETWORK



Thinking Schools Academy Trust has launched an innovative online parenting network to help improve parent voice and engagement across all its schools in Portsmouth.

Parents from across the five Thinking Schools' in Portsmouth taking part were invited to attend the official launch of the TSAT Portsmouth Parent Network at Penhale Infant School, to find out more about how they could get involved with this exciting initiative and the benefits.

The five Thinking Schools' that went to the launch in Portsmouth were Meon Infant School, Meon Junior School, Penhale Infant School, Newbridge Junior School and The Portsmouth Academy.

The project is designed to bring together parents from across these schools into one online place, to engage them as part of the wider school and TSAT community and to gather feedback and insights to inform the work of both the individual schools and the Trust.

The network will primarily provide an online platform for parent consultation, creating a space for parents and carers to share their views, thoughts, feelings and opinions. It will also hold three coffee mornings over the course of each academic year allowing for face-to-face interactions and parent networking and providing those without access to the online platform an opportunity to engage.

Families across all the schools will receive Parenting Network Family Membership, which offers benefits, including discounted entrance fees to local attractions like the Mary Rose Museum and Blue Reef Aquarium.

TSAT is partnering on the project with the Parenting Network, a not for profit social enterprise that works to build a supportive community of families in order

to drive forward social change through education on positive parenting and best practice.

Natalie Sheppard, Director of Education Portsmouth, Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said: "We are delighted to have launched the TSAT Portsmouth Parents Network and to be working with the Parenting Network on this exciting project. It was fantastic to see so many engaged parents at the launch, keen to be a part of the Network and share their ideas and views.

"We are confident that by boosting the parent voice and parental engagement in our schools, we can further improve outcomes for the young people we serve. Insights gained from the Network will also inform the work of the senior leadership teams and governing bodies at each of our schools and the Trust more broadly – ensuring that we are responding to and meeting the needs of our pupils and their families."

Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive Officer, Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said: "The TSAT Portsmouth Parent Network is a fantastic initiative, which will give parents a real stake, not just in the school their child attends, but in the wider TSAT community across Portsmouth.

"We are proud of the central role that our schools play in their communities and the Network will help to enhance this and create new opportunities for parents to get involved and express their views.

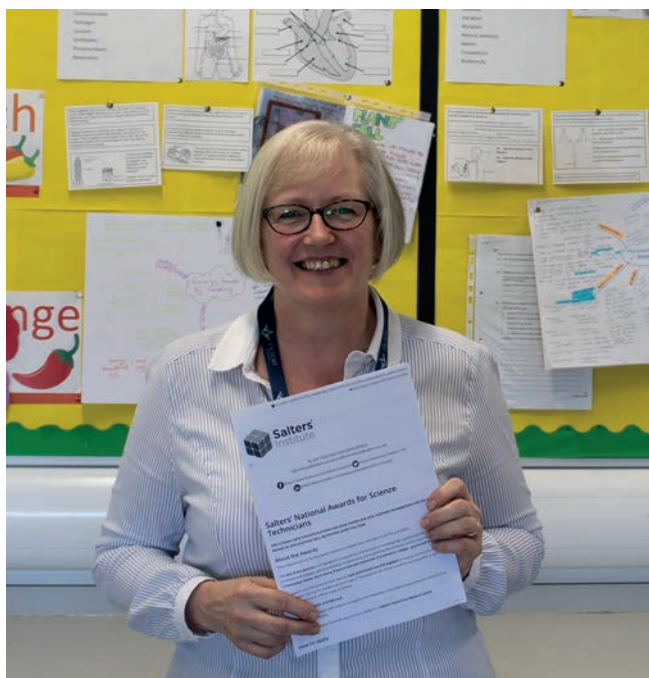
"The Family Membership will also give TSAT families preferential access to historical and cultural experiences – helping our students to build their cultural capital and broaden their horizons, whilst also supporting local businesses."

Matt Foster, Managing Director, Parent Network said: "The Parenting Network are thrilled to be in partnership with The Thinking Schools Academy Trust and to be able to facilitate a closer relationship between parent and school that will enhance parental voice and engagement with home learning.

"We will be bringing together school communities in a unique way and providing parents with a deeper insight as to what is going on across other TSAT schools in Portsmouth.

"The additional inclusion of The Family Card creates greater opportunity for families to spend time going out together as a family which we know our partners from The Thinking Schools Trust feel very strongly about".

SALTERS' NATIONAL AWARDS FOR SCIENCE TECHNICIANS



Maureen Wade, a highly skilled science technician from the Victory Academy in Chatham, has been recognised for her work by the Salters' National Awards for Science Technicians.

Ms Wade received the award from science education charity the Salters' Institute in honour of the significant contribution she makes to the school and the success of its Science Department.

Following a visit to the Victory Academy, which included a tour of the Science Department and discussions with Maureen and other members of staff about their work, the awarding panel determined Maureen to be a worthy recipient of the £1000 award.

The Salters' National Awards for Science Technicians are organised by the Salters' Institute, a charity that champions and supports chemistry teaching and science education in the UK. The Institute is the flagship charity of the Worshipful Company of Salter's Company, one of the City of London's livery companies.

This award is a fantastic achievement for Maureen and the school's strong Science Department, recognising the high-quality education they provide for students. The award also further illustrates the excellent work being done by The Victory Academy.

The Salters' National Awards for Science Technicians are run in collaboration with CLEAPSS and SSERC. The Awards are also supported by a number of prestigious organisations including the Association for Science Education, The Institute of Physics, The Royal Society,

The Royal Society of Chemistry and The Royal Society of Biology.

The aim of the Awards is to acknowledge publicly the immense contribution that Science Technicians make to the well-being and success of schools and colleges and, in particular, to Science Departments. The Awards are open to Science Technicians in schools and colleges catering for students up to age 18.

Maureen will now attend the Salters' Institute Annual Awards Ceremony to formally receive her award. The Ceremony will take place at the Salters' Hall in London on Friday 6 December.

The award winner, Maureen Wade, a Science Technician at The Victory Academy said:

"I am truly delighted to have received this award. It means a great deal to me to be recognised by such a prestigious organisation – and one supported by some of the most respected scientific organisations in the country. However, the award is not only for me, but also for the whole of the science department and wider school community. We are all one team, and it is only as a team that we can ensure that we are giving our students the best education possible, with a strong grounding in science that will benefit them in the next steps of their education or in the world of work."

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

"This is a fantastic achievement for Maureen. She is an extremely dedicated member of staff, who has always been willing to go the extra mile for the school and its students and it's great to see her being recognised for all her work."

AFCA REVOLUTIONARIES OPEN THE JUSTGIVING AWARDS 2019

The talented choir from All Faiths Children's Academy had the privilege of opening the 2019 JustGiving Awards in London by performing the song 'True Colours'.

The Awards, organised by the online giving platform JustGiving, took place at the Royal Lancaster Hotel in London.

The Choir, known as The All Faith Revolutionaries, were invited to perform at the ceremony after successfully raising money through JustGiving to fund a trip to Dundee to take part in the prestigious National Junior Signing Choir competition, earlier this year.



Each year the JustGiving Awards recognise the outstanding contributions to fundraising by individuals and groups who have used the company's donating services.

The awards hold no monetary value; they are simply about acknowledging the amazing stories of those who have raised money, and of the causes that have been supported.

The award ceremony was hosted by presenter and wheelchair basketball player Ade Adepitan, alongside him was an audience filled with inspirational people and special guest Olympic Rowing gold medallist, James Cracknell.

Cormac Murphy, Headteacher at All Faiths Children Academy, said:

"It was a truly fantastic experience for all of the pupils. Not only did they get to perform on a huge stage to a high-profile audience, but they were also able to be part of such a wonderful evening and witness the amazing fundraising work being done by so many people. We are exceptionally proud of all our students and hope they all thoroughly enjoyed the experience!"

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

"It is a huge honour for pupils from All Faiths Children's Academy to have been asked to perform at such a prestigious event. They should all be very proud of themselves. At The Thinking Schools Academy Trust, we pride ourselves on helping pupils to achieve both academically and to engage in and experience a broad range of extra-curricular activities during their time at school, helping them develop skills that will benefit them in the next steps of their education and later in life."



NHS AND KENT FIRE AND RESCUE PROVIDE EXCELLENT WORKSHOPS FOR CEDAR CHILDREN'S ACADEMY

Year 3 pupils at Cedar Children's Academy enjoyed an action packed workshop when they had a visit from the NHS and Kent Fire and Rescue.

Pupils at the school listened to a radiographer and nurse from the NHS as part of their celebration for all that the NHS does. The workshop gave them an opportunity to challenge stereotypes that only boys can be doctors and girls can be nurses.

As part of the services experience, they also had a visit from Kent Fire and Rescue to talk about being safe and the importance of firefighters. The pupils were able to explore the fire engine and fire the hoses that they thoroughly enjoyed.



ROCHESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL WIN DISTRICT ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIP

Towards the end of the last academic year, 40 students went to represent Rochester Grammar School in the annual District Athletics Championship held at Medway Park. There were 14 other local schools present and students competed in a variety of track and field events throughout the day.

The Rochester Grammar School has a long history of success at the competition and the students were

determined to once again bring the winners shield back for the ninth year in a row. The students medalled in 31 events with 10 of those being gold medal positions. This fantastic effort meant that the girls won the whole competition with an impressive 379 points with second place Chatham Grammar coming in at 326 points. The trophy has nine Rochester Grammar badges on it and now it is full, it will stay with the school forever.

Athletics Captain Oyindamola Olunloyo said:

“To captain the team is a real honour. I am so proud of everyone; they have all left everything on the track. This is a massive achievement and everybody should be proud of themselves.”

Head athletics coach Hanna Miller said:

“This remarkable achievement requires the whole team to put in their best performance. We are so very proud of all of our girls who competed. Their training ethic and desire to compete to the highest standard is an inspiration to any budding athletes. What they have developed over time is a winner’s legacy and it is one that I am incredibly fortunate to feel part of. The success of this team is much more than raw talent alone, it’s commitment, desire and practicing those parts of a skill or event that you struggle with until you absolutely ‘nail it’. That in itself is no mean feat and that is what makes these girls the best.”



ABCD AWARDS

ABOVE AND BEYOND
THE CALL OF DUTY



Term 6 (2018-19) Winner
Gary Dixon
Goodwin Academy

Gary took 30 students to the Dordogne for their 8 nights activity break to encourage team work. This particular trip not only took an incredible amount of Gary's personal time to plan but he then organised a presentation event after the trip to mark the efforts of the children who attended.

The school received an email from one of the parents saying "thank you... Lissie had a fabulous time. Her first time away abroad without family and I think she was a little apprehensive but she's come back buzzing about it and wants to go again next year. She loved the activities, she loved the food and she said the staff were great and know how to have a good time. Thanks for giving up your half term. I really appreciate it. Hope you have rested up. Lissie slept all day yesterday. Thanks again".

Following the success of the event, Gary is already planning the 2020 trip, which vast amounts of pupils have already signed up to.



Term 6 (2018-19) Winner
Maria Hughes
Newbridge Junior School

Maria stepped smoothly into the role as Year 5 leader when a member of staff at Newbridge Junior School went on maternity leave. Maria has shown how insightful she is with her input during Senior Management Team meetings and her contributions to the School Improvement Plan. Taking on a new role is never easy, especially during the late stage of the year, but Maria has organised the year group (and the new year group ready for transition this academic year) with confidence and proficiency, going above and beyond the call of duty.



Term 1 (2019-20) Winner
Ellie Nicholson-Green
Holcombe Grammar School

Ellie joined the main office at Holcombe Grammar School as an Apprentice Administration Assistant. Since joining, she always goes above and beyond in her duties; she ensures the students feel comfortable when coming into the office to ask questions and for support. She is a dedicated member of the office team and is always willing to help and support in the multitude of tasks that the main office take care of. She has doubled as the school's receptionist, communicating with staff and parents, oversees reprographics and provides constant support with the admissions of the school's students. Ellie has exceeded all expectations of the role of an apprentice and is a valued member of our team.



Term 1 (2019-20) Winner
Heather Shepherd
Goodwin Academy

Heather has been a real rock for Cathy and Helen Britten at Goodwin Academy, whilst they have both been finding their feet. She has gone above and beyond by supporting both Lee and Kayleigh and has provided them with a great deal of training. Heather has a wealth of knowledge and expertise that she shares with the team and troubleshoots on a daily basis, identifying what support is required for students so that they can achieve their best. Most of all she is always positive and approachable and nothing is too much.

STEP UP

As well as our ABCD Awards (Above and Beyond the Call of Duty) we also recognise that staff throughout our schools strive to be the best they can be and take on new challenging roles to support their fellow colleagues, their schools and inevitably providing an excellent education for their pupils.

Below you will find a list of staff that have 'stepped up' to take on new roles or have added additional responsible to their current roles.



All Faiths Children's Academy

Luke Fairbrass - Teacher



Cedar Children's Academy

Naomi Bardoli - Year Group Lead



Central

Roxy Heywood - HR Partner



Goodwin Academy

Neil Barnes - Head of Vocational Qualifications
Daisy Bradford - Assistant Principal - Personal Development (for 1 year)
Clive Kitchener - Assistant Principal - Data systems and KS3 Curriculum & Achievement
Richard Knott - Head of History
Rachael Moon - Assistant Principal - Teaching & Learning (for 1 year)



Holcombe Grammar School

Daniel Bridges - Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator/Economics and Finance Lead
Justin Claessens - Drive Team Member
Jennie Lee - Drive Team Member
Victoria Gill - Russell Group and Alternative Pathways Coordinator
John Still - Trust Literacy Research Coordinator



Isambard Brunel Junior School

Lucy Passmore - Speech and Language Support
Deb Bryson - ELSA
Megan Chapman - DSL for Isambard Junior School and Meredith



Meon Junior School

Sonia Nickerson - Executive Headteacher
Jan Atrill - Office Manager
Anna Judd - Thinking Lead
Claire Belfield - Maths TLR
Sandra Lipscombe - Reading TLR



Moorings Way Infant School

Christine Turner - Acting & Deputy Head



Penhale Infant School

Julie White - HLTA



Rochester Grammar School

Alix Lee- 1 year secondment to Senior Head of House
Michelle Hollands - Exams Assistant
Leigh Wells - SENCo following completed qualification
Wendy Davis - Assistant Head of House



The Portsmouth Academy

Hajar Bellazrak - House Champion
Sarah Blackmore - Science Teacher - KS3 Lead
Danielle Masters - Student Personal Development Lead
Sandra Newsham - Learning Mentor
Alanya Russell - Assistant Principal
Vanessa Pszonak - Associate Leader
Richard Smith - Outdoor Learning & Welfare Lead
Graham Snookes - Deputy Head of Year (maternity cover)
Gareth Horton - House Champion
Deborah Traut - House Champion
Zack Cross - House Champion
Jennifer Martin - Inclusivity and Equality Lead



The Victory Academy

Laura Gladstone - Head of School (Teaching, Learning & Assessment)
Darren Anderson - Additional role - Professional Mentor (T&L)
Rachel Crane-Herbert - Additional role - HOY7
Sarah Daffey - Catering Assurance Lead
Carley Dawkins - Additional role - Creativity in cognition
Michael McAllister - Unqualified Teacher
Rebekah Mulley - Lead Teacher of Biology
Sasha Sherwood - Lead Teacher of Performing Arts
Susuan Nicholson - Additional role - Professional Mentor (T&L)

OUR SCHOOLS RAISE OVER £6,133 FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

Our Trust and schools are dedicated to transforming life chances for all of the children that attend. Every day we continue to work with our local communities to deliver an education, support and provide facilities that everyone can benefit from. Connecting with schools outside of our Trust and further afield is paramount to drive equality for all.

Every year we look forward to getting involved in the Children In Need charity to give back to the community, locally and nationally, so that not only do the children at our schools benefit, but children from all walks of life are also given the opportunity to lead healthier, happier lives.

No one child should be left unnoticed and we are proud to stand among so many others who strive to give children the best lives they can.

Our staff, children, parents and carers have been doing so many wonderfully entertaining things to raise money for Children in Need. Some of the amazing things that have taken place include non-uniform day, wearing spotty clothes, Pudsey ears and pajamas; Joe Wickes 'Big Move' which was a live-streamed event that took place across the UK in thousands of primary schools; deliciously tasty Krispy Kreme donuts and cakes were sold; children came into school with funky hairstyles; staff took part in a talent show including hula hoop and plank challenges; bands battled with audible delight and challengers stepped up for a penalty shootout.

With many of our schools raising hundreds of pounds for the charity, Newbridge Junior School managed to raise over £1,200. The total raised across all schools is amazing and you will see from the photos that all involved had fun. We would like to congratulate every person who helped at the schools to make Children in Need a success.



Pennale Infant School



Newbridge Junior School



Goodwin Academy



Izzies Day Care Nursery



Rochester Grammar School



Holcombe Grammar School



Cedar Children's Academy



Gordon Children's Academy



All Faiths Children's Academy



Meredith Infant School



The Portsmouth Academy



Moorings Way Infant School

VICTORIOUS BREAKFAST

The Victory Academy has received a grant of £1,000 from Kellogg's towards the enhancement of their breakfast club offering. The school applied for the grant as Kellogg's announce that they are to double their investment in breakfast clubs in 2019. The school runs a breakfast club every day from 7:45am before lessons to ensure that all students are able to access a healthy meal before the start of the school day.



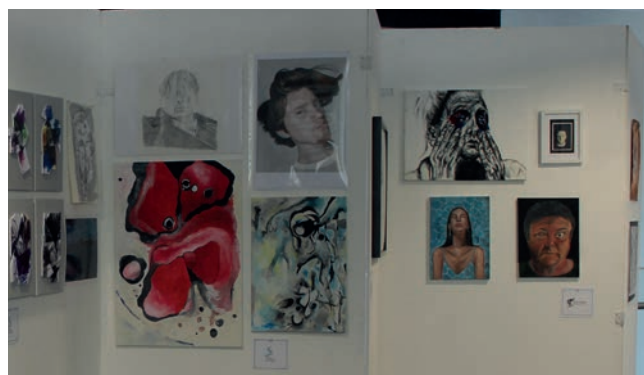
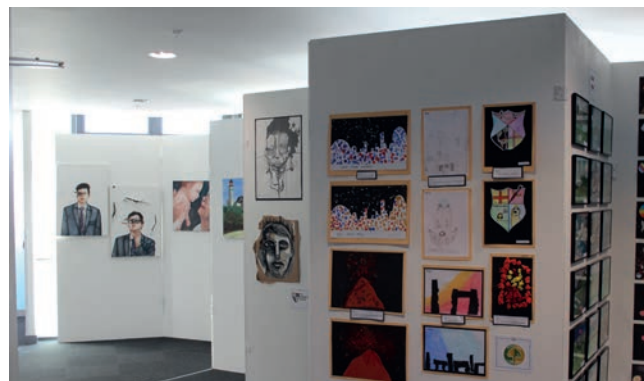
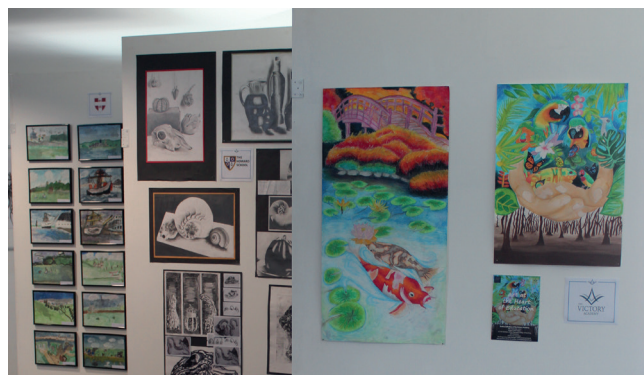
ART AT THE HEART OF EDUCATION

To open the new chapter in the work of the Applied Education Research Network of the Chartered College of Teaching and its new location at The Victory Academy, who is so proud of their Artsmark Platinum Award, the network wanted to celebrate children's voices, their mind and their stories expressed in many different ways for all to see, hear and enjoy.

During the celebration of art, Andria Zafirakou MBE, Global Teacher Prize Winner 2018 and an Art and Textile teacher herself, was welcomed as a key speaker to share her vision and story of how through Art, lives of many children at her school have been changed. She is incredibly passionate about education and changing the lives of young people and underserved communities through creativity.

The evening, well attended by teachers from the Trust but also many guests from local schools, became an opportunity to reflect and celebrate children's art but also an incredible occasion to share some very moving and transformative stories, admire an exhibition of children's art from several local Primary and Secondary schools and enjoy two performances by the Signing Choir from All Faiths Children's Academy and a group of students from The Victory Academy.

The network felt a real privilege to host the event and the comments from those who attended it were simply overwhelming.





PORTSMOUTH FOOTBALL AT CHARTERHOUSE

In October, The Portsmouth Academy's Y8 and 9 football teams travelled to play Charterhouse Independent school. As one of the oldest and most prestigious schools in the world, it was a great opportunity for our boys to build their cultural knowledge.

Football and Charterhouse School have a very special history as it was the first place that football was played in its current format. It was the 'Old Cathusians' (Charterhouse Alumni) that took their school's version of football to Oxford and Cambridge University and created the shared rules and regulations.

The boys travelled up via coach and arrived outside the main dining hall. Whilst parents and visiting staff enjoyed a drink and snack at the on-site coffee shop, the boys made their way down to the changing rooms outside the aquatics centre. Although Charterhouse won both football matches The Portsmouth Academy boys thoroughly enjoyed the match and the tea and cakes provided afterwards. They also enjoyed looking around the grand main building.

All came out having had a positive experience and the hosts commented on how well behaved The Portsmouth Academy's boys were and offered them to come back any time.



ALL ABOARD - THREE TRUST SCHOOLS SET SAIL ALONG THE ENGLISH CHANNEL

Students from The Victory Academy, Holcombe Grammar School and The Portsmouth Academy took part in an exciting sailing experience, completing a voyage along the English Channel from Chatham to Portsmouth and back again.

Students from the Medway schools, The Victory Academy and Holcombe Grammar School, joined forces to embark on a momentous five-day sailing trip, crewing a vessel from Chatham to Portsmouth and then The Portsmouth Academy set sail on the return leg from Portsmouth to Chatham.

The trip, organised by the charity Cirdan Sailing Trust, offered the opportunity for 6 students from each of the Medway schools and 12 students from The Portsmouth Academy to embark on a five-day voyage designed to help them develop valuable life skills.

Despite some sea sickness throughout the trip, the students did all the cooking and cleaning, as well as taking shifts steering the vessel, including taking watches during the day and night, under the close supervision of Cirdan Sailing Trust staff.

Mandy Gage, Director of Education for the Thinking Schools Academy Trust Chatham Schools, said:

“We are thrilled to have been able to offer this fantastic opportunity to a number of our students and one so in keeping with our rich naval tradition, having been named after the HMS Victory.



Victory & Holcombe Students



Portsmouth Students

Daniel Bridges, Teacher at Holcombe Grammar School, said:

“We were delighted that students were able to take part in such an amazing trip. It was a real once in a lifetime experience, providing huge opportunities for personal development and helping them to develop an array of important life skills – as well as a knowledge of sailing and practical skills. I know that all the students gained a huge amount from the voyage and I would like to thank Cirdan Sailing Trust for making this possible.”

The experience was hugely rewarding and enriching for all the students involved, teaching them not only about sailing, but also important teamwork, leadership, and communication skills. The trip also helped to boost the students' confidence and resilience as they undertook and overcame new challenges to complete the voyage successfully.

The students from the schools in Medway boarded the yacht and successfully sailed from Kent to Portsmouth meeting with their counterparts in Portsmouth who then set sail to complete the return journey. The trip was a fantastic way to celebrate the links between the schools and their shared ethos of "Aspire, Challenge, Achieve".

The trip is just one of the many extracurricular and enrichment opportunities offered by the Thinking Schools Academy Trust. The Trust places significant emphasis not only on academic excellence but also on student's overall personal development.



Victory & Holcombe Students



Portsmouth Students

Natalie Sheppard, Director of Education for the Thinking Schools Academy Trust Portsmouth Schools, said:

“Our students dived in headfirst and learnt a great deal from this experience.

We pride ourselves on offering a vast array of enrichment and extracurricular opportunities to our students and believe these types of experiences are a vital part of the learning and personal development of young people.”

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

“What a fantastic experience for all students involved! Trips like this give students the opportunity to try new things and push themselves – teaching them not only about sailing, but also about themselves. The skills, resilience and confidence students gained from this experience will benefit them throughout their lives.

It is a testament to the fantastic students and staff of both schools that it was such a success and we are grateful to the Cirdan Sailing Trust for making this possible.”



Portsmouth Students

WHISTLESTOP TOUR OF JAPAN

Students from Holcombe Grammar School and Rochester Grammar School have had the pleasure of a whistle-stop tour of Japan, experiencing its splendours and cultural history.

During their visit to Japan, students visited the Samukawa shinto shrine and the Will Adams Memorial in Yokosuka, where a presentation was conducted at the shrine followed by a trip to the harbour to see the Mikasa Memorial Ship. They also had the opportunity to do some shopping in Kamakura and visited the shinto shrine in the centre of the city, the Tsurugaoka Hachiman-gū.

Although during the week there were occasions of warm weather, the students did not escape the rain as they found themselves caught in a tropical storm whilst exploring Enoshima and the Sea Candle Lighthouse.

The group experienced a tram journey to the Kamakura Buddhist Shrine and the Kamakura Hasedera temple, then back to Hiratsuka for dinner.

Mid-week saw the students visiting the popular tourist attraction, the Tokyo Tower, a building inspired by the Eiffel Tower and the second tallest structure in Japan, standing at 333 metres.

As the students continued their journey in Japan, they visited the Himeji Castle before going back to Kobe to ride the cable car to the top for some wet and cloudy views. To complete their first-hand experience of Japan the students spent some time at Hyōgo Prefectural Kobe High School, and were treated to views over the city and towards Osaka. The group were also lucky enough to see Mount Fuji on their travel to Odawara, which had previously been hidden by clouds and rain.



MEON JUNIOR SCHOOL - U11 FOOTBALL TEAM

Meon Junior School are very proud of their Year 6 football team who have beaten off all competition to finish victorious. Their hard work, team play and determination saw them produce a 100% winning record to storm to victory and lift the Portsmouth Cup.

Winning the Portsmouth Cup also led them to represent the area in the County Finals where they finished a proud third place. The team were sublime at times, nearly taking the crown but conceded a last minute equaliser against the eventual tournament winners.

It has been a great set of results for Meon Junior's football team and they were only one game off preserving their unbeaten record this season.



STAFF INDUCTION DAY

Our staff induction days are an important part of the journey our staff take when they join our family of schools.

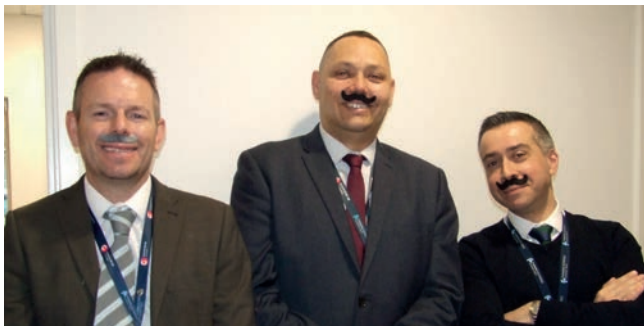
All of our new staff for September attended their school and hub based induction sessions, providing them the opportunity to learn about their school, our Trust and meet key stakeholders and their fellow colleagues. All new staff receive personalised school induction packs welcoming them to our family.

The hub-based inductions allow new staff to meet colleagues from our other schools encouraging a collaborative relationship as soon as staff join our Trust.



MEN'S HEALTH AWARENESS

Staff at Goodwin Academy have taken part in Movember to raise funds and awareness for men's health. The month formerly known as November, is a moustache growing charity event held during November.





TRI-GOLF CHAMPIONS

During October, twelve Year 3 and 4 students from All Faiths Children's Academy ventured to the Howard school to participate in a local Tri-Golf competition.

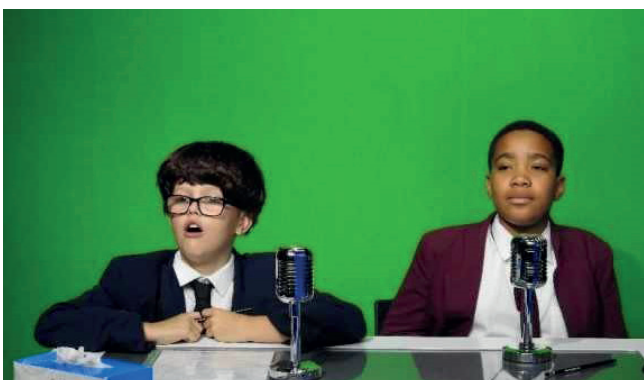
They all showed fantastic levels of control, with some children hitting targets that very few in the whole hall had managed to achieve. Their behaviour was exemplary and their display of teamwork was impressive. The school are proud to announce that the All Faiths team won and showed great sportsmanship.



BEHIND AND IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA

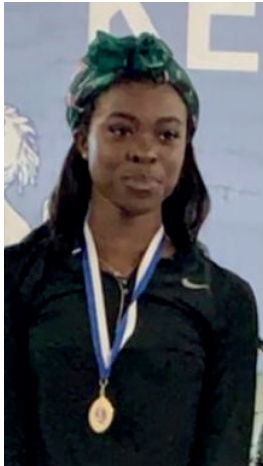
Elgar Class from All Faiths Children's Academy had an amazing experience when they went to the Sky Academy Studios in London. The pupils took the opportunity to be budding reporters, directors, experts, producers and editors for the day. They even produced their very own Sky News broadcast.

It is great for the children to experience new opportunities outside of their classrooms and introduces career paths that the pupils may not have considered before. The pupils said: "It was their best school trip as of yet!"



MY STORY: MAYONG TABE EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS IN ATHLETICS

Mayong Tabe, a student at Rochester Grammar School, has been training over 5 years to be the best she can be in her choice of athletics, the long jump. The following article written by Mayong is inspiring and the Trust and school wish her many more successes in the future.



This summer of sport was filled with success for me. In my event of long jump, my 2019 competitive season saw accomplishment after accomplishment achieved, and goal after goal reached. Having trained in the sport for more than five years, from a young age I have been working towards a number of long term goals, and I successfully achieved many of them this summer.

The first would include one of my proudest achievements to date – reaching the landmark distance of 6 metres, ranking me in the top 5 in my age group within the country. From as early as April, I attended every competition possible, be it a small open meeting or a county match. I took each competition as an opportunity to better my performance, and practice for the larger, more important meetings. The hard work in training and competition paid off as the season progressed and by June, I was in top form. This was demonstrated through my accomplishment of my season’s best performance at the South of England Championships. Having won the county championships the week before with a massive personal best of 5.93m, I was itching to progress even further. From an early age I had recognised the significance of 6m+ jump and longed to be known as a ‘6m jumper’. After my second round jump of 6.07m, I finally made this achievement. The immense hard work put in by my coach and the amazing support given by my parents finally paid off, setting the rest of my competitive season on the right foot.

My second large achievement came a month later, at my fourth consecutive English Schools National Championships. Having competed for Kent at the competition for the last four years, this was the first time I had competed as a lower year in the U20 age group. Having previously allowed my nerves to overcome me, hindering performance in prior years, I entered this year’s competition with confidence, determination and focus. I gave the competition my all under appalling weather conditions and that day I achieved yet another long-time dream – a medal at the English Schools Championships; an achievement that I had longed to reach since I began in the sport back in 2014, and had been robbed of at the last minute for many a year. It just goes to show, that if at first you do not succeed, try again until you do.

Other notable achievements included selection for major international competitions, including the Loughborough International and British Championships respectively, in each case being one of a very few U20s selected. Competing in these major championships provided me with invaluable experience of what it was like to compete at an elite level. It was an honour to jump alongside the best in the field, with each competition giving me a chance to execute my own performance in front of the best. The British Championships at the end of August provided me with the chance to close my season with a bang, as well as practicing how to execute myself under the immense pressure of the widely televised event. I rubbed shoulders with the likes of Katarina Johnson-Thompson, Dina Asher-Smith and Adam Gemili for the day, even having my name announced on national television by none other than Greg Rutherford. It was an amazing taste of what is surely to come in the future, following similar levels of hard work and commitment.

Overall, this summer exceeded all of my expectations. Attempting to maintain high academic standards, upholding my Executive Officer duties and committing to training was very testing, but this allowed me to develop key organisation and time management skills, crucial to all aspects of my life. As each goal was accomplished, I rejigged my focus to achieve the next. I did not expect to have done as much as I did, but maintaining motivation and staying driven after having already achieved many of these accomplishments were achievements in themselves. Next year, I will go again, with an all new set of goals, and the same determination and grit. With hard work, who knows how far I will go?



IT'S BEHIND YOU!

Goodwin Academy are currently getting ready for their annual pantomime that this year is "Dick Whittington and his Wonder Cat". They have multiple casts that are currently rehearsing. The Year 10 and 11 cast will be performing as part of their BTEC course and the 'Community' cast will consist of Year 7,8,9 and Sixth Form.

The story tells of a young boy who comes to London to seek his fortune, he meets Alice and falls in love, but is soon accused of stealing after King Rat and his Rat Gang play a trick on him. Running away from all the troubles, Dick Whittington embarks on an adventure that sees him meeting pirates, mermaids, sailors and even the King of Morocco!

Written by Cate Hayes-Watkins, Head of Performing Arts, the pantomime is an exciting annual event at Goodwin, running for two weeks. Students perform to local primary schools, friends, family, cubs, brownies and VIPs. The pantomime has all the fun and games of a traditional performance with opportunities for the audience to get involved including the usual dancing, UV work and of course a Ghost Gag! By the end of the two week run who cannot fail to feel 'Christmassy'!

BUDDING PIANIST

Isabelle, a musically talented pupil at Meon Junior School, has performed in her recital with the Portsmouth Music Academy that took place during November. The song was Dancing with a Stranger by Sam Smith.

Isabelle attends the Portsmouth Music Academy as part of out of school activities that she takes part in.

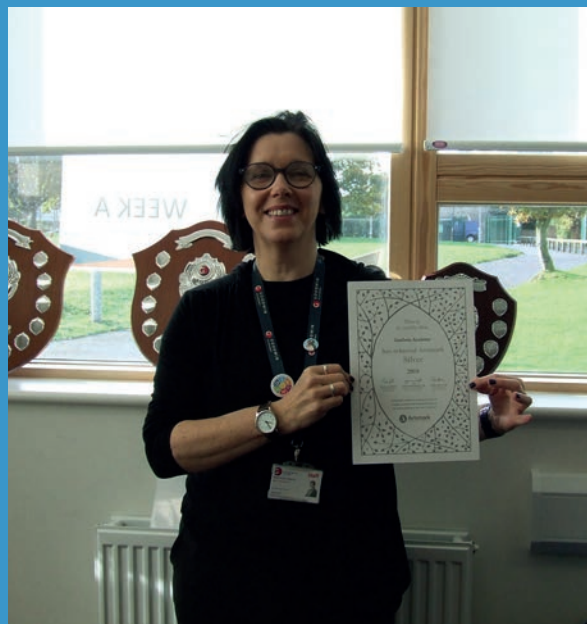


ARTSMARK CELEBRATION

Goodwin Academy are celebrating their success in gaining their Artsmark Silver Award from the Arts Council.

The award is in recognition of all they do for young people to access the arts in all its forms, including events such as the pantomime, the work with Deal Festival, Outreach work with primaries, collaborations with Laban University, regular trips and engagement with visiting artists.

The work at Goodwin Academy will continue as this award is a stepping-stone towards all of the amazing opportunities and ventures that will unfold at the school in the coming months.



TEACHER ON A POSTCARD

We are delighted to hear that pupils at Newbridge Junior School have been chosen for the Teacher on a Postcard competition after having received a fantastic response during the voting stage.

Emilia won the Year 3 to Year 6 category with Jessica and Vanathy being 'Highly Commended' and Poppy being awarded the 'Judge's Choice'.

The pupils received official invitations to the Exhibition that was formally opened by Councillor Pitt on Tuesday 29th October.

To celebrate their achievement the pupils were visited at school and presented with the awards at an assembly during November.

The Teacher on a Postcard Art Exhibition took place at the HIVE in the Portsmouth Central Library. Every postcard received in the competition was displayed on two TV screens, along with a wide selection of postcards from pupils on physical display, including a special section for the shortlisted and winning postcards.

This is an amazing achievement by all involved and congratulations go out to those who took part in the competition. A very proud moment for Emilia, Jessica, Vanathy and Poppy at Newbridge Junior School.



UNSUNG HERO AWARD



Iain Mclean has been a dedicated governor at Moorings Way Infant School for a number of years. As ex-forces, he has always been a champion for the school's 'Service Children' and has taken his governing responsibilities seriously.

Although retired, Iain is an advocate and role model for learning and has completed a number of Open University courses in various subjects, taking joy in learning new skills and knowledge. He has assisted in making the school question and challenge their decisions and the school has benefited from this way of thinking. The school is honoured to have Iain as a governor and are proud to say that he is their hero!

MEDWAY'S GOT TALENT

Max Barnes from The Victory Academy has shown his dancing talents to the community by taking part in 'Medway Youth Got Talent' that is hosted by Medway Council. Max came 2nd in the whole talent show and staff at the school and his family are incredibly proud of him.



AMAZING MUD

Deirdre, a member of staff at Cedar Children's Academy, has been very creative. Over the summer and in her own time, she has made a mud kitchen for the Early Years Foundation Stage department at Cedar. It looks amazing and you can clearly see the care and attention that has gone into it. The children love using it and the school now has an order in for another one!



CHILD GENIUS

New Horizons Children's Academy have a pupil with a higher IQ than Stephen Hawking.

Evan Siju Thomas scored the highest score possible when he took a Mensa IQ test. The 11 year old scored 162 that is 2 points higher than Stephen Hawking which puts him in the top 1% of people who sit the exam.

The Cattell B III exam that Evan took requires a score of at least 148 in order to be invited to join the society.

New Horizons provide an excellent curriculum and support children by helping them to broaden their knowledge that has also been of great benefit to Evan.



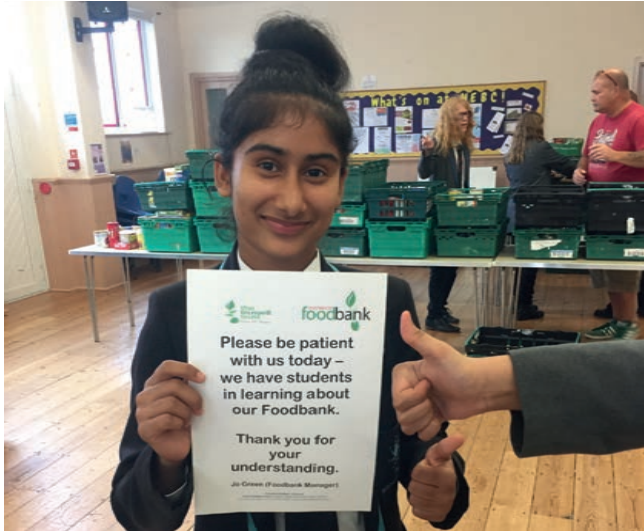
QC JUDGE VISITS PORTSMOUTH ACADEMY

A Queen's Counsel Judge has visited The Portsmouth Academy to give a talk to Year 9 students. Judge Mousely QC, spoke to the students about what it is like to be a judge and how to become one.

Students learnt many facts about courts and the criminal justice system. They were very interested to learn that the wigs are made of horsehair. As part of the experience, they tried on gowns and wigs.

Students said: "Judges are really cool", "It was fun and it interested me" and "I decided I might want to be a judge as it sounds interesting."





VOLUNTEERING AT PORTSMOUTH FOOD BANK

At the end of last term, 16 pupils from The Portsmouth Academy spent the afternoon volunteering at North End Foodbank. The pupils carried out a range of activities; sorting and labelling food, making up food packages and making teas and coffees for those using the Food Bank.

The pupils commented on how eye opening the trip had been to the situations many people find themselves in all around us.

The volunteers running the afternoon commented on how polite and respectful all the pupils were and said they were a credit to the school. The school is very proud of their work and look forward to returning just before Christmas to deliver our Christmas Hampers.



ZOOLAB EXPERIENCE

Year 5 children at Meon Junior School have had a wonderful Zoolab experience.

As part of their topic work this term on 'Fantastic Beasts', the children had a visit from Zoolab who are an animal handling experience company.

They conducted workshops with the children who were able to get up close and personal with a variety of creatures.





SICKLE CELL DONATION

The Rochester Grammar School has had engaging cultural activities taking place during the previous academy year, providing enriching experiences to its community. They have also served as an amazing fundraising drive for the Sickle Cell Society. From the Multicultural Tag Day to the Fashion Show and all the fun activities in between, students managed to raise £2553.67 to

aid the charity in its work to combat a disease that predominantly affects ethnic minorities.

This would not have been possible without the steely determination of over 130 students and staff. It is an achievement that displays the generosity of the school community and sets a fantastic benchmark for this academic year.

BASKETBALL SKILLS

Congratulations to Newbridge Junior School basketball team who took part in the Portsmouth Basketball Festival during October. They were all awarded medals for effort and skill advancement.





The Victory Academy

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

During Anti-bullying Week, Meredith Infant School learnt about the act of kindness and they all took home a minion balloon, their safe and happy mascot. They learnt about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and the impact it has. Every child was given a 'choose kindness' wristband to wear. The Victory Academy had an 'odd socks' day as part of the Anti-bullying week.

Staff at every one of our schools provide support and strive to eradicate bullying to provide pupils with an environment where it is safe to learn and grow in confidence.



Meredith Infant School

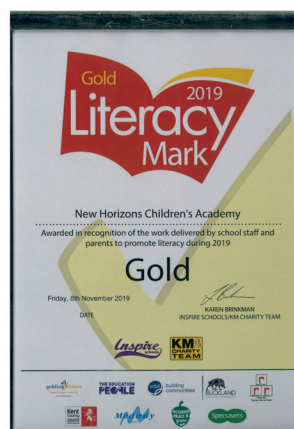


The Victory Academy

GOLD LITERACY AWARD

New Horizons Children's Academy has been awarded the Gold Literacy Mark for Reading at home through their participation in Busters Book Club.

The Busters page on the school website also featured in the presentation ceremony as good practice for promoting reading at home.



WINTER SAFETY DAY IN PORTSMOUTH

Isambard Brunel Junior School and Meredith Infant School took part in a Winter Safety Day during November in which the children had lots of fun whilst learning about how to keep safe during the winter.

They started the day with an amazing and inspiring assembly from the NSPCC before heading off to our workshops for the day. They were extremely lucky and had many visitors throughout the day. Chartwells led their healthy eating workshop which promoted the importance of a healthy diet to fight off germs and illnesses. The pupils tried many new vegetables

and the school said that some of them have been converted!

The school had a visit from their local police who even joined in with some of our Sweat Camp activities. During the visit, they looked at what to do if they ever came across an injured person by practising the recovery position, and ways to keep safe on the roads now that the nights have set in. Isambard pupils also revisited the SMART rules for surfing the internet to keep them safe online.



YOUNG WRITERS' COMPETITION WINNERS

The Young Writers' Competition is a national competition that challenges students to write creatively. The Victory Academy first took part 2016, when 23 students won a place in the Young Writers' anthology. Since then, over 200 students have had their poetry and short stories published.

To celebrate their success, we have selected two fantastic poems from the Poetry Escape Anthology, which students participated in during National Poetry Day. Sky Carter wrote a poem in Year 8 inspired by the challenge of writing an ode to nature. Rihanna Owens, in Year 11, chose to explore the complex emotions one experiences after the death of a loved one.

Autumn by Sky Carter (13)

Golden dust smears the floor,
Leaves go crunch under shoes,
Colours dance through the night-time air,
You see red, orange, yellow and brown everywhere you look.
Children running, screaming, throwing leaves,
As they gently glide down to the rushing stream.
Bare and cold are the trees' fingers and twisted arms,
As they reach out to you.

Life's Too Short by Rhianna Owens (15)

How do I feel about this?
Am I happy that you're no longer in pain?
Or am I upset because the cadaverous plague,
Ripped yet another golden soul from this rudimentary world?
You were too young, but you were still forced to perform the deathly dance.
I still remember out last few minutes, feeling your body go cold as I held you for the very last time.
What do you think of me now?
Do you feel pity because I still drown in waves of pain?
Or are you somewhat indebted to me?
You weren't here for my whole life,
But I know I made your life whole.
You weren't here for my whole life.
But I know I made your life whole.
You were taken too soon, but I promise to someday be with you,
We can start our life together again,
And nothing will stop us,
Not even death.



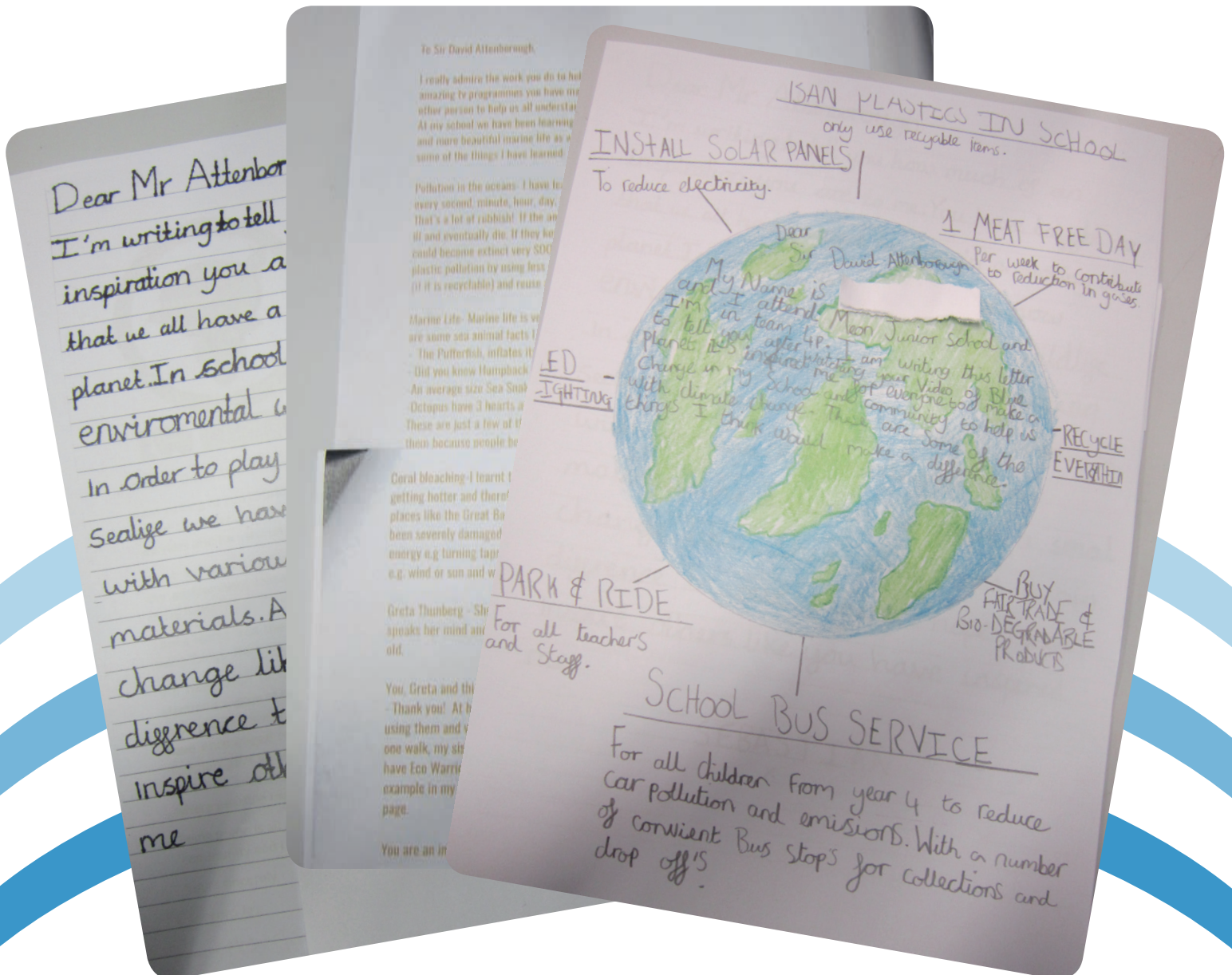
LETTERS TO SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

Children in Year 4 at Meon Junior School were set a challenge to write a letter to Sir David Attenborough to inform him about all of the things they have been learning about in their 'Blue Abyss' topic during the previous term.

The letters were also to let Sir David Attenborough know what changes they could personally undertake that could make a real difference not only in their school, but also to the planet itself.

The wonderful letters the children have written really demonstrate the respect they have for the environment.

All the letters will be sent to Sir David Attenborough and the children are hoping that they will receive a response from him in the near future.



WORLD TEACHER DAY

On the 5th October, the Trust celebrated World Teacher Day to thank all of our teachers that work hard to transform the life chances of the 8,585 children we provide a 'Thinking' education for at our schools.

World Teacher Day!

On behalf of the 8585 children within our care at the **Thinking Schools Academy Trust**, thank you for your dedication and commitment.

This day has been celebrated annually on 5 October since 1994, World Teachers' Day commemorates the anniversary of the adoption UNESCO Recommendation, concerning the rights and responsibilities of teachers.

Join us in sharing your 'Why! We are taking part in the DfE's social media campaign #ProudToTeach to join the celebration and show our appreciation. Use the hashtag to share any of your photos and videos.

#ProudToTeach

HOT CHOCOLATE THE TASTE OF SUCCESS

Rachel Grey, Principal at The Portsmouth Academy, has introduced 'Hot Chocolate Fridays' to reward students on a weekly basis.

The students who have received the most habit points or have achieved something amazing during the week are awarded a nice cup of hot chocolate for their efforts and for being great ambassadors to the school.



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TERM TIME Mon - Fri: 5pm - 10pm Sat: 9am - 6pm Sun: 9am - 6pm	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS Mon - Fri: 9am - 10pm Sat: 9am - 6pm Sun: 9am - 6pm
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DAY OF THE DEAD



Pupils at Holcombe Grammar School have been involved in a Day of the Dead competition with some wonderful work being created.

Prizes for the Day of the Dead Competition were given to students for their challenge to create an altar for a famous deceased Hispanic person for El Día de los Muertos, which is held on 1st and 2nd November. Students were creative, using a variety of materials. They also had to research and learn as the altars needed to include the traditional items of El Día de los Muertos altar and any others they felt appropriate. The staff were proud to see so many entries to the competition, all of them well researched, colourful and unique.



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HORSE OF THE YEAR 2019

Sienna, a pupil from Meon Junior School, has qualified with her horse and attended the Horse of the Year 2019 competition at Birmingham NEC. At the event, Sienna won 6th place.

Meon Junior School said: “Sienna has worked extremely hard this year to achieve what she has. She has put her all into each lesson and is an inspiration to watch ride.”

We wish Sienna lots of success for the shows she will take part in during 2020!

It is an honour to publish the great stories about pupils participating in outdoor learning and enhancing their skills out of the classroom.



COFFEE MORNING

Meon Junior School had a very successful ‘Coffee Morning’ recently to raise funds in aid of the MacMillan Cancer Charity.

The school raised over £451 that was supported by parents and carers who donated cakes as well as attending the event. The event brought the community together to raise money for an important charity and was a huge success.



NATIONAL MATHS COMPETITION

Pupils at The Victory Academy have taken part in the National Maths Competition.

Out of the 25 pupils that took part, 18 gained either silver or bronze awards and one pupil, Johannes Sadler, will go on to take part in the next round having achieved a gold award.

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



Trust Christmas Card Competition Winners 2019

Congratulations to our winning entries and thank you to everyone who took part.



Orlando
Holcombe Grammar School



Lola
Newbridge Junior School



Warisha
Penhale Infant School



THINKING
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