



CEO welcome

As we welcome the arrival of spring, I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of the exciting events and achievements that have taken place across our Trust over the past term.

World Book Day was a huge success, with children across all of our schools dressing up as their favourite characters and sharing their love for reading. It was fantastic to see our pupils embracing reading and storytelling in such creative ways.

We have also had the privilege of welcoming poet, Tony Walsh, and author, Sean Perkins, to our schools. Both are proudly from our local area and have inspired our pupils with stories of their personal journeys and amazing works, demonstrating how anything is possible when you 'do all you can'.

I am also thrilled to announce that Wesley Methodist Primary School recently received an 'Excellent' rating in their church school (SIAMS) inspection, highlighting the exceptional standard of education and spiritual guidance that we provide to our pupils.

Looking outward, our schools have been doing all they can in creative ways to raise money for EduKid, a charity that helps to remove the barriers to education faced by children living in poverty and conflict in Uganda. We are proud to be supporting such a worthy cause

and making a difference in the lives of children who need it most.

As ever, there is so much to celebrate and hard work to recognise across all our schools, so this newsletter features just a glimpse of some of the highlights. After such a busy time, I hope everyone has a peaceful and relaxing Easter break.

Warm regards,

Julie-Ann Hewitt
CEO, Epworth Education Trust

Wesley Methodist Primary School celebrates 'Excellent' news after SIAMS inspection

Wesley Methodist Primary School is celebrating being deemed an 'Excellent' school after a recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) inspection.

A SIAMS inspection reviews how effective a school is at delivering a strong Christian ethos, to enable pupils and staff and the school community to thrive. The school was previously graded as 'Good', making the move to an 'Excellent' grade even greater cause for celebration.

The report praised the school overall, stating: "This is a very happy school where the vision fosters excellent relationships" and that "the highly inclusive nature of the school celebrates the uniqueness of all."

The report also highlighted the care taken by staff to meet all pupils' needs, and how the school's vision translates into practice on a wider level, as evidenced by pupil activity outside the classroom. The report said:

- "Pupils with additional needs are fully included and have their individual needs met extremely well. This means they grow in confidence, develop key skills and make very good progress."
- "Pupils demonstrate impressive stewardship of the environment by taking action to reduce pollution and protect wildlife. Character development has a transformational impact on pupils' confidence."
- "Pupils have a keen understanding of service, are committed to good citizenship and take on many leadership roles. They willingly show acts of kindness without expecting anything in return."

Rhys Jones, Headteacher, said: "We are delighted with the results of the report. Every member of staff here works hard to bring our values and philosophy to life in

everything we do, and it's wonderful to see the positive impact this has on our pupils and wider community."

Leadership at the school was commended for its vision, staff investment and pupil care, with the report commenting:

- "The headteacher promotes and drives the vision with energy and passion. As a result, pupils are challenged, supported and able to develop."
- "The investment in pastoral staff, and well-being days for adults, lead to an environment where all feel safe and cared-for."
- "The curriculum excites and inspires children and impacts positively on academic and spiritual development."

Inspectors also spoke with parents of pupils at the school, noting: "Parents describe the visible impact the vision has on their children, spiritually and academically. Parents say the school brings out the best in their children, letting them 'Shine like stars.' As a result, they make very good progress from their starting points."

Julie-Ann Hewitt, CEO, added: "Congratulations to Wesley Methodist Primary School for such an excellent and inspiring SIAMS report. Epworth schools are a "family of schools" that continually help each other to become even better, so it is a pleasure to see how this way of working is actively contributing to a school that provides 'the best experience for Wesley children.'"





Celebrating World Book Day across Epworth Education Trust

Celebrating the joys of reading and helping children discover new books and authors, World Book Day is always one of the most colourful and fun days in every Epworth school's calendar. Here's how our schools marked the occasion:

Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School held a whole school 'Vocabulary Parade'! On the day, pupils and staff attended school dressed as an interesting word of their choice. Children showcased their words during a parade in assembly and were given many opportunities to discuss the vocabulary in class.

Pupils at Wesley Methodist Primary School celebrated World Book Day with a week of 'mystery readers'! Parents and carers attended school every day to read to different classes, with the children given clues to figure out who the adult would be.

At Nutgrove Methodist Primary School, the whole school, staff included, marked the day by dressing up as a character from a book, or wearing colours to link to iconic stories.

At Summerseat Methodist Primary School, pupils took part in an interactive online show hosted by

bestselling, multi-award winning children's author and illustrator, Rob Biddulph. During the session children got to draw, sing and hear all about how Rob creates his marvellous books.

Westleigh Methodist Primary School made the most of World Book Day this year, with pupils dressing as characters from favourite books and holding storytime sessions across the school. Year 2 pupils had a day themed around children's book, 'The Day The Crayons Quit' by Drew Daywalt and Oliver Jeffers. The children drew their own signs from the crayons to the book's main character, and made bookworm bookmarks to take home.

Rosehill Methodist Primary Academy combined fundraising with fun on World Book Day this year, with the goal of making the recently enlarged school library even better. Pupils were encouraged to use recycled materials or second hand clothing to dress as a favourite book character in exchange for a donation, and there was an after school 'bring and buy' book sale, where pre-loved books had the opportunity to become someone's new favourite story.

Gemma Yapp, Headteacher at Rosehill Methodist Primary Academy, said: "We value the importance of reading very highly here at Rosehill, which is why we have been investing in our library space. We want children to be able to settle down in a welcoming environment and make the most of the many books we can offer."

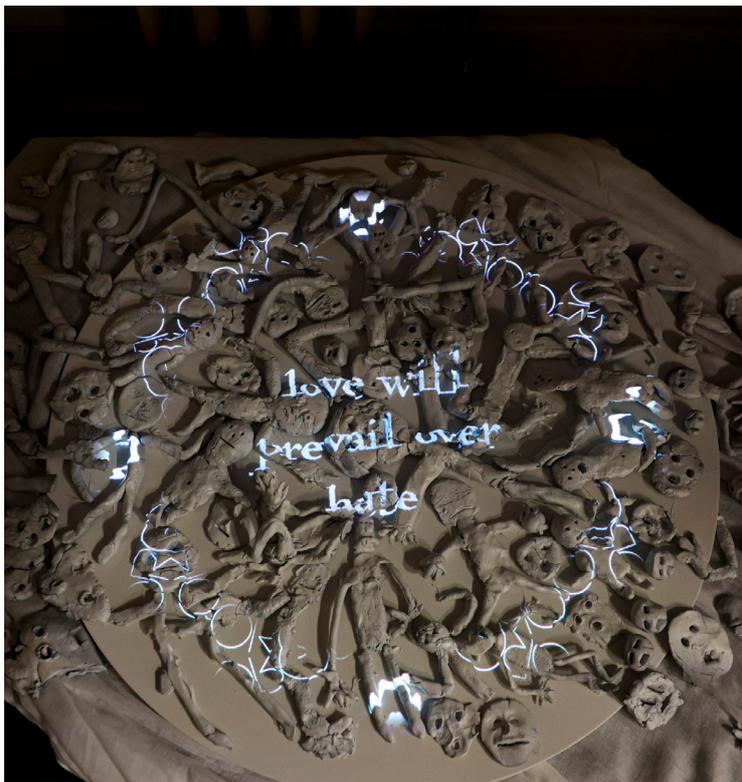
Telling 'God's Big Story' through art

Children across Summerseat Methodist Primary School took part in a whole-school collaborative art project based on 'God's Big Story'.

The project, inspired by artist Emma Yarlett, was commissioned by RE education resource, 'Understanding Christianity', to create a wall frieze that effectively presents a view of the 'big story' of the Bible.

Children learned about the Bible and its stories through eight key words and phrases: Creation, Fall, People of God, Incarnation, Gospel, Salvation, Kingdom of God and God.

Julie Whittaker, Headteacher, said: "We were blown away by the wonderful work produced by the children, which will be displayed in our school hall. Well done everyone!"



Commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day

Pupils at Nutgrove Methodist Primary School helped to create a compelling public art exhibition to mark this year's Holocaust Memorial Day.

Held every year on 27 January, Holocaust Memorial Day falls on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp where more than a million people died during the Second World War.

Nutgrove's pupils were fortunate to have the opportunity to work with artist, Helen Newell, to create figures that contributed to a new art installation at Thatto Heath Library, remembering the plight of those who suffered during the Holocaust.

Pupils and staff representatives from Nutgrove were then asked to attend the launch of the exhibition with local dignitaries, which included observing a candle lighting ceremony.

St Helens Council's Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, Culture and Heritage, Councillor Anthony Burns, said: "Holocaust Memorial Day is an opportunity to reflect and remember the countless lives that have been lost throughout history as a result of mass genocide because of ethnicity and religious views, among other things.

"Thank you to the pupils of Nutgrove Methodist Primary School who have shown maturity beyond their years for putting together an excellent exhibition to raise awareness of one of the darker moments of history - proving that the victims of atrocities like this will never be forgotten."

Sustainable Schools Project Semi-Finals

Earlier this term, pupils from the Eco Committee at Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School took part in the semi-finals of the Commhoist Sustainable Schools Project at the DW Stadium in Wigan.

Ten schools across the borough presented their ideas on how they could make their school more sustainable, providing evidence of how they are putting their plans into action to a panel of judges.

The Bedford Hall pupils pitched their #ReUse campaign, which aims to remove the stigma of buying preloved by focusing on the environmental damage of throwing things away and buying new.

They discussed the global, national and local impact of buying preloved, rather than new, and enthusiastically presented a range of strategies such as using preloved clothes and uniforms, as well as preloved toys, games and books.

While the judges deliberated, the pupils were given a tour of the DW Stadium, including the players' locker rooms and conference rooms. They were able to see the pitch, the

trophy cabinets and learn about the history of the club for both Wigan Athletic and Wigan Warriors.

Pupils were excited to hold the EFL League One Trophy and felt proud that even though Wigan is 'only a town' it could achieve such a prestigious award. They were even lucky enough to meet Wigan Athletic's CEO and hold a quick interview about his biggest joys and challenges.

At the end of the morning, the judges announced that Bedford Hall had been selected as one of four schools to go through to the finals.

At the finals, the team will update the judges on the progress of their sustainability project. The winning school will be awarded with a cash prize of £500 to put towards their future sustainability endeavours.

Good luck Bedford Hall Eco Committee!



Story time with local children's author

Sean Perkins, author of the popular children's book, 'Oscar and Ben', visited Westleigh Methodist Primary School to share a sneak peek of his latest release, 'Oscar and Ben - The Birthday Party'.

The author, who lives locally, visited every class in the school to share his latest story, sing songs and talk about life as an author.

Xanthe Moragrega, Headteacher, said: "The children were blown away by Sean's story-telling and were pleased to meet the characters in real life. Sean was so happy to discover that, in Year 6, we have our very own Oscar and Ben who share some similar attributes to his characters!

"Welcoming a local author to our school really helped to demonstrate to the children that anything is possible if you have a passion and work hard. It was a truly inspiring experience."



Poetry workshop inspires

Wesley Methodist Primary School welcomed Manchester-born poet, performer and writer, Tony Walsh, to school this term as part of the school's programme of regular author visits.

As an inspirational local poet, Tony is also one of the school's role models, with Class 3/4 named after him.

Tony, or 'Longfella' as he is sometimes known, led a poetry session with every Key Stage 2 class as well as sharing some of his own works from when he was a child. He then supported the pupils in creating their own poetry, helping them write autobiographical kennings - poems that only have phrases of two words per line, joined by a hyphen.

Rhys Jones, Headteacher, said: "It was absolutely incredible having Tony Walsh here in school. Key Stage 2 had a brilliant afternoon in the poetry workshops, with many discovering their inner poet.

"Here at Wesley, we understand the importance of offering our children every opportunity to do all they can and to be the best citizen they can be. That's why we named all of our classes after significant role models from our local area of Bury and Greater Manchester - like Tony.

"We hope that by doing this our children see what is possible for them and how they can also make a difference, similar to these incredible individuals who grew up in the same place as them."



Summerseat Methodist Primary School gets running for EduKid

This half term, Summerseat Methodist Primary School staff have been working hard to highlight the importance of active lifestyles and raise money for EduKid, an international charity that is supported by schools across the Trust.

Edukid is a UK registered charity that helps to remove the barriers to education faced by children living

in poverty and conflict, as experienced in Uganda, Cambodia and Peru.

During March, Summerseat staff have taken on the challenge of collectively crossing the distance of Uganda - 486km (302 miles) from east-southeast to west-northwest. The aim was to complete the last part of this in a whole school 'Rainbow Run' at the end of March, however the great British weather has had other ideas!

Nevertheless, staff have decided to increase their target and keep going to see if they can reach the 787 km distance from north-northeast to south-southwest instead of the original 486 km.

Staff have completed over 350km so far - Well done team Summerseat!

Rosehill bakes the world a better place



Pupils, parents and carers at Rosehill Methodist Primary School are all baking their way to a better world, using cake making and bake sales to raise money for Edukid.

Children spent two days in school taking part in baking activities before the school's Working Together Committee ran an in-school bake sale where pupils could finally taste their tantalising treats.

An after school bake sale followed for parents and carers, ensuring they too got the chance to sample the delicious baked goods.

Through activities like this, Rosehill are able to support Flavia and Jonathan, six year old children who attend the Koch Goma Primary School in Uganda, thanks to the work of Edukid which is helping to remove the barriers to education faced by children living in poverty and conflict.

Gemma Yapp, Headteacher, said: "We are so proud of the efforts made by our pupils and the wider Rosehill community to raise funds for Edukid and Flavia and Jonathan. Compassion and generosity are two of our core values, which everyone has demonstrated in abundance."

Roman settlements in Wigan

Year 3 pupils at Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School were recently invited to trial a Roman workshop at Wigan Life Museum. The workshops are being introduced later in the year and Year 3 were honoured to preview what will be available.

This visit provided the perfect opportunity to further explore this term's learning about the Romans and their influence on Britain. Pupils enjoyed learning about how the Romans spent their time in Wigan, why they chose to settle here and their daily life. They were also able to connect to the past and understand the emotions of the tribes of Wigan during the Roman invasion.

During the session, Year 3 demonstrated all of the values that Bedford Hall pride themselves on. We were honoured to receive an email containing feedback following the session from Wigan Life Museum's Joan Livesey, recognising the children's fantastic representation of the school. She said: "I have to say what a wonderful class, they are a real credit to you and the school."

Thanks also go to Bedford Hall Governor, Nick Fletcher for attending the trip. Nick said: "I was really impressed with the children's knowledge of the Romans and their enthusiasm to learn more. It was interesting to see how far language acquisition has come since I was at school."

Year 3 would recommend the workshop and can't wait to go back with their families soon to visit for free.



'Kids Against Plastic'

Children at Nutgrove Methodist Primary School are campaigning against plastic pollution alongside 'Kids Against Plastic'.

Kids Against Plastic aims to help young people to learn about environmental issues such as plastic pollution and the Climate Crisis and spread the word across the community. Through free resources, projects and its 'KAP Club', they try to inspire and empower others into action.

As part of the initiative, the school entered a poster competition run by the organisation and Olivia in Year 3 won the overall poster design award, with the school winning £1,000 worth of reusables kindly donated by FSG Tableware and other supporters of Kids Against Plastic. Olivia's poster will also be digitised and a copy sent to the school.

Julie-Ann Hewitt, CEO, said: "It's inspiring to see how well informed and passionate our young people are about environmental issues. So many of our pupils entered the competition with incredibly thoughtful designs that focused on doing all we can to combat plastic pollution. Congratulations to Olivia for her winning artwork!"

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against
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From pupils to playleaders

Freddy Fit, a company specialising in health and fitness activity workshops for schools, came to train Wesley pupils in becoming school playleaders.

As part of the training, children in Year 5 took part in a session where they learned how to inspire others to get fit, have fun and stay healthy as part of their responsibilities as playleaders. This important role involves helping to establish a happy playtime for all children by organising activities, encouraging people to join in games and to extend friendship groups.

Rhys Jones, Headteacher, said: "Our playleaders help to keep breaktimes positive and fun by organising activities that encourage inclusivity and keeping active."

"The playleader programme benefits everyone. Our playleaders develop life skills such as organisation, communication, cooperation and a sense of responsibility. Year groups and friendship groups become more integrated, promoting social inclusion, and a happy and active playtime means pupils are better able to focus during lessons. Well done to everyone involved!"



Exploring the great outdoors

Year 5 pupils at Bedford Hall Methodist Primary and Westleigh Methodist Primary had a fantastic few days at Low Bank Ground Activity Centre, by Coniston Water, in the Lake District.

The pupils enjoyed mountain walking, kayaking, ghyll scrambling, orienteering and caving to name just a few of the activities they braved!

As well as looking after their physical wellbeing, getting up close and personal with nature has proven to improve mental wellbeing too. Children took part in team building exercises, showed resilience when trying new things and continuing even when the weather wasn't on their side.

Additional life skills were learned and developed as children needed to make their beds, set the tables for breakfast and dinner as well as other routine jobs like sweeping, hanging clothes out for drying and stripping the beds.

Lisa Whittaker, Head of School at Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School, said: "We are so proud of everyone on the trip, they truly demonstrated how they 'learn, love and live: without limits'. A huge thank you must also go to all the staff for making this possible!"



Tennis superstar at Westleigh Methodist Primary School

Westleigh Methodist Primary School is celebrating the success of Year 5 pupil, Neili Adhikari, who recently came first place in the Dragon Signs Welsh Local Tour.



Run by local clubs, coaches and organisers, the Tour gives players aged 8-18 their first experience of competitive tennis, opportunities to earn ranking points and to play in matches that count towards ITF World Tennis numbers.

Each tour has fantastic, limited edition medals to compete for and collect for winners and runners up at each event. Each medal is unique, reflecting all that is great about Wales.

Neili has trained for 4-5 hours every week at Leigh Cricket and Tennis Club since the age of seven, and has represented Lancashire County Under 10s, currently ranking 5th in Lancashire for her age group.

Xanthe Moragrega, Headteacher, said: "Well done Neili! We are incredibly proud of Neili's achievement and how committed she is to her training. Hard work and good sportsmanship brings its own reward - now watch out Wimbledon!"

'Feel Good Fridays'

Summerseat Methodist Primary School is helping children focus on physical and mental wellbeing with its 'Feel Good Fridays'.

The weekly programme is supported by staff members who have trained to become official Relax Kids Coaches, with staff teacher Ms Cole recently passing her training.

Relax Kids aims to give children access to a variety of simple, yet effective techniques for relaxation, mindfulness and stress management that are developed and delivered in a fun and creative way. The seven-step activity works to take children from a high energy to a low energy, leaving them totally relaxed and refreshed by the end of a session.

Feel Good Friday's seven steps include:

**MOVE - PLAY - STRETCH - FEEL -
BREATHE - BELIEVE - RELAX**

Julie Whittaker, Headteacher, said: "We believe that relaxation, mindfulness and a positive outlook are the keys to good mental health, self-esteem and emotional resilience. A huge well done to Ms Cole and I am sure the children will enjoy taking part in her sessions in the coming term."



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