

# RISING STARS



**Bright Futures Newsletter**  
Summer 2020 Edition



I never dreamt that I would be writing this after months of 'lockdown' when most of our students have not been able to access their learning at school. Keeping students engaged has not been easy. Even those with good access to online resources and a place to work have struggled at times. Imagine how much harder it has been for those children living in overcrowded conditions with either no online access or having to share a device with siblings.

We had just two days' notice before closing our doors to the majority of children. There was no opportunity to say proper farewells to our Y13s, Y11s and Y6s or, indeed to prepare them for the changes to the public exam system. We have had to recruit and induct new staff using video conferencing and it hasn't been possible to say our farewells to colleagues who have moved on in the ways that we would like to. Professional development opportunities have also had to move online. Whilst this has meant a big reduction in travel time, accessing everything from home or the occasional trips into school brings its own pressures and frustrations.

I am sure we can all think of some advantages to the new ways of working that were foisted upon us, but not being

able to choose between face to face activities and 'virtual' experiences has proved difficult and wearying at times for us all - staff, students, governors, parents and carers. What's remarkable, however, are the innovative ways that people have found to overcome the many challenges we've faced. We've had staff visiting students' homes to make sure the most vulnerable have enough food and basic stationery to complete work. Others have produced online performances of set texts, engaged students in story or dance or have created high quality live and recorded lessons. For some of our students with the most complex needs we have found new ways of supporting parents and carers to meet their children's needs at home. Numerous welfare calls have been made to make sure students and their families are safe.

Perhaps more than ever, the circumstances since March have tested the depth and power of our collaborative approaches. It's been great to see the sharing of ideas, resources, successes and challenges across and beyond the trust. At times, we have looked internally to find strength and resilience. We have also reached out and have enjoyed the reciprocity that comes from helping



others. Nobody has found this easy and that's why we have appreciated so much the small acts of kindness that have been shared between people throughout – the messages of appreciation from parents/carers and students, and the colleagues who've continued to offer well-being support through online quizzes and novel 'keep in touch' events. We've all certainly been tested but have risen to that challenge magnificently. It's wonderful to end such a turbulent year with a celebration of so many encouraging examples of collaboration, innovation and mutual acts of kindness.

**Dr John Wm Stephens CBE**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Bright Futures Educational Trust

## Innovation and kindness

As organisations across all working sectors have been agile and adapted during COVID, we are so proud of everyone within the trust who has done something to help our amazing key workers saving lives on the front line. From creating ear protectors for nurses whose masks were hurting, to helping to construct and deliver PPE equipment, to making scrubs for hospital workers, our students and staff have tried to help as much as possible. We are so grateful for the NHS on this, the month of its 72nd birthday.





# New training programme



The Alliance for Learning has launched its innovative Relationships, Sex and Health Education training programme, funded by the DfE.

Initially planned as face to face training, the programme was quickly adapted to be delivered online and will be delivered to 200 secondary schools who commenced the training at the end of June.

Subject to DfE funding confirmation, The Alliance for Learning will be delivering the training to another 200 secondary schools in September 2020.

The Alliance for Learning has also launched a Race & Diversity Hub, in partnership with CRED (The Centre for Race, Education and Decoloniality) at Leeds Beckett University, with the aim of spreading an awareness of the issues around racial and cultural diversity in education and highlighting the positives to be gained by addressing it into the leadership of other education organisations and schools.

# Insta-fame for Stanley Grove

Abcdoes is an Early Years consultant, author and doctoral researcher with a huge audience through social and traditional media outlets. In May, Stanley Grove students and staff had the honour of taking over its Instagram feed for #takeovertuesday, promoting the school's great work to over 26,000 followers. It was a fantastic opportunity share the outdoor construction and play areas as well as the wonderful home-learning activities, message centre and creativity through art and music.

# Barking birthdays

Wishing our therapy dogs many happy returns – both Marty and Murphy celebrated their birthdays in June. Our trust is lucky to have them.



# It's a game for Girls

Baroness Sue Campbell, Director of Women's Football at the FA, was our guest of honour recently, when she joined the Alliance for Learning to host a webinar on girls' football. Joining Director of Teaching School Lisa Fathers and Rachel Redmond, Senior Developing Manager at the Youth Sport Trust, Baroness Campbell discussed how to stay fit, well and motivated during this challenging time. Students

from over 90 different schools joined the webinar which culminated in a rousing question and answer session. Says Lisa: "Our webinar was a huge success. The feedback from participants was fantastic - they loved the opportunity to ask questions. It was great to be able to put this event on for so many young aspiring footballers. Thank you to everyone who was involved."



# Healthy work at Rushbrook

As a trust, we are passionate about the mental and physical health of our students and staff – so it's wonderful to see the work being sent in by Rushbrook pupils that focuses on healthy eating, vegetables and nature – as proven by these super snapshots and wonderful pieces of work.

# Marton joins Active Leisure's #Passiton4Blackpool message

Active Blackpool combines Blackpool Council's three leisure facilities - Blackpool Sports Centre, Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre and Palatine Leisure Centre. While lockdown has been going on, the organisation has been encouraging everyone to stay healthy and enjoy the outdoors as much as possible - while abiding by the rules. One of the initiatives they have organised is Pass it on 4 Blackpool, which has seen members of the community pass on various items of sports equipment via a series

of video links shared on YouTube and social media channels. Members of the town's local cycle team, its health referral scheme, Blackpool Athletics Club and NHS workers have all taken part to encourage Blackpool residents to stay active to improve physical and mental health. Featured in the series is Marton's very own Mrs Blencowe, who took to the beach and advised people to try not to worry, and keep walking. It was wonderful to see Marton take part alongside so many of the town's health ambassadors.



# An Inspector Calls

Talk about bringing a text to life!

Year 10 students had a real treat at the start of July, when the English teaching team at South Shore Academy re-enacted An Inspector Calls for them over Zoom. The virtual theatre experience – created for both amusement and education, saw 'Team English' don full costumes and perform the first act from the classic play. This was followed by a series of questions posed to the students. Well done to all!



## Marton interactive playground

Marton has invited its learners to give ideas for a diverse and inclusive playground. The school has asked pupils to submit designs for a friendship stop, station or seat, which will actually be brought to life. The Pupil Voice programme at the school has already taken on board a number of fantastic suggestions from the pupils and activated Marton Buddies and new equipment, and the winning design will be created for use in the next school year. Good luck to all taking part!



## Birdfeeders by Melland

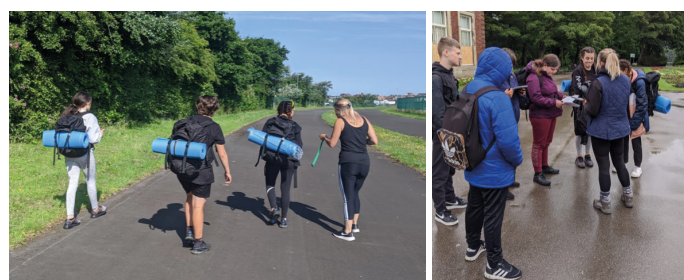
Nature has been on the agenda at Melland, as the students have created birdfeeders out of recycled materials and enjoyed making the food to go in them. Look at those fabulous colours – well done everyone!

## Podcast launch at CMA

The new CMA podcast has been launched in the last week, in which students discuss how they have been coping during lockdown. This week the podsquad provide tips on anxiety and depression, what effect the Black Lives Movement had on them and how they've been connecting with their families over the past four months. Special thanks must go to staff from the humanities department for helping the students put the podcast together and well done to the learners involved: Lutae, Megan, Mary and Chloe.



## South Shore Duke of Edinburgh



Many of our learners have enjoyed coming back to school premises and operating in bubbles as per the guidelines from the government. South Shore students have been making the most of the good weather by going on practise expeditions and nature trails as part of their training for their Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Teamwork and communication were top of the agenda and it was fantastic to see the young people support each other in their training.



## Melland drummers

There has been music at home and at school during the last few months, it really does have the power to connect us all and we have loved seeing the images of Melland students enjoying their drumming lessons. Great stuff!

## Blackpool Pop Idol

The 'Pop Idol of the Year' competitions for Blackpool Primary Schools have been very popular for many years and this year, Marton ran a 'Virtual Pop Idol Competition'. Each year we are impressed with the courage and talent of the children who audition, and this year was no different. A huge well done to all of the children who took part in the auditions – especially Caitlin from YR5A who is Marton Primary Academy Pop Idol for 2020. Many congratulations to Caitlin for her beautiful rendition of 'On my Own'.

## Black Lives Matter



Music is just one of the mediums Cedar Mount students have been harnessing alongside stunning artwork, poetry and performances as part of their humanities timetable involving The Black Curriculum, a social enterprise founded in 2019 by young people to address the lack of Black British history in the UK Curriculum. By delivering arts focused Black history programmes, providing teacher training and campaigning through mobilising young people, they aim to facilitate social change. The lectures provided great insights and brought about really thoughtful responses from our students. And some incredible video content has been created and shared across social media. Inspiring stuff.

## AGGS plays the blues

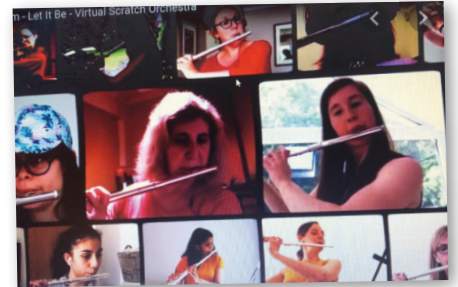


The Brass ensemble at AGGS has not been held up by COVID - Year 9 student Grace Greaves has applied her tech knowledge to run it on Zoom, rehearsing and arranging parts for all the other brass students. We applaud their innovation and efforts!



## Let it Be

Meanwhile, other music students from AGGS had the pleasure of taking part in a global online performance of Let it Be, arranged by Brit-Award-winning saxophonist Jess Gillam as part of her Scratch Orchestra series. Contributions



from the school included singers, violins, trombones, a bassoon, a clarinet and a double bass. Huge thanks to the instrumental teachers who set this up and helped the students learn their parts. The performance can be seen on Jess's You Tube channel and is fantastic, bravo everyone.

## In the news

### New plan to revolutionise teacher training in Greater Manchester – and it's free

Coronavirus lockdown shows we need great teachers now more than ever



**Schools are planning to revolutionise teacher training in Greater Manchester**  
Currently, one in five new teachers leave the classroom – and teaching altogether – within the first two years of their career. This can have a long-term impact on educational outcomes for young people.  
As experts warn that pupils will fall behind in their learning whilst schools are closed – with the biggest impact likely to be on children of the poorest families – keeping teachers in the profession, and supporting them to keep getting better, is more important than ever.  
Research shows that one of the best ways to keep teachers in the profession for longer is to provide high-quality packages of extra training and development, especially for those at an early stage in their career.  
From September, almost 1,000 teachers in our region will get this extra support and professional development via the new Early Career Framework – part of a new government funded package for schools and newly qualified teachers.  
The Early Career Teachers programme will be free to schools in Greater Manchester in 2020.

The Alliance for Learning's Early Careers Teacher training featured in the Manchester Evening News, featuring students and staff from Cedar Mount and Marton.



The Alliance for Learning's partnership with child bereavement charity Winston's Wish was also covered in the media.

AGGS has been named the best state-funded secondary school in the UK in the 2020 Real Schools Guide and this has been covered across the media. Well done to all at AGGS!