

RISING STARS



Bright Futures Newsletter
Summer 2021 Edition



When I wrote my introduction to last summer's 'Rising Stars' I had no idea that one year on we would still be struggling with the impacts of a pandemic. In many ways children and young people have endured some of the hardest restrictions on their lives during lockdowns with the loss of many rites of passage and opportunities to meet and grow together in social groups. Normal events in the fields of music, sports, drama and the arts have often had to be cancelled, or run in restricted ways. This has been enormously challenging for those youngsters who find expression through these activities. For younger children, social contact with one another, extended family and opportunities to develop through play have also been more limited. People with toddlers will know how hard it has been preventing them from rushing up and hugging family members, especially after long periods of absence and isolation.

The vaccination programme has, however, brought real hope of less restricted times when all of us may be able to return to a more sociable life, renewing and restoring our friendships with others and, once again, being able to give young people opportunities to create together, play together and just be together. It's great to see so many examples of the ways in which our schools have found ways to encourage and support students, to give them a voice and to enable them to be heard even in the context of the restrictions we have all been working under. It's so important that we all learn from the experiences of the pandemic without allowing it to limit our dreams and ambitions for the children and young people, families and communities that we serve. The brilliant examples in this edition of 'Rising Stars' demonstrate that our collective efforts remain strongly focused on genuinely striving to achieve 'the best for everyone, the best from everyone'.



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

Farewell to all our leaving classes of 2021

What a year they have had: some of them have had no exams, no proms, no sports days, no inductions to their new schools - and no lessons in school for much of the year! All the more reason that we are bursting with pride for every single one of our graduating students, whether they are Year 11s leaving secondary school for the last time, Year 13s heading off to higher education or employment, or Year 6s leaving primary. They have shown levels of positivity, resilience and strength that will set them in great stead and achieved more than they probably realise in this challenging year. A huge thanks to all of them and all of their teachers, parents, families and carers for endeavouring to make their school year as normal as possible. We wish them all the greatest of success in their very, VERY bright futures.





Barton Clough's inspired writers

There has been some excellent writing at Barton Clough, leading to some fabulous wall displays, such as this one showcasing the writing inspired by the story 'Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children.' Pupils wrote spooky poems, character descriptions and short stories around this book. Another great example is the artwork and writings inspired by reading the story 'The Great Realisation'. This story and everyone's own pandemic experiences led to a whole-school collaboration, which is fantastic to see. Well done to all!

Treats at The Orchards

The students had a lovely visit from Austin's Ices, who came along to the school with Vision for Education and gave everyone a great experience, delighting the children (and staff!) with music before the pupils used pictures, signs or words to order their tasty treat.



Lime Tree Wellbeing Award

A huge congratulations to Lime Tree Academy as the school has been presented with the Wellbeing Award for Schools. This award, which was developed in partnership with the National Children's Bureau (NCB), focuses on changing the long-term culture helping staff and pupil wellbeing, staff training and policy revision. It shows that Lime Tree has a clear strategy that promotes and protects emotional wellbeing and mental health and recognises everything the school does around mental health and wellbeing for the whole school community, from emotion coaching, home help, reflection zones, mindfulness and of course, quality first teaching. Lime Tree's ethos is to constantly evaluate its provision and support for mental health and wellbeing, and ensure that the whole school community is involved in contributing to its vision and strategy. Well done everyone.



Cedar Mount Academy heads to Unified Action

Cedar Mount Academy's head boy and girl, Stephen Quansah and Chloe Kerfoo, have joined the Youth LeaderBoard Academy with Sporting Equals, a national partner of Sport England. They had the opportunity to apply to be part of the Youth LeaderBoard Academy whilst taking part in a Unified Action Programme with the Youth Sport Trust.

Unified Action is a new rapid pilot using the power of sport, launching in five cities to connect young people with their communities, create greater diversity in sports governance and civil society, and ensure young people's voices are heard, with funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The project will bring together young people from all backgrounds, opening new opportunities and providing them with a platform to have their voice heard.

Chloe and Stephen will join a group of other young people to develop their leadership skills. They will begin with training virtually whilst working together to support challenge and change in inclusion. Well done, both of you!



Physics victory at AGGS

The Physics department at AGGS has recently received £3,000-worth of prizes thanks to Lois Howarth in Year 12, who won a competition run by the online Physics channel. The generous prizes included a Van der Graff generator, a cloud chamber, a vacuum cannon, vouchers for physics equipment and textbooks. Presenter Lewis Matheson delivered the prizes in person – he drove up from his hometown in Bath and then delivered an impromptu socially distanced Q&A for Year 12. It meant the students heard all about his journey from being a teacher to a rockstar physicist – great fun and what a boost to the brilliant Physics team!

South Shore Student Council

South Shore has recently launched its Student Council. Seventeen students from Year 7 have been given the opportunity to represent their year group in council meetings, where the students work together to share ideas and bring about positive changes to the school.



The council has already put together themes for assemblies that they believe are important and would teach them how to stay safe and they have devised a new Academy Rewards System that will be launched in September. Student voice is at the centre of everything at South Shore Academy - and indeed, across the Trust - so it's great to see these young people so engaged and passionate about their role.

Rushbrook at Robinwood

As schools across the UK have had to cancel or postpone residential school trips because of the pandemic, it's encouraging to see that some events can still go ahead. Rushbrook pupils recently enjoyed a fantastic weekend of activities at Robinwood. This centre is focused on indoor and outdoor activities that help children learn and work together in a different environment. The children were brave and adventurous, taking part in sessions that pushed them out of their comfort zones. A great time was had by all.



Acre Hall activities

National School Sports Week meant some busy PE departments and Acre Hall was no exception, with outdoor activities, traditional sports day events, soft play adventure trips, nutrition lessons and dancing, among other things. Everything was logged in a special NSSW Journal which was a fantastic way for the children to recall, enjoy and write about the week. It looked great fun and it's so nice to see activity days like this being opened up again for our students.

Elmridge at Castle Head



Year 6 pupils at Elmridge also thoroughly enjoyed their adventure at Castle Head, where sunshine and physical activities were on the agenda, from exploring the grounds, to

canoeing or abseiling. Teamwork, positivity and determination were in abundance and everyone had a fantastic time.



Stanley Grove creates Olympic art

The children in Year 6 at Stanley Grove have all been taking part in an exciting art project this month to show their support for Team GB at the 2021 Olympics in Tokyo. They have been producing artworks inspired by this year's Olympics as part of the Purple Bricks Home Support Campaign. The project aims to increase community spirit across the country and to bring people together through art, to show solidarity and pride in their local communities and athletes.

The children took part in a virtual art class led by Mateo Maci, an artist who works for Global Street Art. Mateo encouraged the children to create their own artwork inspired by the Olympics, local athletes, and what sport means to them. These artworks were sent to local artist Alex Altona to inspire his mural on the side of a building on Deansgate in central Manchester.

Some of the lucky pupils attended the unveiling of the mural on Deansgate and met two British Olympians, Taekwondo medallist Sarah Stevenson, MBE and double Olympic gold swimming medallist Rebecca Adlington, OBE. The children thought it was amazing to meet athletes in real life and they actually got to hold Olympic medals!

The mural is part of only 10 such unique art installations around the country. Go Team GB!



Melland brings back the Barbican Box!

The Barbican Box project was launched again at Melland this term. The project has been highly successful over the last few years and with the impact of the pandemic the project was in doubt for some time. With a collaborative effort however, Melland joined forces with Home Theatre, Coney Theatre Company, Harlowe Playhouse and The Barbican, so that this amazing opportunity will go ahead this year.

The Barbican Box is a portable box filled with the ingredients for making and creating original theatre and visual art. Teachers are supported to develop their own teaching practice through training, access to new activities for the classroom and collaboration with an artist mentor – a professional artist working in the creative sector. This year, students will work alongside their teacher and artist mentor to make and present a creative 'gift' that supports the wellbeing of the school, using the box as inspiration.

This six-week project will culminate in a final showcase of the students' creative developments. We can't wait to see them.

Celebrating 10 years of AFL

Wow... what a decade! After 10 years of Teaching Schools, it's time for the Alliance for Learning (AFL) to pass the baton to our two new Bright Futures Teaching School Hubs for Trafford & Salford and Manchester & Stockport. Just before we do, we would like to thank everyone who has been part of our success and helped us to achieve all that we have. The Alliance for Learning Network will continue to focus on both our amazing CPD and School-to-School Support offers and we look forward to further award-winning collaboration with teachers, schools and partners to achieve more of this:

Marton keeps it safe

Road safety is vital for all our students and staff across the Trust - Marton Primary Academy and Nursery have been learning all about this by taking part in the Brake's Kids Walk, which raises awareness about the dangers from traffic and how to keep safe when crossing roads. They discussed safe places to cross roads, including traffic islands and where there is a Lollipop Person. This was then put into practice when crossing the road near school, by everyone remembering to think where it would be safe to cross, pay attention to the road, wait at the kerb and check if they could see or hear any traffic. And of course, looking right, left and right again before walking safely across the road, looking and listening as they crossed.

The health and wellbeing of our students is paramount, so it's wonderful to see activities like this, that remind us how we can all help one another stay safe.

In the media

A new report has called for investment into housing, employment and education, to help the physical and mental health of Manchester's residents. Lime Tree Academy was delighted to welcome the BBC along to meet some pupils and staff and talk about how they focus on their own mental health. There were some great interviews to camera by staff and students alike – well done, everyone!



Clare Larkin
Head, Lime Tree Primary Academy

Stanley Grove artists and their mural featured on Sky News and they were interviewed alongside the Olympic athletes. They were brilliant! Just like the mural!

