

RISING STARS

Bright Futures Newsletter
Winter 2019 Edition

A good friend of mine often remarks that children will rarely remember the individual lessons that a teacher prepares. No matter how wonderful that lesson is, how brilliantly it's executed and how engaged the students are, it probably won't be those moments that stick in people's minds. His argument is that whilst they may forget your beautifully crafted geography worksheet, students never forget the way you make them feel. It seems that deeply rooted in our humanity is a need for positive relationships with others. The feeling of belonging that we get by connecting with others has an enduring and beneficial effect on us. This is why friendship is such an important aspect of our lives. I am fortunate to still be in touch with a number of people that I have been friends with for years. We all live

some distance from one another now, but whenever we meet up (virtually or in reality!) it's as if we have never been apart. The shared humour, experiences, enthusiasms, interests and quirky ways that we happily tolerate stand the test of distance and time. I can recall no happier times than those spent in the kind of easy good company of true friends.

Knowing the value of friendships does not make them easy to establish and maintain. Clumsy misunderstandings, inevitable disagreements, stubborn pride and just inexplicably getting on each other's nerves can all hinder our ability to enjoy the rewards of deep, trusting friendships. This is why I am so pleased to see the work across the Trust that helps young people of all ages to value and invest in friendships. Whether that's nursery children learning to share or sixth formers



working together for the success of an elite team, the foundations of rewarding friendships are firmly laid in so much of our work. I hope you enjoy reading about the many diverse celebrations of friendship in all its incarnations across Bright Futures.

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

Friendship poetry competition

Schools across the North West have participated in the Alliance for Learning annual poetry competition, which highlighted the importance of friendship this festive period.

This year's competition was judged by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, Simone Spray, Chief Executive of Manchester-based mental health charity, 42nd Street, Simon Black, Chief Executive of Mental Health First Aid England, Professor Dame Alison Peacock, Chief Executive of

The Chartered College of Teaching and Diane Modahl, MBE - Co-Founder & CEO Diane Modahl Foundation/ Commonwealth Games Gold Medallist.

Lisa Fathers, Director of our teaching school, The Alliance For Learning, said: "Christmas can be a particularly lonely time for those that don't have lots of friends so we wanted to encourage students across the NW to explore this theme, at the same time encouraging them to look at ways they can make new friends, evaluate their own relationships and support their existing friends."

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, said: "Schools sit at the heart of our communities and are perfectly placed to encourage young people to think about issues such



image: Angelina Litvin, Unsplash

as friendship and loneliness, how these issues might affect their local communities and what they can do to have a positive impact."

Congratulations to Anika Khateen of Oasis Academy, Oldham, Erin Fairfield of Bedford Hall Methodist School and Jessica Lee of Birchwood High School. The standard was very high!



Legal eagles at AGGS

A huge congratulations to the Altrincham Grammar School for Girls (AGGS) Year 12 Mock Trial Team. Last week, this group of friends took part in the Sir Rhys Davies School Mock Trial Competition at Manchester Crown Court.

This annual competition sees students from across the region compete in a series of mock trials, gaining a unique insight into the workings of the justice system.

The intimidating setting did not deter our team, who competed against 11 schools including Withington Girls, William Hulme Grammar School, Bury Grammar School, Oldham Hulme Grammar, Loreto Grammar School, Manchester High School for Girls and MGS.

The team worked really hard and won every single one of their trials including a very tense and close final against the previous champions, Oldham Hulme Grammar School.

Well done, all!

Dancing GCSE trip

Year 10 dancers from AGGS recently took part in a brilliant dance trip to the Conway Centre, Anglesey. The weekend, run by Homegrown Dance Theatre, included dance workshops on all aspects of GCSE Dance, including choreography, theory, set phrasing, artificial things and performance. Students from schools across the country attended and learnt repertoires from professional dances. A great weekend was had by all.



South Shore boys' badminton

Well done to the South Shore Academy Year 9 Boy's badminton team! They won first prize at the Blackpool Schools Tournament in November. Great effort.



Egypt in Bolton

Just one of the many fantastic school trips enjoyed across the Trust this month has been Marton Primary Academy's visit to Bolton Museum, where Year Five pupils were given a tour of the Egyptian Collection as part of their history learning.



There, the children were enthralled with all the ancient Egyptian artefacts and enjoyed creating a human timeline to show just how long ago the Egyptians lived. The visit included a live re-enactment of a body mummification and the children were welcomed into an exact replica of an Egyptian tomb, complete with decorated sarcophagus and mummified man. The tomb had hieroglyphics around the walls and the children enjoyed holding a genuine piece of the Pyramid of Giza. The museum's staff were very impressed with the children's extensive historical knowledge and a fantastic time was had by all.

Stanley Grove wins at Manchester Culture Awards



The Manchester Culture Awards were held this term, and our very own Stanley Grove Primary Academy won the award for Promotion of Culture and Education, thanks to its fantastic Build a Bridge Project, which brings pupils and cultural organisations together to build friendships and relationships.

They were up against some stiff competition including the Royal Northern College of Music and Manchester Libraries - but the judges singled out Stanley Grove in the category that looks for an organisation, school, group or individual that supports children's and / or young people's education, through cultural and creative activity.

The Manchester Culture Awards are organised by Manchester City Council and supported by the Manchester Evening News. They aim to promote, recognise and reward organisations who are involved in art, heritage, performance, photography, film or craft, that helps to shine a light on the rich culture of the city.



STEM visit

Engineering is hugely popular across the Trust and thanks to the friendships our academies have built up with leading organisations, we are able to deliver some inspiring away days and training sessions. One such example was the recent trip Cedar Mount Academy (CMA) students made to Jaguar Land Rover, where they had a full tour of the manufacturing plant, watched Range Rover Evoques being put together and were lucky to get a first hand view (pardon the pun) of how robot arms support the whole manufacturing process. It was a hugely interesting visit and one which further fuelled the passion for STEM amongst the visitors.



Melland cricket triumph

Melland High School's cricket team were delighted to be selected to represent Manchester this month, to compete against other schools from Cheshire and Yorkshire in a cross counties tournament. A huge congratulations to the team - as they brought home the trophy! Great teamwork.

Rushbrook reports from Media City

Over the October half term break, Rushbrook Primary Academy children had the opportunity to apply their writing skills into writing news reports around any topic that interested them. A group of children were then chosen to visit the Newsround studios at Media City to meet with the Newsround production team and see what goes in to making each episode. On top of that, they were then lucky enough to meet all of the presenters! After lunch the children visited the Imperial War Museum where they met two veterans, aged 94 and 98, who were able to give inspiring insights into WW2. The children all commented that it was a fantastic trip which they thoroughly enjoyed. The standard of all the news reports was very high - so well done to everyone.



Global friendships

Melland High School is in the Global Scholars Programme for the second time, following a great success last year. The programme is a 'world classroom' in which students learn about a specific topic and how it affects their lives and where they live, interacting by email in an 'e classroom' with international students, in a 'collaboration' of different schools from all over the world. This year, Melland is in collaboration with schools from Barcelona, Buenos Aires, Fort Lauderdale/Broward, Hawaii, Madrid, Philadelphia, Shanghai and Warsaw.

Students gain a lot from the programme, learning about the world around them and the diversity in different cultures around the world amongst many other aspects.

Melland is not the only BFET school to be on the programme - they first got involved in it following Cedar Mount's success with it. In total, there are 25 countries and 51 cities involved. BFET is a truly global Trust!

Making music at Marton

Marton students made music of a different kind recently, when they were treated to a musical instrument workshop in the hall. The idea was to create a range of musical instruments using everyday items, such as card, plastic bottles, string and tins. Parents and guardians were invited into school to get involved and help out.





Anti-Bullying Week

Anti-Bullying Week took place in schools across England in November. The theme for 2019 was 'Change Starts with Us', with the goal of collective responsibility. Schools across our Trust took part - holding workshops, wearing odd socks to celebrate what makes us all unique and hosting assemblies to communicate the very important messages. Thankyou to all our staff and students for making this message part of our school lives, not just in Anti-Bullying Week, but every week.

AFL hosts sessions on new Ofsted framework

The Alliance for Learning recently held a fantastic CPD session for our Specialist Leaders in Education (SLEs). Over 140 SLEs came together to hear from Senior HMI Ofsted Inspector, Vincent Ashworth.

The aim is of course to help schools improve, by mobilising our SLEs who have a proven track record of delivering results. Focussing on the values of community, integrity and passion to underpin this important work around leadership, a broad team has been developed to undertake a variety of rich deployments to deliver school-to-school support across the North West. This event, where peers came together to share their views and hear first-hand about the updates is just one example of how the ALF invests in leaders, providing ongoing advice, coaching and CPD training.



Sharing bread

South Shore students have been supporting local homeless charity StreetLife, by baking bread in their cookery classes and donating them. A lovely thing to do.

Melland student leaders

The talented student leaders at Melland have been working hard all year to develop their motivation, resilience and leadership skills - and making new friends from across our Trust in the process.

The 11 newly appointed student leaders didn't have to wait long for the chance to develop their leadership skills and make new friends as they were asked to help host The Annual Parent/Carer Information Day and Christmas Fair at the school where Melland students were joined by others from across BFET and other schools. The Melland and Cedar Mount student leadership teams are hoping to join forces over the coming year on a number of projects to support pupils across GEV - watch this space.

South Shore's Library is open!

South Shore's new library is now open and in a wonderful display of Trust friendship, the students received postcards from students at AGGS, recommending some of their favourite books. They are all writing back with their reviews / thoughts!



Merry Christmas!

From Christmas cake competitions to tremendous trees, to winter festivals for our friends and families, our academies have all joined together to really enjoy the season. We wish all our readers a Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year. See you in 2020.