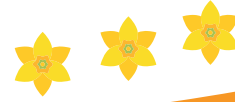


# RISING STARS



Bright Futures Newsletter  
Spring 2023 Edition



I'm sure you will all be familiar with the African proverb, '**it takes a village to raise a child**'. It captures succinctly the huge collective effort required to enable people to learn and grow positively. It also reminds us that families or schools working in isolation may never be enough to guarantee that all children have the very best experience of growing up.

In this edition of 'Rising Stars' it's brilliant to see the many diverse ways in which we work with different people and organisations within and beyond the Trust to ensure that children, families, colleagues and communities are able to access the very best opportunities. At the more formal end of partnerships this may be working together with health and social care colleagues. It may mean getting involved with community-led initiatives that are about taking pride in the places where we live. It may even be about engaging with high profile people who can use their presence to help us to shine a light on the positive work we are undertaking.

When people are so busy it would be easy to become more inward looking and focus narrowly. The wonderful examples in this edition of 'Rising Stars' show that we are always outward looking and well connected with partners who can help us to make a positive difference in the lives of those whom we serve.



**Dr John Wm Stephens CBE**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Bright Futures Educational Trust

## A royal visit for South Shore Academy

South Shore Academy were both honoured and privileged to host HRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex\*, who visited school to learn more about how students are making a difference through the Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Award.

The Earl met with students in his role as DofE Trustee and joined in with their volunteering activity supporting children from a local primary school with cooking, art, and Lego building.

Corron, a student at South Shore, who is also a young carer for his two sisters, said: "My DofE has given me so many opportunities and new experiences. When I started high school, I was really shy. Now I'm a much more confident person, a good public speaker, and I'm excited about what the future holds. It was brilliant to get to meet the Earl and show him what me and other South Shore students are achieving through the DofE."



Miss Leach, DofE manager at South Shore, added: "It was an inspirational day; a once in a lifetime opportunity! The students were so nervous, but the Earl was friendly and chatty, putting them all at ease. He seemed genuinely interested in the project work they were delivering. This was a real highlight in my career and one I will not forget."

\*Since his visit, Prince Edward has been appointed as the new Duke of Edinburgh.



## Melland's exciting expansion!

Melland High School's expansion is continuing at pace and remains on track for completion in early July. Staff and students are very excited to see the build progressing and are looking forward to being able to view the interior spaces over the coming weeks.

As a result of the expansion, Melland will welcome a larger group of Year 7 students in September and have an exciting programme of transition events and activities to enjoy over the coming months.



## Stanley Grove take action

On behalf of Action Aid, Stanley Grove Primary Academy dedicated a day to fundraising for the Turkey and Syria appeal, following the recent devastating earthquakes. The amazing school Wellbeing Ambassadors arranged the whole event and all the children were invited into school wearing their own clothes.

At the end of the day, there was a bake sale in the playground. These are always very popular with the families (and staff!) and lots of money was raised for this important cause.

**act:onaid**



## Marton Schools Alive

Marton Primary Academy and Nursery's Year 5 gave an epic performance of 'Annie' for their Schools Alive performance at the Blackpool Grand Theatre. The children were superstars! They all sung their hearts out and danced their socks off. Their enthusiasm and energy hit the audience like a tidal wave. What a fantastic, memorable performance. The way the children supported each other was inspiring and the support of families was amazing; the children were thrilled to have so many familiar faces in the audience. Everyone is so incredibly proud of them and hope the skills they have learnt in the process will stay with them for life.



## #TeamRushbrook's Young Voices

In February, Rushbrook Primary Academy's choir visited the AO Arena in Manchester for the Young Voices concert. The children had been practicing for months and after missing the last concert due to lockdowns, anticipation was high for a fantastic event.

For many of the children this was their first visit to a concert, to be part of an 8,595-strong choir made up of children from across the UK certainly helped to calm the nerves. The afternoon was spent rehearsing and everyone loved getting to see behind-the-scenes of how such a huge production comes to life.

As parents and members of the school family started to arrive, children shone their torches so they could be spotted amongst the crowd. The children performed beautifully under Miss Rachael's guidance - not many children can say they have performed with Heather Small at the AO Arena!







# Cedar Mount supports National Apprenticeship Week

Cedar Mount Academy were delighted to support the BBC with their promotion of National Apprenticeship Week (6 to 12 February). Students from Years 9 and 10 had the exciting opportunity to work with the BBC and a television crew from Lizard Fish to film a short sketch.

Students were told they were meeting 'Barry', a careers advisor, to discuss their options after leaving school. Unbeknown to them, 'Barry' was in fact television presenter, Sam Nixon, in disguise handing out terrible careers' advice. Students were quick to realise they were not getting top-quality tips from a professional which they are accustomed to receiving with their school careers advisors to help them make informed choices.

The BBC team were really impressed with students, in fact, they went as far to say: "We've found your pupils to be the best to work with!"



# Lauren Quigley helps Elmridge fundraise for the future of sports



Elmridge Primary School were thrilled to welcome Lauren Quigley, a former professional swimmer who has represented Team GB at both the World Championships and Commonwealth Games and won a number of medals. Lauren is one of only two British women to swim the 100m backstroke in under a minute. She was able to share with pupils not only her passion for sport, but also how hard work, dedication, self-belief, failure, and resilience helped her to achieve her goal. The children joined Lauren and Sports for Schools in a special sponsored fun fitness circuit to raise funds for school sports resources and to help support future GB sports stars. So far, Elmridge have raised over £1,700, which is amazing! No doubt pupils and staff alike will remember Lauren when facing a challenge in the future and follow her advice of never giving up!

# MFL debating success for AGGS

In January, six Year 13 Spanish and French linguists from Altrincham Grammar School for Girls (AGGS) participated in the North Schools' Modern Languages Debating Competition at Cheadle Hulme School. The two AGGS teams performed brilliantly, debating topics such as 'Simple is better than complex', 'Digital technology is making people's lives better' and 'Religion has a key role in modern society' in French and Spanish. The Spanish team won both of their debates against Manchester High School for Girls and Alderley Edge School for Girls, narrowly missing the final. While the French team stormed through to the final beating both Cheadle Hulme School and Cheadle Hulme High School and were crowned champions of the regional competition!

Congratulations to all students involved – Avan, Ije and Esomchi (Spanish) and Honor, Ava and Imogen (French, and pictured right).





# Reception's big move at Barton Clough

This term, Barton Clough's Reception class excitedly moved to the main school building, complete with a newly renovated classroom and a brand-new outdoor area. Children have thoroughly enjoyed exploring their new calm and purposeful learning environment and have loved investigating their new outdoor area equipped with plenty of opportunities for maths, mark making, gross motor skill development, understanding the world, and expressive arts and design. The big move also made it possible for lots of collaborative working opportunities including Year 6 prefects supporting Reception with their play and reading, and The Friends of Barton Clough and Forest School Lead, Mr Gibson, helping children to grow their own herb and vegetable garden in some new planters!



## Wellbeing for ALL at Lime Tree

Lime Tree Primary Academy were delighted to welcome Rosie Mills from 'Place for Space' who delivered some yoga and meditation sessions for Years 4 and 5, and staff. This is what Rosie said about her visit and using the school's high-tech 4D immersive space:

"So this is the space I was blessed with to run yoga and mindfulness sessions for the children and staff of Lime Tree Primary Academy!

"I had the most amazing time mindfully walking in the sea before everyone arrived and didn't even get my feet wet! (I also had a great time popping bubbles on it at the end, a great way to re-energise!). The dreamiest of setups and the loveliest of children to spend the morning with. Lots of smiles, questions, and calm faces; a perfect combination!

"Having worked in education and been a teacher I can't thank the head teacher enough for gifting her staff with their own session. I know how deserved and needed it is at this point in the school year. I remember well the resistance to staff well-being events due to the 1,000 things that need doing and thinking about, meaning that there's no time to relax - that's when it's exactly the right time."

To kickstart Children's Mental Health Week in school, staff were also invited to join in a 'Wym Hof' experience. Colleagues were encouraged to spend some time focussing on breathing techniques before then undertaking the ice bath challenge! Among the many benefits of which are: stress and tension reduction, more focus and mental clarity, increased energy, strengthened immune system and improved mental health.







## Green fingers set to work at Acre Hall

Children from Acre Hall's Nursery have enjoyed helping to enhance their outdoor area. So far, they have worked hard to clear an area to spread seeds to create a wildflower garden, made a pebble path and cleared another area which will eventually become a reading garden. Nursery take pride in their outdoor space and look forward to benefitting from these improvements as spring and summer arrive

## Comedy A-listers' charity event raises £16k at SSA

At the start of the year, South Shore Academy welcomed 8 out of 10 cats' Lucy Beaumont, Jon Richardson and Jason Manford, who hosted a comedy night. All proceeds raised will help Blackpool families in need of help with the rising cost of living. It was a sell-out event which was jam-packed with laughter and thoroughly enjoyed by an audience who couldn't quite believe this was happening in the school sports hall!

The Blackpool Gazette commented: "The atmosphere throughout was electric and the evening was consummately well organised – the perfect answer to those January blues in an albeit unlikely, but ultimately ideal setting."



## The GB Spring Clean launches at Stanley Grove

In March, excited pupils had gloves, bags, and litter pickers at the ready to officially launch #GBSpringClean (17 March to 2 April) at Stanley Grove Primary Academy. Together with parents/carers, staff and members of the community, groups of children embarked on litter picking stints to help keep the local community clean and tidy. The work of these 'Litter Heroes' supports the work of millions across the country committed to keeping Britain tidy.

Stanley Grove has made a positive commitment to the environment by signing up to become an Eco School. Amy Footman, Principal at Stanley Grove, said: "The pupils are so passionate about caring for the environment and improving their local area. They wanted their litter pick to inspire others to reduce waste and not drop litter." Pupils talked about how their involvement in this campaign linked with topics in the school curriculum and they took pride in playing their part, asking: 'Please can we do this every Friday morning'!







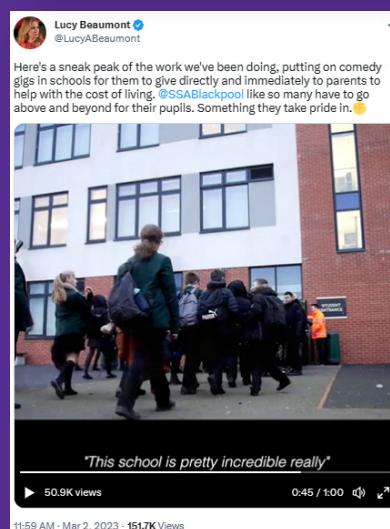
# World Book Day 2023

Across the Trust, our schools had a wonderful time celebrating World Book Day, not only with amazing costumes but the opportunity to take part in many activities to encourage a love of reading.



## In the media

Both of the events at South Shore Academy resulted in a lot of positive press attention, as highlighted below:



## National leaders at Bright Futures

CONGRATULATIONS



**Lisa Fathers**  
National Leader of Education

At Bright Futures we are delighted that Lisa Fathers, Director of Development, Partnerships and Teaching School Hubs, has been designated a National Leader of Education (NLE) and Edward Vitalis, Chief Operating Officer, has been designated a National Leader of Governance (NLG).

CONGRATULATIONS



**Edward Vitalis**  
National Leader of Governance





# Bright Futures Youth Board

This term, the very first Bright Futures Youth Board was officially launched. 24 pupils from across our 12 schools make up the Youth Board and they all spoke of their excitement and passion to make a difference. When stating their reasons for applying for their new roles, students highlighted: 'equality of opportunity', 'meeting new people', 'fundraising' and 'inclusivity'. A huge thank you to all our schools who have helped us with the process to appoint our Youth Board. We are looking forward to our next meetings being face to face, and to making a difference through various projects. This year, we will be looking at how the Youth Board can advise on policy, fundraising and communication. We, and our Youth Board, look forward to keeping you updated on our progress and news.



Inaaya (Y5) &amp; Liana (Y5)



Kais (Y12) &amp; Romario (Y10)



Benji (Y5) &amp; Tyler (Y5)



Poppy (Y5) &amp; Darcy-Jayne (Y5)



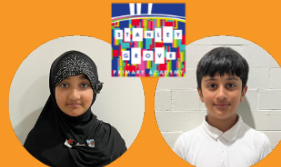
Alice (Y5) &amp; Elisabeth (Y5)



Sinmi (Y10) &amp; Abdulhadi (Y10)



Hollie (Y5) &amp; Cody (Y5)



Amina (Y5) &amp; Muhammad (Y5)


Tyler (Y8) & Jake (Y8)  
Photo Unavailable


Zelaf (Y4) &amp; Lucas (Y5)



Anna (Y8) &amp; Hadiya (Y9)



Morgan (Y5) &amp; Charlotte (Y5)

## Children's Mental Health Week at Barton woof!

To celebrate Children's Mental Health week in February, Oak class were visited by two very special guests, Lola the Golden Retriever and Lennie the American Bulldog. Children spent time speaking with the dogs' handlers discussing how therapy dogs can support positive mental health and different strategies to use to make themselves feel better. Everyone soon realised that they all really love spending time with animals as they helped humans to feel calmer and more relaxed. The visit also provided the perfect opportunity for children to learn about being a pet owner and to have a few cuddles as well as a chance to support some pupils in developing their confidence around animals.



Oak class now have a very serious mission ahead of them... to convince Mr Foster-Carr to get a school dog!

## New age kurling for Marton

A group of Year 4 children were chosen to take part in Blackpool's 'New Age Kurling Competition'. Pupils played five rounds against five other schools and did really well. They were so enthusiastic and well-behaved, and they demonstrated both great sportsmanship and fair play. Great job, everyone!





# AGGS' annual 'First Give' competition



Year 9 students at Altrincham Grammar School for Girls (AGGS) took part in the annual 'First Give' competition. Each set had to choose a social issue and a charity that they would work alongside to hold various events and activities to raise money and awareness. With the winning group set to win £1,000 for their charity. Here, Aamira from the AGGS Media team explains more about the social issues and charities the teams focused on:

"9A chose terminal illness with East Cheshire Hospice, and they held a bake sale and a fun run, raising £315. 9B chose gang violence with Prevent 2 Protect and made a short film about realistic gang violence. 9C chose human trafficking and modern slavery with The Salvation Army, and they held a doughnut sale and performed a street drama, raising £128.74. 9D chose homelessness with Centrepont, and they held a sleep out at

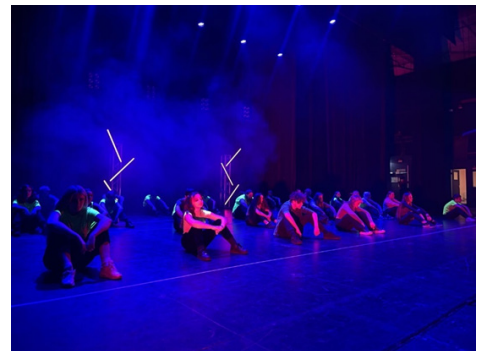
school, wrote 121 letters to the homeless, walked 121,000 steps, collected 121+ hats, scarves, gloves, and socks, raising over £1,300. 9E chose refugee poverty with Afrocats, holding a movie night, brownie sale, as well as making welcome boxes for refugees and partaking in a dance workshop, and they raised £2,089. 9F chose disability awareness with Scope, and they had a bake sale, raising £150. 9G chose substance misuse with the Daniel Spargo-Mabbs (DSM) Foundation, holding a tombola and making lesson plans and leaflets, raising £110.60.

"All sets did amazingly well with their diverse range of social issues and charities, but ultimately, there could only be one winner. After all the sets had presented to the panel of judges about what they had done in many interesting and creative ways, it was surely a tough decision to make. In the end, 9E won the £1,000 with their chosen social issue of refugee poverty and their charity Afrocats. Congratulations to 9E and well done to all the other sets!"

## SSA light up the stage!

South Shore Academy Performing Arts students put on an outstanding performance at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool. They had worked tirelessly over a course of four weeks, totalling just eight rehearsals, and pulled together a 10-minute dance medley performing 'The Best of Billie Eilish'.

Miss Duckworth is in awe of how enthusiastic and dedicated students have been and everyone had a great time watching the show. Congratulations!



## The Orchards

At The Orchards, each child is encouraged to express themselves, make choices throughout the day and create their own path to learning. Each child is unique, and we celebrate each and every method of communication, developing the children's confidence and challenging their skills.

Hilltop class celebrates a wide variety of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Methods until a child is confidently able to express their preferences. We believe supporting a child to find their own voice is the key to learning and development.

In Hilltop, we are currently using; PECs, (Picture Exchange Communication System), Sign-a-long, Eye-Gaze Communication Devices and Canaan Barrie Sign Language.

To support the children throughout their day, the class team use a diverse collection of tools to help a child navigate their school day. We build a portfolio for each child and work closely with Speech and Language Therapists to continue adapting and progressing alongside the children.







# Professional Development Institute



## We've launched our new Early Years Hub in Manchester!

In March, the Early Years Stronger Practice Hub was officially launched with its inaugural conference. The Hub was delighted to host over 120 attendees from across the northwest including schools, nurseries, childminders and early year advisors and leaders.

Expert speakers included Aaron Bradbury, Ruth Swailes and Jamel Carly Campbell who inspired attendees with both their passion for early years and in-depth knowledge and theory of high-quality provision for young children. As summed up by one attendee: "A fabulous day, amazing keynote speakers and a great opportunity to speak with new people."



## Ofsted visits Bright Futures ECF team

In its remit as a delivery partner, Bright Futures Teaching School Hub was chosen to be part of the Ofsted inspection process for Teach First's Early Career Framework (ECF). This involved a huge team effort across the Trust as Ofsted wanted to meet with Early Career Teachers (ECT), Mentors and Head Teachers of schools who have programme members on the ECF. The main purpose of the visit was for Ofsted to learn more about ECT experiences, the impact ECF is having on professional development/practice and to hear feedback on the programme. Some of the areas of focus included subject and curriculum, adaptive teaching, and assessment. Colleagues provided useful feedback and thoughts around the implementation of the ECF. Thank you to everyone involved!

## Spotlight on NPQs

"I have recently completed an NPQ in Leading Teaching, to help develop my leadership skills as my career progresses. I have taken on the role of science subject knowledge lead for the Bright Futures SCITT since starting the course.

I valued the blended approach of the NPQ course, consisting of online learning modules, seminars on Zoom and face-to-face conferences. The online learning modules contained useful reading materials, which allowed me to fully engage with the content for upcoming seminars. I particularly enjoyed discussions on 'how pupils learn' and 'implementation'. The seminars being spread out throughout the year helped me to manage the workload of the course. I also attended a conference, which was a great experience to network with other NPQ colleagues, and I found practising difficult conversations particularly useful.

These activities combined helped me to feel confident in my knowledge of the topics covered and I was able to apply them successfully to a case study within the final assessment."

Anna - Altrincham Grammar School for Girls

# HAPPY EASTER

We wish everyone a restful Easter break.



The best *for* everyone, the best *from* everyone

