

Our Community Matters

March 2023
Issue Twelve



The latest news, views, and announcements for the
Community Academies Trust



#catschools/#schoolscat

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This issue looks at a
selection of just some of
the work that network
groups are doing.

I always forget how quickly a half term goes until it comes time to put an OCM issue together. Suddenly, six weeks doesn't seem so long. But how much have our schools managed to pack into those six weeks? As usual, you are amazing! The new "School Bytes" feature highlights just some of what our schools have been up to from celebrating national storytelling week to rewarding student achievements.



Pupils from Budbrooke Primary School

Headspace in this issue looks at the journey to headship by Budbrooke Primary School's Headteacher Corinne Thomas who proves that sometimes opportunity knocks on your own doorstep and finds you without you needing to go out and look for it.

And finally, a plea for help...

Teacher recruitment this year is reportedly at the lowest that it has been in the last ten years. We need new teachers coming into the pipeline and we know the schools in our trust provide excellent training grounds in which our beginning teachers can thrive. The CAT Institute of Education is looking for undergraduates who might be ex alumni of your school, friends or even relations, who would like to spend three weeks in the summer term trying out teaching for themselves on our internship programme and earn £300 a week for their time. If you know anyone who might be interested, do point them in our direction. They need to be undergraduates in disciplines such as Sciences, Engineering, Computing or French (or have a good A level in them) and be interested in secondary education. There's no obligation to go into teaching afterwards. More details are all on the IoE website www.thecat institute.org.

Enjoy the rest of this Spring term and I look forward to chatting in the next issue.

Michelle, Editor
Our Community Matters



Message from Philip Hamilton OBE, CEO



Ensuring Excellence describes the main characteristics of an excellent trust school. I used it as a reference when we met in the autumn term. Up until now there have been 5 main areas of focus in this document:

- **The Power of Education** - Instilling a crucial sense of possibility in the young people in our care and making sure they value education and are motivated to achieve.
- **Living Inclusivity** - We all work so that we live and breathe inclusion, ensuring that all pupils are valued as individuals
- **Our Professional Best** - Where we all commit to ensuring a consistent approach to leading and managing behaviour so that there are excellent relationships or learning
- **Education** - Ensuring an excellent curriculum and progress through it lesson after lesson
- **Leadership** - Ensuring leaders at all levels enable our trust to be a place where we all grow professionally and that this impacts on pupils' achievements.

However, our trust vision for schooling goes beyond this. We believe in a community informed education and that our schools should be anchor institutions for their community. A place which adds to the positive identity of a place and that brings a sense of pride and security for families, local residents and wider stakeholders. Following our latest review of Ensuring Excellence I have added a 6th area to the definition of a great trust school.

- **Community Schooling** - Schools as anchor institutions who play a significant role in their localities contributing to the greater social good.

The importance of great community education cannot be overstated. Some of the impacts include:

- A relevant curriculum that accesses local resources, people and the geography resulting in pupils with a greater sense of citizenship and advocacy for their local community
- Greater trust and mutual respect between school/pupils/families and wider community stakeholders.
- A positive community identity centred around the resources our school provides to the community (library/sports/creative/educative)
- Employment for local people and a source of support in their work
- All local children attend their local school
- Improved attendance and achievement including but not limited to the academic
- Community advocacy for the school
- Pupils from vulnerable groups and families hold school in high regard and succeed at school

There are so many wonderful examples of activities and work in our schools that do an excellent job of anchoring the school in its community. These often require schools to go that extra mile time and again. My personal thanks for all you do in this endeavour.

Best wishes for the half term ahead.

Philip Hamilton OBE, CEO



Head Space

Schools in the Spotlight:

Budbrooke Primary School

by Headteacher Corinne Thomas

Budbrooke Primary School joined Communities Academies Trust in 2014, a proud, community focused, school-based multi academy trust which now consists of 18 schools across the primary and secondary phases. The trust is committed to preserving local school identity and ethos and adopt strategies for school improvement that build on and enhance local reputation, raise standards, and respond to the needs and aspirations of those in which it serves. Fundamentals that Budbrooke whole-heartedly embraces, with the added benefits of collaboration with forward-thinking, progressive, like-minded schools full of talented colleagues.

My own journey at Budbrooke started when I was appointed Deputy Head in September 2018. At the time it was my perfect role, the one I had been waiting for! But who would have thought just over two years into my Deputy role, that I was going to be here, proudly calling myself 'Headteacher of Budbrooke Primary School'. This is a career path in all honesty I had not given much thought to, but I do truly believe things happen for a reason.

Previously, I had held a position in school as 'Leader of Learning' supporting colleagues in their own professional development. I was requested by Warwickshire Local Authority to become an Early Years Moderator, a position that I saw as a privilege, an opportunity to visit schools across the county, picking up some amazing ideas to improve my own practice along the way. I also, for those of you who do not know me all that well, have a passion for Phonics and the importance it plays in teaching the fundamentals of early reading skills. Because of my determination and belief that phonics absolutely must be taught correctly (a little bit of a bugbear of mine) I also became a Local Authority Phonics Monitor but was still seeking further professional development for myself as a leader.



The Deputy Head role at Budbrooke gave me the opportunity to grow professionally into a more senior leader position within school but also allowed me to continue with my passion in developing effective Early Years provision. I believe all children deserve the best opportunities a school can provide and getting those crucial first years right is paramount in beginning children's journeys through education on a positive path.

During the Easter break of 2021, I received a phone call from Mr May asking me if I would consider the role of 'Acting Head'. I remember feeling apprehensive and a wave of self-doubt came over me -but I agreed. I was welcomed into the fold and have always felt supported as I was finding my feet in an unknown territory. During this time, I was determined that I was not going to be a 'caretaker' for the school but set straight to writing my first 'Learning Improvement Plan' with priorities that I had identified to continue Budbrooke's improvement journey.



The Headteacher position was advertised! Whilst showing around potential candidates for the Headship I found myself asking 'What have they got that I haven't?', 'What could I offer Budbrooke?', 'I wonder what changes they will want to make to MY school?', etc. So, I decided to apply for the Headteacher role myself and endured the interview process. From that moment I have not looked back. I was full of enthusiasm on how I was going to continue Budbrooke's journey to greatness!

Together with my hardworking team, we decided to go back to the beginning, a fresh start - what do we believe in and what do we want for our pupils that will demonstrate the school's commitment based on the fundamental belief that all young people have talent and the potential to achieve more than they ever thought possible. We decided together on our new school values 'The 5Cs' Consideration, Collaboration, Confidence, Curiosity and Challenge. These school values are our driving force that underpins everything we do. They form the principles to our new reward systems, our new feedback policy, our new behaviour management strategies - our school ethos.

Our curriculum offer has been a challenge over the past couple of years transitioning from mixed-age classes to a single form entry, ensuring appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum, developing that progression of knowledge and skills across all subjects, maintaining a school priority of challenge whilst facilitating this within an inherent two-year thematic cycle but I am excited about our evolving curriculum that meets the needs of all and how this is developing. I am looking forward to next September which will see the launch of our new curriculum. Recently, we have been developing our wider curriculum offer including many additional, broader curriculum opportunities, including visits and visitors; a calendar of deep and diverse experiences which create links with our community and a wealth of extra-curricular clubs centered around pupil's (and staff's) interests. All these opportunities enhance and enrich our curriculum and aim to encourage our pupils to be aspirational and to spark curiosity.

I am extremely proud to say that our amazing pupils are a strength of this school. Our pupils, that we have the privilege to teach, develop and support, are the reason that we strive to provide the best opportunities that we are able to deliver; our pupils speak with enthusiasm and understanding about the effect our school values have on their own personal development; our pupils who frequently say how much they enjoy coming to school and that lessons are fun; our pupils who enjoy challenging themselves and are proud to talk about the impact they have in school development through their work in our Student Leadership programme. Our pupils have a voice here at Budbrooke -they know they will be listened to and that the school belongs to them.

I have absolutely met some challenges in the early days of Headship, but continue to embrace the role with determination, resilience, and passion. I am proud that, over a relatively short period of time, Budbrooke is becoming a school of choice with more first-choice preference applications for next year than we have had in several years, along with many enquiries for mid-year moves. Parent voice is more positive with 93% of parents reporting that they would recommend this school to others.

I know there is still much to do in terms of Budbrooke's school improvement and that realistically the 'job' will never be done! I learnt very quickly to accept that you never get to the end of that 'to do list' and that everyday sitting on this chair is different, but I am developing in confidence and together with the amazing team around me I look forward to celebrating further school achievements -and I am going to end on -'I survived my first Ofsted as a Headteacher!'

Ensuring Excellence



READERS MAKE LEADERS

By Sarah Foley, The Telford Park School

Since the opening of the Telford Park School reading has been a whole school priority. We run a variety of interventions, including ensuring every teacher knows the reading status of all their students in every class, regular reading, and literacy CPD sessions and a Tutor Reading Programme (TRP) for all KS3 students (where Teachers read a carefully curated literary canon linked to our curriculum three times a week).

In addition, we buy every student in school a minimum of one book every year. We also aim to provide every year group with an Author visit, and hold reading award events every term.

Every KS3 student is expected to have a reading book with them every day to join in the daily 15-minute rolling independent reading session (known as READ45) and we give raffle tickets to students who are entered in prize draws (known as BYBIED, Bring Your Book in Every Day).

We don't have all of the answers and are constantly exploring ways that we can maintain a reading culture with integrity and purpose. One of the growing initiatives we had observed in Primary schools was the repurposing of confectionery vending machines to become book vending machines. The photos of beaming students with their golden tickets and chosen books were enticing. However, given our guiding principles it took about a year for us to decide upon the validity of such a purpose, how it would enhance what we already do and the impact it would have for our students.

Once we had made the decision, we researched suppliers and decided upon purchasing the machine and worked with the company to brand it with our school colours, vision statement and logo. We did have the option to hire a machine however, it could not be branded, and we wanted our students to feel a sense of ownership. The company were easy to work with and we drafted a minimal number of design options because we communicated thoroughly what we wanted.

All students in all years are all eligible to be awarded a free book. Reasons can range from their raffle ticket being drawn, having a positive attitude to reading, undertaking activities to support and promote our reading culture and becoming a reading ambassador. Students are presented with a voucher in assembly and when they see a book, they like they may exchange the voucher for a token and use the machine. As we positioned it near the school canteen it always draws a crowd.

Our first recipients were our two Year 11 Head Prefects who asked if they could have a book each for being photographed at the opening!

If anyone would like any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.



School Bytes

Snapshots of what our schools have been up to this half term

The Wilnecote School bounces into celebrations ...

by Mr Thorogood,
Assistant Headteacher



During the final week of Term, we were able to celebrate the achievement of students at Wilnecote. On Thursday 17th December, students who met the criteria were able to enjoy either an inflatables session in the Sports Hall or a movie experience. This was just a small way to recognise some positive and consistent attitudes to learning. We know there was some disappointment for those students who didn't get to enjoy this, so we are committed to reviewing the criteria to be as fair as possible for next Term.

The inflatables were great fun, and some staff (me included) tried our luck on them. I went home with a cricked neck, so my body clearly is too old for such fun!

The other events during the final week were our House Celebration Assemblies. In these assemblies, we awarded the first Value Badges of the year. It was fantastic to see just how many had achieved the thresholds for them, with four students even achieving Badge two as well, so early in the year! Students should be encouraged to wear their badges on their lapels with pride.

... and become Climate Avengers

By Miss Julius,
Head Performing Arts



During the Autumn Term Year 8 have been looking at the topic of climate change. They began by exploring the performance Urban Astronaut by theatre company Highly Sprung. Urban Astronaut is set in an imaginary future and explores what might happen to our planet if we don't do something about climate change. Students then created their own performances based on the theme of climate change. They worked in groups and devised their own performances which they then presented to the rest of their class.

Over the last few weeks of the term students worked in pairs or small groups to create a set design for their performance. They began by creating a mind map of their ideas, then they drew, coloured, and annotated their set design thinking about what they wanted to include and why. Finally, students created a model of their set design using a shoe box and some crafts. The results were really creative and imaginative, and students should be very proud of their work.

Mock the Interview

On 24th January, The Telford Priory School was delighted to host their second Mock Interview event, which saw 41 employers conducting over 200 interviews with Y10 students. This is a really important part of our careers programme, providing real life experiences ready for the working world. Our students performed exceptionally, with comments such as *"polite and confident"*, *"a brilliant CV"* and *"very well presented"*. The feedback from our visitors was also excellent: *"such a great opportunity for students"*. Thank you to the many local companies who took part, and I can't wait for the next one!



Sir Elton John's invite is still standing....

Readers may remember back during the covid years, a group of students from the Telford Priory School produced a fantastic rendition of Elton John's "I'm Still Standing". Teacher Ben Millington was blown away when Sir Elton's management team contacted him about how impressed the global megastar had been when he had heard this group of students and their rendition of his hit. Sir Elton was so impressed by

the talent of this group of young people, that he promised to send them tickets to one of his shows the next time he was on tour.

I imagine Sir Elton hears a lot of versions of many of his songs, all of which will no doubt be of varying quality. The unique selling point of this one however, was that it was produced by The Telford Priory students via Zoom, back when Zoom was only just becoming a thing, and that the performance was so good, it caught Sir Elton's attention long enough for him to find out more about the school and to send a video message of his own to them. If you didn't see it first time round, you can see it for yourself right here:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CBhq2nRHcRY/>

The whole incident hit the local news feeds at the time and Ben and his students became an overnight sensation. Well, the invitation had pretty much been written off into the annals of history until just recently when Mr Millington was contacted again by Sir Elton's team who were coming through on the earlier promise of tickets to Sir Elton's show.

Once again, in the media spotlight, Mr Millington is now busy trying to track down his former students to let them know about this amazing opportunity.

Chadsmead Primary Academy launches Oracy project

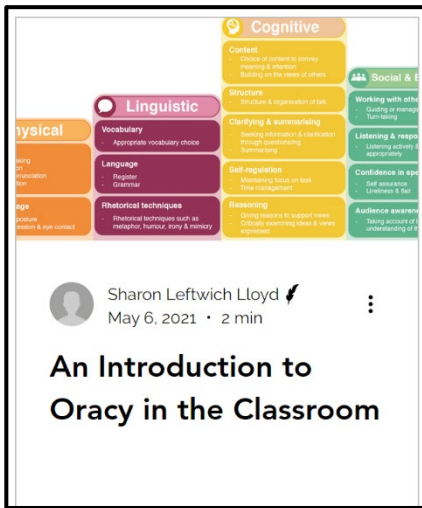
Mr Budge, at Chadsmead Primary Academy recently talked to parents about an exciting new project in their school called Oracy.



Research shows that the way children speak affects nearly all parts of their lives. How children speak is so important to their development, especially their writing. Speaking clearly, confidently and using precise vocabulary allows children to order their words for maximum effect.

When children can do this, they become capable of writing to a much higher standard. In short, if they can't say it, they can't write it!

The Oracy project at Chadsmead compliments so much of the work they already do in school said Mr Budge, for example the use of Tier 3 vocabulary in all lessons and speaking in full sentences when appropriate.



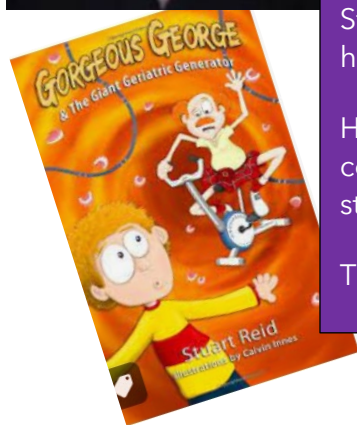
To start the project, staff spent some time teaching children about the different ways people speak. They then encouraged children to speak a sentence using 'local speak' i.e. using abbreviations or slang or perhaps with a dialect. This sentence was then translated into Standard English (the English language we are required to teach nationally). Also, children took great pleasure in using Suave speak. This is where children 'suave up' a sentence using some tier 3 words or other advanced vocabulary. To give this greater emphasis, the school launched "Suave" word of the week. This is where, in the star assembly on Friday, the whole school is given one "suave" word for them to use at home and at school wherever they can.

If you would like to read more about Oracy, The Polesworth School Lead Practitioner, Sharon Leftwich-Lloyd wrote an article for the OCMJ blog. You can read it by clicking on the picture to the left.



Visiting author helps Windmill Primary celebrate Storytelling Week!

We were visited by Stuart Reid, author of nine "Gorgeous George" books, and an expert in promoting literacy.



Stuart was delighted to visit Windmill and was exhausted at the end of the day, having given so much energy to his workshops.

He said, "What a super day and I hope the feedback has been good. The energy, contribution and laughter from Windmill pupils (and teachers) was superb! The students were an absolute joy to present to!"

This was a great end to national storytelling week.

Christmas Activity days at The Telford Park School

By Tom Ward, SENCO/DSL



Christmas feels like a long time ago now, but on Monday 19th December, The Telford Park School opened its doors to families over the Christmas holidays.

Following on from two successful year 7 summer schools, we teamed up again with Telford and Wrekin Council to run two action-packed days full of enrichment and academic activities. The scheme, which saw the school open for two days during the holidays, was part of Telford and Wrekin Council's Happy, Healthy and Active Holiday programme.

We had over 50 children attend on both days. Pupils got the opportunity to bake biscuits, play sports, go on treasure hunts and make Christmas crafts with their friends. We have a lovely warm building and an amazing catering team who provided hot lunches for our pupils. We also have enthusiastic staff who wanted to give up their time in the Christmas holidays to put activities on and we have fantastic pupils, who just wanted to come and get involved in everything we've got on offer. Some pupils turned up halfway through day 2 when they heard about how much fun we were all having. The highlight for some was school wide game of hide and seek. We were also delighted to be able to send our pupils away with food parcels full of fresh vegetables, tinned foods and recipe cards to help them and their families prepare some meals over the holiday period.

Shirley Reynolds, the council's cabinet member for children, young people, and families, attended the school during the first activity day. She commented on the pressures of rising energy and food bills, meaning that more children needed help this winter. We were also paid a visit by BBC Midlands Today who enjoyed sharing our school and seeing first-hand what our pupils were getting up to.



We are already planning our next Summer School in August. We would also like to expand our Holiday provision with a rewards trip this Easter and an enhanced Christmas provision later in the year.

We are not a term-time-only type of school. We think about our pupils and community all year round and look forward to seeing our pupils again during the Easter Holidays.

Introducing....

Nic Parker, Assistant to the Directors for the Central Team. Nic joined us in January this year and is already getting her teeth into her new role.



Hello, I'm Nicola (Nic) Parker and I'm the new Assistant to the Directors for the Central Team. I'm new to the Trust, having only joined in January, so I'm slowly starting to meet and communicate with colleagues across the Trust and get to know our schools. I'm really enjoying my new role so far; everyone has been really welcoming and helpful and I'm glad to have joined such a great team of people.

My role as Assistant to the Directors involves working closely with the Executive Leadership Team to plan their diaries and organise meetings, events and conferences and also working with the Board of Directors for the Trust, to manage all the statutory governance matters, including all Trust Board and Committee meetings and the recording and publishing of statutory information. I support local governors, head teachers and governance professionals across the Trust, and am responsible for the administration of governance for the trust including administration of GDPR and Freedom of Information.

I have worked in school administration for many years, in a variety of different roles. I started as a part-time administration assistant at a middle school in Leicestershire. It was here that I really learnt about and became involved in all aspects of school administration. It was also in this role that I first started attending governor meetings to cover when the clerk was absent, and started learning about the importance, impact and requirements of the board of governors. I also became involved in the whole life of the school and the pupils; becoming a First Aider, taking part in school trips, serving Christmas lunch to pupils, joining in the annual fun run and volunteering at parents evenings and the leavers prom. I really enjoyed seeing the pupils grow from joining in year 7 to leaving in year 9 and felt proud of my involvement in their school life and development.

From my introduction to governance, I then became an official clerk to governors for a Primary School and completed my clerk to governors training with Derbyshire County Council, and later went on to become a clerk for a local secondary school. Both schools were LA maintained schools at the time, not academies, and I really developed my clerking skills and knowledge of school governance, including recruitment of governors and headteacher recruitment, pupil disciplinary panel meetings and liaising with SLT in the school and the governing board regarding governance matters. I also learnt that the clerk to governors role involves much more than taking notes at meetings - there are many statutory requirements to adhere to, accurate records to keep, procedures to follow, and the role requires high levels of organisation and communication skills. The clerk is also a source of guidance to the governing body on procedural matters and information, so the role can often be underestimated, and I'm pleased this role now has the new title of 'Governance Professional' to indicate it's importance and level.

My next role was in a Special Educational Needs School, incorporating a split role of Commercial Administrator and Teaching School Administrator. In this role I was primarily involved in the financial administration for the school, and also working in the Teaching School, where we provided training events for the schools in our Alliance and provide Initial Teacher Training via School Direct, offering trainees placements in our Alliance Schools.

In this role, involvement in the whole life of the school was paramount for all staff, and I learned some basic Makaton (a language programme using signs to enable children with disabilities to communicate which I'm sure many of you have seen courtesy of Mr Tumble) and also taking part in assemblies, school trips, staff shows, celebration events and special events days, as well as social evenings. One of my favourite memories here was the office team dressing up as Trolls and running round the Forest School Woodlands area whilst being filmed, to create a funny video for the pupils to enjoy in the staff pantomime!

I was offered training to become the next School Business Manager but eventually decided this was not the route I wanted to take as I wanted to concentrate on a HR role. Therefore, I next joined the David Ross Education Trust as a HR Administrator.

This was my first experience of working for a Multi-Academy Trust as part of the Central Team and learning how to communicate and collaborate with colleagues and academies across the Trust. I was involved in all aspects of HR Administration and was soon promoted to the Central Services Team Leader. I was also offered an apprenticeship as part of my CPD with DRET to complete my Level 5 Certificate in Human Resource Management, which I was very proud to have achieved. I left DRET to pursue an alternative career path in the private sector with a company that delivered Leadership and Management Training courses and apprenticeships to corporate clients, but I soon found I missed working in school education.

What attracted me to work for the Trust was the community schooling ethos, the school being a vital and inclusive part of the local community and the families within it, and the focus on children's social and personal achievements, as well as academic achievements, which I think is really important to encourage and enable all children to achieve and succeed. The role of Assistant to Directors incorporates my knowledge and experience of governance, my schools and MAT knowledge and experience and fully utilises my organisation and communication skills. I'm looking forward to expanding my knowledge and experience now of working with the Trust Board and supporting the Trust's first Strategic Priority of Developing Expert Governance across the Trust.

Reminder of the dates for upcoming Expert and Network Group Meetings

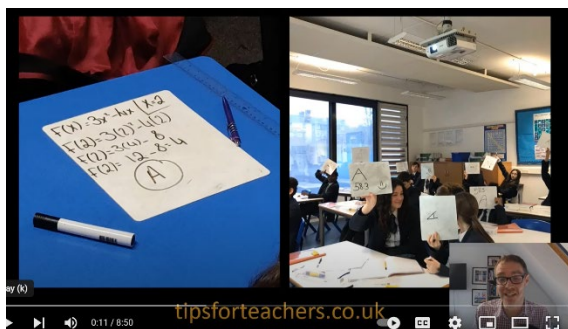
Expert Groups	Network Groups
8 Mar 23	15 Mar 23
24 May 23	3 May 23
28 June 23	5 July 23

Zoom joining links can be found on the appropriate landing page of the IoE website:
www.thecatstitute.org

Education Matters

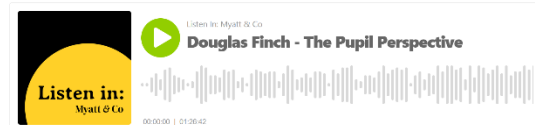


If you haven't downloaded our App onto your phone yet, you can do so directly by accessing the OCMJ on the web here: <https://www.theocmjournal.com/> As usual control and click on the pictures below to access the full story. If you would like to submit an article, we would love to hear from you. Email: communications@catschools.uk



Education Matters this half term comes recommended by Mary Myatt from her Top Three Things to do on a Thursday series. This video clip is from tipsforteachers.co.uk and features the top 5 things to do to improve mini whiteboard use in the classroom.

Douglas Finch - The Pupil Perspective
DECEMBER 17, 2022 LISTEN IN: MYATT & CO



LISTEN ON

SHARE EPISODE

In this podcast, we hear about thoughts on the education system through the eyes of a pupil. We all have our own views on the system, but how often do we hear it from the student perspective?



And finally (not from Mary) Let music sooth the furrowed brow...take a moment (or three in this case), here is some relaxing, music to help you focus or simply to destress from the day - remember tomorrow is a new day - take a deep breath!

CAT Institute of Education Matters



A spotlight on the trust's centre for Teacher Training, Professional Development and school improvement by Alexis Rickus, Director of Institute of Education

This half term we've been working closely with the Quality of Education Expert Group, with a particular focus on identifying "pillars" of education with the aim of arriving at a common understanding of what makes great teaching and learning.

Paul Murphy, from Ambition Institute, was invited as a keynote speaker to a recent conference held in Cannock and run by the IoE in partnership with the Quality of Education Expert Group. The conference was attended by School Headteachers across our trust together with fellow colleagues in our schools who had a responsibility for teaching and learning. Paul shared his Doctoral research on exploring professional development strategy and planning within a MAT. Participants then looked at Danielson's Framework for Teaching with a view to modelling what might work across our trust to design a CAT specific Toolkit. It's early days yet, but the day was very well received with many positive outcomes in terms of designing our own pillars and determining the areas important to us.

What has fast become our annual ITT internship programme, has officially launched this half term. We are offering internships across all of our CAT secondary schools. If you have alumni, families with older siblings at university or you simply know anyone who might be interested, please highlight this opportunity for them to earn £300 per week for three weeks in a school to try out teaching for themselves. Below is a link to one of our interns from last summer talking about their experience of a week in the life of an intern. [Why not take a moment to listen to what one of our summer interns from Summer 22 had to say?](#)

Also, we have teacher training vacancies across our trust for anyone you know who might be thinking of teaching as a career. Find out more about all our opportunities on our IoE website www.thecat institute.org.

And finally, you may be interested to learn that OFSTED has just released a series of webinars of subject insights for teachers and school leaders. Each video includes separate sections on primary and secondary. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLq-zBnUkspOzYzqujazp9KpmnRnvsTob>

Alexis Rickus
Director, CAT Institute of Education





Network and Expert Group News

A snapshot of what some of the network groups have been up to this half term. Don't feel you are missing out, join the conversation! Meetings are virtual, on Zoom Events and you need to register via the links on the IoE website to join.

COMPUTING

National Careers Week runs from 6-11 March – digital skills can benefit a large range of future career choices.

Useful resources can be found here:

- access a selection of [resources, videos and job profiles](#) on the STEM Learning website to help you to link your computing curriculum to careers.
- explore how volunteer [STEM Ambassadors](#) can support your secondary students to learn about careers linked to computing and digital skills.
- develop the skills needed to hold relevant and exciting discussions in the classroom with our [Impact of technology: how to lead classroom discussions course](#).
- find ideas for linking to the wider curriculum in the [STEM careers guide for teachers](#) or [Linking curriculum learning to STEM careers](#) course.

PERFORMING ARTS (Music and Drama)

In the performing arts network group this year we are focussing on good practice in the classroom and the resources that can help to support this. We are looking at which music programmes are the most effective for supporting the teaching of our music curricula and making sure there is coherence between the primary and secondary curricula for music and drama.

As music and drama are such specialist subjects, we are also going to focus on CPD needs to make sure the subject knowledge each teacher has, whether they be specialist or not, is sound.

We will be looking at research from Paul Harris to enhance our discussions about good practice and will be discussing attending the London Expo in February to support CPD and resource needs.

Your networks need you! Being part of the conversation means you have an input in the strategic direction of our trust in your area of interest. Sign in, join in and have your say!

SCIENCE

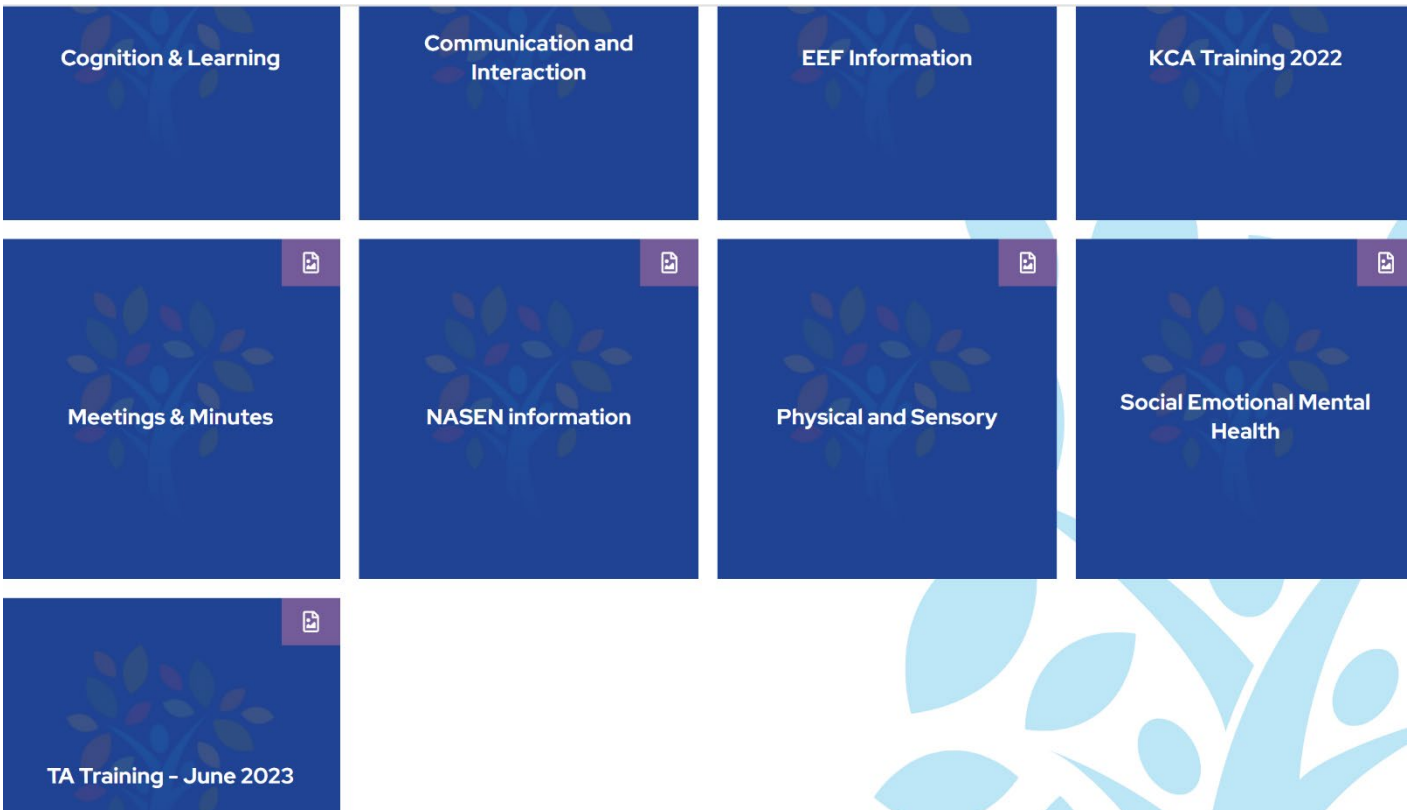
British Science Week runs from 10-19 March this year. Below are details of activity packs which are one stop shops to support you during British Science Week and Beyond.

The theme this year is "Connections". The packs give ideas on how to enthuse students about science and have activities aimed at primary and secondary pupils, including encouraging students to engage in conversations about connections within their communities and sending home experiments that the whole family can get involved with.

[Secondary Activity Pack](#)

[Primary Activity Pack](#)

SEND





And finally.....

Hopefully you found us on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/schoolscat/> (#schoolscat) as well as on Twitter @SchoolsCat (#catschools). Follow us and we'll follow you back. You can also find us on our App via the Wix Spaces, Our Community Matters.



Stratford-Upon-Avon Primary School @StratfordPrim · Jan 26
Oscar delivered a whole school 'In the News' assembly about Louis Braille. He demonstrated how he uses his Braille and how he uses ping pong balls to learn different letters and words. Oscar, you inspire us daily and we are all so proud of you! @CatSchools @guidedogs @RNIB



Stoneydelph Primary School @StoneydelphPS · Feb 7
What a beautiful afternoon for visiting Birmingham library. Wonderful views of the city and the chance to chill out with a good book. A perfect afternoon with some amazing pupils. @SchoolsCat #lovetoread



Polesworth School @PolesworthSchl · Feb 1
Before and after photos of our new Goodere building and Sports Hall sign! #thePolesworthSchool #polesworth #signage



Grange Park PE @Grange_Park_PE · Feb 6
What a fantastic afternoon of football we've had at our Year 2/3 Girls Football Festival for @SchoolsFootball #SchoolFootballWeek today.



Dordon Primary @DordonPrimary · Jan 25
For any parents attending we are to the right of the stage right at the back!



Telford Langley School @TelfordLangley · Jan 26
Pupils at our food enrichment club have been cooking up a right treat. Jamie Oliver watch out! @SchoolsCat



#TeamGP

Over 40 girls from @windmillsports @RedhillPrimary @BroseleySchool @lawleyacademy @LonglandsSport playing football and having fun.



Wood End Primary @WoodEndPrim · Jan 26
We are ready to sing



Birchwood Primary @BirchwoodPrim · Feb 3
Maple class enjoying a trust game as part of forest schools @SchoolsCat



Heathcote Primary @Heathcote_PS · Jan 13
Exciting writing from across the whole school based on our whole school text 'Leaf' by @sandradiECKmann #catschools



Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue and made this edition possible. This publication will drop into your inbox at the start of each half term. Don't forget to subscribe to the OCM Journal Please email any articles, news to communications@catschools.uk.

Our Community Matters

