

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter. Since our last publication, all of the schools have been working extremely hard preparing to become incorporated into the Trust. This has involved networks of staff working across schools to ensure that the transition is smooth and that everyone can feel the full benefits of moving into the Trust. Finance and Business Managers have been looking at new digital programmes to allow centralisation of finance and HR functions. Our Safeguarding Network has been looking at new guidance, updates and sharing best practice in regard to safeguarding pupils. Maths and English Networks have also met to support curriculum developments in every school.

One of our priorities is improving attendance across all of the schools in the Mersey View Learning Trust. We want to ensure that as many pupils attend school, on time, every day, so that they are making maximum progress in their studies. The Trust Attendance Network meets regularly to look at Trust wide initiatives to support families getting their children into school and breaking down any barriers. We aim to intervene quickly to resolve or remedy any issues that prevent pupils enjoying and learning in school. To outline that work further, schools in the Trust are working in a coordinated way to ensure consistency in school.

All of our schools have a culture in which excellent attendance is expected, developed and nurtured. The escalated approach to supporting attendance is built on foundations of belonging and connectedness. The approach to improving attendance is built on clear policies, systems and processes. This ensures continuous and sustainable improvement drives attendance practice. The Multi-Academy Trust Attendance Policy reflects the existing policies and this is shared and understood by all stakeholders allowing all the schools to set, and maintain, high expectations to improve the culture of attendance.

All schools prioritise the development of a team of Attendance Leaders/Managers, with a shared vision and core purpose. The Attendance Leaders deliver bespoke training to support all staff to fully understand their role in improving attendance. External partnerships with the Local Authority and Social Care such as 'Team Around the School' support attendance improvements through a multi-disciplinary approach for identified children and families.

Data information and analysis by schools allows them to direct resources proactively towards key demographic groups and identified individuals. The expert use of data analysis informs decision making at all levels. The attendance process ensures the Attendance Leader understands the reason for attendance concerns, so that barriers can then be successfully overcome. 'Connecting and belonging' drives every school's approach to supporting attendance and all staff are determined to understand the 'deeper roots' of poor attendance. Our schools have developed, and embedded, effective rewards to champion attendance improvements and celebrate success.

In our next newsletter we will be reporting back on the work of the Trust SEND network and its plans to ensure that all learners thrive and succeed throughout our Trust.

For now, I would like to wish you all a 'Happy Easter' and hope that you get to enjoy time with friends and family during the break.



K. SEXTON CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER





FOREFIELD COMMUNITY INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL

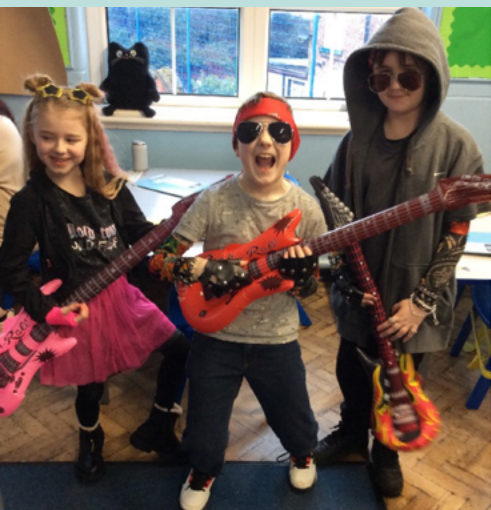


Year 1 has been a flurry of all things African this term. The children have learnt all about the continent of Africa, its climate and weather, the different habitats and animals that live there as well as many of the different cultures and traditions. They have also studied Jane Goodall, the work she did with Gorillas in Gombe National Park and her impact on research and conservation around Gorillas.

As part of this unit of work, the children spent a wonderful day cooking up some traditional African culinary feasts with the Fun Food Chef. Using ingredients such as cassava, plantain and spices they made traditional African bread, milkshakes and some other delicious dishes to taste.

The children have learnt about a wide range of different categories of animals including some African animals as part of their Science this term, and so they decided, as part of their Passport to Learning challenge, to raise money to sponsor some African animals. To do this they organised an African Animal Day during which they dressed up as their favourite animal. The day included making African animal masks, creating art masterpieces detailing African skies and sunsets in the style of the artist Sarah Shindu and making traditional clay pots as well as learning how to weave.

The children raised over £200 which they have used to sponsor an elephant, a giraffe and a rhinoceros at Chester Zoo.



WATERLOO ROCKSTARS



In February, we had a Times Tables Rockstars day for children (and staff) in Years 4, 5 & 6 to raise the profile of times tables and increase engagement with the Times Tables Rockstars app which we continue to use in school and at home. This gave pupils and staff a great opportunity to dress up and enjoy maths in a memorable way as can be seen from the photographs.

We wanted the children to understand why it is important that they learn and know their times tables - not just for school - but for all aspects of life and to be able to recall these facts at speed.

The children completed 10 studio games to set their rock speed in order to find out how close they were to their target speed of 6 seconds per question.

During the day we held a Battle of the Bands competition to give children the opportunity to apply multiplication tables in a fun and engaging way. Going forward, our pupils will continue to compete regularly with their peers. Points mean prizes!

Teachers can regularly look and see who has moved up the ranks, increased their mental recall and accuracy together with their improved speed in applying this vital skill.



READ @ FJS!



Here at Forefield Juniors we love nothing more than a good book to read! As a result, we have an abundance of books and we are always adding more. Our well-stocked library is at the heart of the school and books simply flow through our veins (corridors!).

Reading Ambassadors from across the school help our Reading Champion to keep on top of this vast collection and ensure that the latest authors are represented on the shelves. This year, on top of the themed book areas, community library, reading shed and book vending machine we have launched two new initiatives to support and promote reading.

The first addition has been 'adopting' an author! We have always welcomed visiting authors to our school, but Luke Temple – author of: Felix Dashwood and the Mutating Mansion, Ghost Lord, Zombie Cows from Outer Space and a whole host of equally imaginative titles – is now officially linked to FJS. This means that as well as providing inspirational workshops and signing copious amounts of books, Luke is in regular contact with school to try out new ideas and encourage pupils. He has just asked us to imagine what he would look like if he were a zombie and share our ideas to inspire his next book! Links and visits really bring his books to life and capture the imaginations of our pupils. They have bought over 600 of his books and copies in our library never get the chance to gather dust!

The second initiative has made an even bigger impact on reading habits! To develop fluency, we have added to our repertoire of teaching skills with a new raft of quick and fun activities. Every day in school, across a range of subjects, you will see (and hear) classes working on modelled, choral, echo or paired reading. Pupils are exposed to repeated oral reading and challenged to 'drill' into a text by reading for 60 second bursts. These 'warm-ups' then lead into whole class reading lessons designed to encourage the acquisition of new vocabulary and enhance comprehension skills.

We want our pupils to leave FJS with a love of reading and the essential skills that they will need to be proficient readers beyond the primary curriculum. Hopefully, they will look back on their time at Forefield and remember the opportunities they had to develop and enjoy their reading. Perhaps in years to come we will even be adopting one of them to be our next linked author!



EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT



PUPILS VISIT LONDON'S GLOBE THEATRE



Chesterfield High School were thrilled to announce that four of our Sixth Form students will be representing the school at the European Youth Parliament's (EYP) regional competition on the 1st March.

This prestigious event provides an invaluable opportunity for our students to hone their skills in critical thinking, public speaking, diplomacy, and teamwork. As they engage in debates on pressing European issues alongside their peers from diverse backgrounds, they will develop a deeper understanding of global affairs and strengthen their ability to articulate well-reasoned arguments. Participating in EYP not only fosters personal growth but also cultivates a sense of civic responsibility and international collaboration. We are confident that this experience will leave a lasting impact on our students, empowering them to become informed and engaged citizens.

The European Youth Parliament United Kingdom (EYPUK) is a non-partisan and independent educational charity (no. 102943). They engage young people with UK and European political issues, providing them with a platform to express their opinions whilst building new skills, confidence, and friendships. Each year, they run Regional debating competitions and two national events with participants from across the UK. They also run a series of outreach events, engaging young people with the issues in their local communities, and run training and social events for members. EYPUK also links up with the wider EYP community for international events, from Dublin to Dubrovnik!

The EYPUK is the UK's National Committee of its umbrella organisation, the EYP. Thousands of young people are actively involved as volunteers all over Europe, making the EYP a genuinely youth-driven programme, run by young people, for young people. The entire network is made up of more than 30,000 young people and organises around 500 events every year.

Chesterfield Sixth Form Pupils Visit London's Globe Theatre

This half term, pupils from Years 12 and 13 travelled to London to watch the 10th anniversary production of *The Duchess of Malfi* in the Sam Wanamaker Theatre. Pupils are studying the Jacobean revenge tragedy as part of their A Level literature course and seeing the play brought to life on stage gave them the unique opportunity to enhance their knowledge of a play very rarely performed.

Pupils said:

"It provided us with an illuminating new perspective on the play we have studied in class."

"I've never been to the theatre before and seeing a play like this was such a special experience for me."

"The modern aspects of the staging and intimate candlelit stage added to the effect. It gave us a real insight into what Jacobean theatre would have been like."

The staff were extremely proud of the pupils who attended. Their conduct, engagement and focus were exemplary.



VALEWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL AWARDED GOLD!



What a Spring Term we have all enjoyed at Valewood. It has been jam-packed with new learning and adventures – and also a new accreditation! Mrs Mitchell's collation of our school's daily practice, around multi-levelled safety (for staff, families, children, agency support partners and governors) was examined in detail on 1st February 2024 by Dr Jennifer Nock.

Valewood Primary School was awarded the highest standard- GOLD! Thank you, to all within our Valewood community, for showcasing what we know is right (and necessary) to enable us to bring out the best in each other. I have never been prouder to be the Headteacher of our school. This validation has meant more to our staff, than any other external report.

Valewood Primary School was the first Sefton school to be awarded Bronze (Spring 2022); the first Sefton school to be awarded Silver (Spring 2023) and, most recently, we are the first maintained Sefton school to be awarded Gold. We have been liaising with other schools who are on their ATSSA journey, and this was also recognised by Dr. Nock.

The reputation of our school is wide reaching, making us the most over-subscribed primary school in Sefton, for many consecutive years. We pride ourselves on the strong relationships we forge with our families, enabling them to work alongside us, to get the most out of school and our external partnerships.

Here's just a snippet of our accreditation letter:

"It would be impossible to communicate adequately in this letter the breadth and richness of your practice. In short, Valewood Primary School is a trauma-informed and trauma-responsive organisation, which prioritises improving systems and practices, making them healthier, more relational and interpersonal, more cohesive, more integrated, more reflective, and more interconnected, not only focusing on the pupil population, but by ensuring that trauma-informed knowledge, narratives, language, values, principles, assumptions and processes are embedded deep into the culture of the whole school; and are owned, moulded and maintained by everyone who is a part of the school, regardless of role or status."

What really shone through in today's verification is that an attachment- and trauma-sensitive approach is becoming increasingly interwoven into strategy, policy and practice. It is no longer a 'tick box' of things to do, but a rich tapestry which is organic and dynamic, responding to the needs of the whole school population."



ROWAN PARK GOES ON SAFARI



This week a class from Rowan Park School started their work experience at Knowsley Safari Park. It will be a 5-week placement and they will learn about and take responsibility for a number of aspects of working at the park. On Tuesday, the students learnt all about meerkats and then made feeders for them out of bamboo, insects and vegetables to ensure they stay healthy and active. The students also started to weed the Safari environment ready for the public.

At Rowan Park School, we strongly believe in providing our students with opportunities to explore various professions, develop employability skills, and gain valuable work experience. The "World of Work" programme aims to create a simulated work environment within the school setting, where students can engage in meaningful vocational activities and build essential skills required for successful employment or volunteering should they choose to do so as part of their next steps programme.

The school introduces our students to a wide range of vocational areas, allowing them to explore different career options and develop a deeper understanding of various industries. These have included visits from local employers and public service representatives (such as the police), trips to places of work ranging from recycling centres to restaurants, the leisure industry and retail.

The school provides hands-on experiences and practical training related to specific vocations, ensuring that our students acquire practical skills and abilities necessary for specific job roles. All our work skills form part of our accreditation programme and will be accredited.

Rowan Park focuses on nurturing key employability skills, such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, time management, and professionalism. We understand these skills are not only essential for success in the workplace, but also provide skills that are valuable for future educational or community settings.

We strive to arrange work experience placements for our students in collaboration with local businesses and organisations such as Knowsley Safari Park. These experiences are meaningful and give them a chance to apply their skills in real-world settings to gain valuable insights into the world of work.



CONFEDERATION OF SCHOOL TRUSTS VISITS



Mersey View Learning Trust is working closely with the Confederation of School Trusts as part of our development and transition to incorporation. As part of that work we had a visit from Nick Hudson who is mentoring the central team.

Nick Hudson (Ex-CEO of Ormiston Academies) is mentoring our CEO (Kevin Sexton) for 18 months as the MAT starts its journey of delivery and growth. Nick is proud to have led his own MAT (OAT) through a significant period of growth and improvement.

OAT's schools serve some of the country's most deprived communities in a variety of contexts, including urban and coastal, with a workforce of over 5,000 people. During his career, Nick has held a variety of leadership positions in schools, local authorities and at Ofsted. His values-led approach to trust development is underpinned by a firm belief that schools, and groups of schools, should be rooted in their communities, anchored by strong purposeful leadership.

On January 30th Nick visited all the schools in the Mersey View Learning Trust to meet pupils, staff and leaders to gain an understanding of our vision and values. He is also helping to develop and support the Trust in the important areas of governance and developing the role of Trustees and Local Governing Boards.

When he visited Rowan Park, Student Leaders took Nick around the schools and treated him to afternoon tea in the café. He was very impressed by the work we had completed so far and how the vision and values of the Trust permeated every school we visited. Thanks to all the schools for hosting Nick's visit.

OUR VISION STATEMENT

- **MERSEY VIEW LEARNING TRUST DELIVERS LEADING QUALITY LEARNING IN A SAFE AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENT.**
- **WE EMPOWER PEOPLE TO BE READY FOR THE FUTURE, MEETING NEEDS AND RAISING ASPIRATIONS.**
- **WE ARE VISIBLE, ACCOUNTABLE AND TRUSTED.**
- **WE COLLABORATE, CARE AND INSPIRE TO ENRICH LIFE FOR ALL.**

