



The STAR

MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



We provide the best possible education in a fun and enjoyable learning environment.



THE NEWS LETTER



CEO UPDATE



March 2023

We are really delighted to share with you lots of wonderful news from across our Trust. We pride ourselves in being a community of schools working together to serve children and families in our local

communities and therefore sharing with you - our parent/career community - is vital. The word community is really important to us!

Every school in our Trust has a unique identity, we are not a 'corporate' Trust, but we are proud to be part of something bigger facilitating more support, challenge and opportunity than individual schools ever can.

I hope that you enjoy reading about all that is happening across the Trust. There really is lots of exciting learning and fun going on. Sharing where we are, our successes and our next steps helps us all get stronger.

In this newsletter you will also hear about our recent Trust training day – student focused as ever – looking at wellbeing, inclusion and how to positively support our young people (and each other).

Have a fantastic Easter and here's to a wonderfully exciting and productive summer term to follow.

From the Chair of the Trust Board



The spring term is always a busy term for the Trust but it is good to feel like business has somewhat returned to normal with all our schools bouncing back well from the traumas of the last few years. Having managed to recruit a wonderful Safeguarding, Inclusion and Wellbeing lead for the Trust last academic year (Cayte Mulhern), this term

we have been focusing on the School Improvement function of the Trust and are excited to be in the middle of a process to recruit a Head of School Improvement to enhance the central team and really help further our School Improvement Strategy across the Trust. This will be a really key post going to support all our schools in becoming the best they can be and to enhance the already fabulous work that goes on within them to really drive teaching and learning and curriculum development. At the time of writing this newsletter the post will just be closing and we are confident to be able to appoint ready for September. We have also been continuing work on strengthening the financial and back office functions of the Trust so that schools are as financially strong as they can be in an extremely difficult climate and to ensure we have robust systems in place to plan for the future. Part of that has been bringing the catering provision for our schools "in house". This has been a big challenge for all involved but it is wonderful to hear the largely positive feedback which has come from families and schools, and going forwards we are confident that the quality of the provision will continue to improve and costs will remain optimum for everyone.

Wellbeing of the staff and students at our schools and within the Trust also remain a priority and the whole Trust workforce was able to focus on this at the recent training day. The feedback was very positive and so we look forward to continuing this work going forwards to ensure The STAR MAT remains a really great place to work and be.



Safeguarding, Inclusion, Equalities & Diversity and Wellbeing

We held our first whole Trust training day in February. The theme was student wellbeing and the day consisted of a range of training opportunities all focused on helping us look at ways to further support our children and young people, whatever their needs or experiences. As part of the day we launched with staff our Student Wellbeing Strategy, which can be found on our website <https://web.starmat.uk/safeguarding/student-wellbeing-strategy/>

The strategy focuses on how we can enable our children and young people to flourish in the modern world and how we can work together to share good practice.



Our keynote speaker was Dr Pooky Knightsmith - an author, speaker and advisor, who was the former chair of the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition. Pooky has a wealth of resources to support not only schools, but parents also, you may want to take a look at her channel [https://](https://www.youtube.com/@PookyH)

www.youtube.com/@PookyH Her latest video is about supporting your teens or tweens to navigate friendships!



ESTATES AND FACILITIES

STAR EATS

We are now at the end of another successful term with our in house STAR EATS service providing meals for all primary schools across the Trust and as such, we can reflect on our successes. STAR Eats has now rolled out meal selector to eight of our schools, which allows parents to view and pre book meals in advance. This gives the kitchen an insight into upcoming numbers and also encourages positive parent/student conversations about school meals at home.

We have seen our meal numbers improve by over 5% across all our schools and because of this we have managed to keep the cost of meals to parents at £2.50 whilst still offering a menu that complies with school food standards.

New allergen and special diet menus are also finalised and will be rolled out to meal selector schools next term. These menus reflect the standard menus as closely as possible and enable us to offer a greater number of choices to students.

The upcoming Easter menu is proving to be popular on pre-orders and using suppliers, such as C & G Starkey butchers in Sherburn, Cockerills and Millers in York and Poskitts Carrots in Kellington, we are proud to be able to provide a locally sourced and nutritious lunch.

Our Executive Chef, Steve, is now planning for September menus, themed days and is supported by a new support cook role who will be covering staff within kitchens to enable further staff development and training.

Over the Summer term, the Trust will also be investing in new energy efficient ovens and equipment. This will not just improve our carbon footprint but help in reducing the cooking times across all the kitchens.

The Summer term will see more taster days and feedback sessions. As always if you have any suggestions or feedback please contact us at stareats@starmat.uk

DECARBONISATION PLANS

The STAR MAT now has decarbonisation plans in place. These have been funded by the government scheme - SALIX skills fund - and have enabled us to bid for various carbon reduction projects. Over the last 2 years, we have replaced lights for LED lighting in three of our schools and installed a ground source heat pump at Monk Fryston.

The recent bid to install ground source heat pumps and PV at Kirk Fenton has also been successful and the project will start in the Summer term. You can find more info here...

[Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme: Phase 3 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

We are aiming to submit further bids to remove gas and oil from all our sites when the fund reopens in the Autumn. The Trust is also pursuing investment in PV panels and possible battery storage at a number of our sites.

Finally further government funding has provided us with the opportunity to upgrade the remaining lights within the Trust to LED. The upgrades will be rolled out over the next few months.

Appleton Roebuck sprung into the Spring Term with a bang as their second learning journeys of the year got into full swing. This term has all been about experiences and the widening of our curriculum to excite and engage the children.



In January, our children dressed to express for the day, showing awareness for children's mental health week. The children loved being creative with their dress sense for the day. Our PTA launched the 'experiences passport'. Every child received a passport card where they collect stickers when they complete experiences, all linked to the fundraising of the PTA team.



As for visits, the Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children visited the Castle Museum as part of their Toys learning journey. The Greek learning journey in Year 3/4 came to an end with a showcase of greek food and culture. Finally, our Year 5 and 6 children enjoyed a residential at Beverley Park together. This



included high ropes, river walking, abseiling and canoeing.

In the summer term, we look forward to the KS2 production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat and the cast have started preparations for auditions. They certainly do have the

X-Factor at Appleton Roebuck.



Brayton CE Primary School ~ [Visit us here](#)

We marked World Book Day with a whole school theme of Roald Dahl, and were rewarded by the school being full of Matildas, Grandparents (including one who brought his bed along!), Trunchbolls and more. This year we focused on sustainability and sent home lots of ideas for easy, home-made costumes that would not cost a huge amount and involved reusing, and we saw some really imaginative designs including a 3D Golden Ticket!



On Wednesday 22 February scout and guides marked World Thinking Day. This usually falls in the half term holiday but for this year we were in school, and one of the local leaders asked if children were able to attend in their uniforms. It was lovely to see so many of the children in all or part of their uniforms from the scouting and guiding groups, especially when we usually only see badges that have been earned or neckers from being invested/enrolled.

As well as having the sports clubs up and running, including a very well-attended football training session for girls, we have 'branched out' with a new Gardening Club for Key Stage 1. Their current projects are: looking after some of our large pots, and working on 'rewilding' some key areas at the edges of the field. Key Stage 2 children in Drama Club are also busy working towards their performance of 'Annie'.

This term we have also launched the first of our 'Coffee Break' sessions run by our Inclusion Team. These offer a chance for families to stop in for a drink and a snack, with toys available for pre-school age children, and to chat with other parents and school staff about anything at all! Future sessions will include input from other groups, such as the Early Help Team, and will look at areas like sleep or eating to follow up on requests from families.



It has been a very busy and successful term at Kellington. The staff and children have all been working incredibly hard to ensure the school is the very best it can be.

Last month, we celebrated World Book Day which involved the whole school celebrating diversity and looking at how we are all different and unique. The children read stories about differences and created pieces of art that celebrated our individuality.



As part of their work in geography, our younger children went on a walk around Kellington to find out more about the area they live in. The children had a super time exploring what there is in the village and passers by commented how well behaved the children were.

Our roving reporters, in key stage two, have worked with Emily Collins, a reporter from the Goole times, to develop their journalistic writing skills. Emily was so impressed that she even wrote an article in Goole Times about her trip to school.

Kellington parents have also been very busy this term and have relaunched the school's PTA group. They have lots of great ideas and events planned, and already run a Valentine's cake sale and a Mother's Day gift stall.

All at Team Kellington would like to wish pupils, staff and parents of the STARMAT a happy and restful Easter break.



Kirk Fenton CE Primary School ~ [Visit us here](#)

What a busy term we have had at Kirk Fenton! We had a great start to the term, when fifty children from key stage two had a fantastic time performing in the Young Voices concert at Sheffield arena. They had been practising the songs and the dance moves for months, and their hard work paid off with a great day of loud and proud singing. They even got to be Heather Small's backing singers!



Our younger children have spent lots of time doing great learning in their much improved outdoor space. The area has been opened up to include some exciting new places in which they can develop new skills and have a fantastic time exploring the world around them.

One of the highlights of this term was British Science Week, which is always an important week in our school calendar. This year, our focus was 'inventions' and every class explored an invention that has changed the world, investigating the impact their chosen invention has had on mankind. The week came to an exciting conclusion with an assembly where each class worked to persuade us that their invention was worthy of the title of 'the best invention of all.' After some very persuasive presentations, electricity was named the worthy winner.



World Book Day is another annual event that is a highlight of the spring term. This year, we spent a lovely day celebrating and sharing our favourite books, from a wide and diverse range of authors. Children also took part in a readathon and we were very impressed with their great appetite for reading.



It has been very busy after school this term, with some exciting after-school activities taking place. Amongst other things, children have been exploring South America in geography club, creating Very Hungry Caterpillar collages in art club, and developing their martial arts skills

during Capoeira club. Next term, gardening club returns, which means our school allotment will soon be bursting with an array of fruit and vegetables.

We finish our term with a busy week. Year three and four have been hard at work rehearsing their Easter production and are really looking forward to performing this to their friends and families. Year six also has an exciting week, as they head off to their residential trip on the North Yorkshire Moors, where they will be making the most of the great outdoors. Everyone at Kirk Fenton would like to wish you all a peaceful and safe Easter holiday.



Children in both of our schools have been working hard towards re-accreditation of the Eco Schools Green Flag award this term. We have conducted litter picks in the villages to improve the environment, and we have created new habitats for creatures in the school grounds by making and installing new bird boxes, insect hotels and cleaning out the pond.



We are sure that the animals will appreciate this as they start to look for new homes and reproduce this spring.



Work towards the Green Flag will continue next term. Our teams of Eco Warriors will be completing further actions on the themes of litter, marine life, transport and water use. They will also evaluate the impact that their work has had during the year, before submitting their application in July.

We have had a few changes to our staff team and are delighted to have welcomed Mrs Brown as Head of School at Saxton, and Mrs Finn, Ms Plant, Miss Thwaite and Mr Turner who have joined us since January. Mrs Pedley has also returned after maternity leave.

Our curriculum has been enriched by a focus upon the arts. Both schools are currently working towards Artsmark and the Arts Award. We have done lots of work in the visual and performing arts that will contribute towards our portfolio of evidence for accreditation. We had a combined trip to Young Voices in Sheffield, which is always a wonderful event. Mrs Stevens organised a careers fair at Monk Fryston that was kindly supported by parents who came to tell children about the jobs they do that utilise qualifications in the arts. Children were



amazed and inspired by the range of opportunities that they can pursue in future. Children at Saxton undertook a project to design and make 'blood bags' encouraging people to give blood. They sewed each bag by hand, supported by a number of

volunteers from families and the local community. We hope that the finished pieces can be displayed in local surgeries.



Riverside Primary ~ Visit us here

It has been another busy term here at Riverside. At the start of term, we worked with Evensplits, the organisation that runs the Tadcaster Triathlon, to run a competition to design them a new logo for the event. The winning design was created by Niamh, one of our Year 4 students, and has been made into a logo which will feature on banners around Tadcaster and this year's medal.



In February, our Year 6 children went on their residential visit to Peat Rigg. They had an amazing time and got to try out all sorts of adventurous activities including abseiling upside down from a bridge!



February also saw our very own Mr Calvert compete in York Mix Radio's 'Test the Teacher'. He had to stack cups as quickly as possible and then had to answer as many general knowledge questions as he could in one minute. He finished 4th in the overall table which meant that he just missed out on the live finals, but we're all very proud of his efforts!



The highlight of the spring term is always World Book Week. This year, we were visited by children's author, Emma Beswetherick, who told us all about how she became an author and then led writing workshop with our Year 3 and Year 4 children. On World Book Day, we gave each child a potato and asked them to decorate it as their favourite book character. There were some excellent efforts and it was a 'tater-ly brilliant day!



We are preparing for our Year 3 and 4 production of Roald Dahl's Goldilocks so it will be an exciting end of term. Enjoy the Easter holidays and don't eat too much chocolate (if there is such a thing!).

It was all systems go at Sherburn High last term with a packed programme of events, from theatre visits to musical productions! The New Year kicked off with our Intergenerational Social Action project with local charity, The Linking Network. This involved Year 9 Health and Social Care students working alongside older people from the local community, discussing and collaborating on important social issues such as: Mental Health, Global Issues and the Local Area. Students built amazing relationships with people of different generations which culminated in a listening event where parents, governors and important members of the local community, including district and county councillors, were invited to hear from our young advocates of social change and to plan and pledge the next steps forward to implement their ideas. Giving students opportunities beyond the classroom is key to success so recently we took Year 10 and 11 to watch the production of Henry V and also Poetry Live, both of which enhanced their learning!



There's nothing we love more than celebrating individual extra-curricular successes and this term is no exception. A Year 11 student not only competed in the Piano Solo class for Year 13 and Under at the Harrogate Competitive Festival for Music Speech and Drama on Saturday, but also won! A Year 9 student is currently studying hard for his BTEC in Aviation with Cadets and recently took to the skies for his first flying lesson which will hopefully land him a role in the RAF in the future.



Three students have been selected to represent England in the World Dance Championships in Lithuania in May! They have had to raise £12,000 in order for the team to attend so we're busy helping them fundraise so that they can realise their dream. One of our dancing queen's commented 'It's such a fantastic opportunity, I'm really proud and excited to have this experience with my dance friends; I hope that we come home with many medals!' We wish all our students continued success in their endeavours. Lastly, recently, we were delighted to welcome to the stage, the musical – Grease! Students and staff put so much effort into making this a fantastic event for everyone. The show was a complete sell-out every night which is testament to the sheer hard work of cast, crew and all the behind the scenes work that went on. It was wonderful to see our students immersing themselves in their characters and willing to entertain everyone with their singing and acting skills, it's definitely a production we will not forget!



Sherburn Hungate Primary School ~ Visit us here

Mrs Weights, our pastoral leader, launched the second round of her parent/tots group for families in our



community with very young children. These sessions have been incredibly well attended and it's been great to see so many new faces.

Our new Parents Friends Association got off to a great start with the valentine's disco. The children had a wonderful time and it was lovely to see so many parents/carers involved.



It's been a term of sporting success too. Our hockey teams met in the inter-school's final and they had a great time.



Our charity work has been impressive. World Book Day was a huge success and we raised over £500 for Candlelighters (childhood cancer support).



Finally, our spring equinox art gallery was a huge success and the children loved contributing to it as 'resident' artists!

You may or may not know that Sherburn Hungate is expanding fully this September, meaning we're on the lookout for 5 new teachers for the new classes we will host. It's an incredibly exciting time and we look forward to updating you more in the summer term.



If you'd like to know more about Sherburn Hungate, you can view our tour video [here](#) or by scanning the QR Code below.



As the end of the spring term approaches, it is hard to think that we are already two thirds of our way through another academic year. This term we have begun a new project 'Opal Play' which is going to transform our playtimes and lunchtimes. Mrs Thackray and the PTA have been working incredibly hard to source items that the children will be able to play with.

Several sports teams have been able to represent our school in tournaments this term; they have been successful in hockey, tag rugby, netball and orienteering. The children have really enjoyed playing against other schools.

To celebrate World Book day, the children studied texts that explored themes around diversity and helped us to further appreciate how unique and individual we are. The children created artwork, wrote poetry and stories that helped to demonstrate that we are all unique.

Parents have been welcomed into school this term to see what their children have been learning. They attended parent consultations, an open classroom event and a Mother's Day stay and play. The children are always thrilled to share their learning and were even more excited to show off the chicks in reception. All at South Milford would like to wish pupils, staff and parents of the STARMAT a happy and restful Easter break.



Tadcaster Grammar School ~ Visit us here

There have been many **sporting successes** for our students including: a student becoming National Champion in the British Gymnastics Classic Challenge, another being selected to play for Yorkshire Under 18's boys rugby, a number of students qualifying for county and national cross country events after doing really well in the North Yorkshire Schools Cross Country Championships and over 100 students were awarded their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze or Silver awards. Congratulations to all involved with these successes!



During the first part of our term we opened our doors for our whole school production of Matilda Jr. Both evening performances were sellouts with record numbers of tickets sold to students, staff and their families. The show was absolutely fantastic! The

students sang and danced incredibly well - the set looked amazing - everyone involved created something to be very proud of. February half term saw families wave goodbye to almost 100 students as they left for their Ski Trip in Folgarida. With double the number of students usually joining this trip, Mr Solk and a large team of staff set off to the slopes.



Year 11, 12 and 13 students studying RPE also left for Italy over half term. They had a really busy week taking in The Pantheon, Trevi Fountain, Spanish Steps, Mouth of Truth, Coliseum, Palatine Hill, Roman Forum, Vitoriano, Vatican City, Sistine Chapel, St Peter's Basilica - including the Dome on the inside and outside, and, Castle St



Angelo - as well as looking at the stunning architecture around the city. There was a lot of walking, but the rewards of incredible architecture, interesting history and breathtaking views, were well worth it. Thank you to students for your enthusiasm as we took in the wonderful city of Rome, and thank you to our staff who planned and ran this key element of students' studies.



Our reception has moved! A new purpose-built reception was completed for the reopening of school after the half term break. All visitors are asked to report here (parking in the main car park as previously). Students are asked to report here if they arrive at school late, or need to leave before the end of the school day. Parents/carers are also welcome to leave any items for students with the lovely team at Reception and they will ensure they're passed on.

