



The STAR
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



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

THE NEWS LETTER



CEO UPDATE



December 2024

Dear Parents/Carers/Students and Staff,

As we approach the end of this autumn term, this whole-Trust newsletter has some more wonderful news to share from all of our schools across STAR.

It has been a wonderfully successful term for our schools and our Trust. Whenever I pause to reflect, it is amazing to think how we impact positively on so many young lives – building futures together with families.

Plenty more to do as we move into 2025 though and we look forward to working in partnership to achieve the very best possible for every young person.

Have a great Christmas. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in January for a happy, healthy and successful 2025.

Warm regards

Ian Yapp

From the Chair of the Trust Board:

Our Trust Values are Community, Inclusivity, Aspiration and Collaboration. When thinking about this end of term note, this year, and the proposed changes we have recently announced, I wanted to go back to these Values and reflect on how important these are for us as an organisation and why they are so important.



Values help us shape our identity, guide our decisions, and create a sense of purpose. They help us grow and develop and shape our future.

That is why those four words really matter to and reflect our organisation. Our Community is wide and diverse with each member contributing a range of views, perspectives, and backgrounds. Each is valid and important. That breadth of diversity is important in today's world with its local, national and international challenges. It helps to create a more inclusive and equitable society, a better understanding of others' needs and thoughts, and, I hope, a more tolerant and friendly society, where we can work together to do better with and for each other.

At the end of this year we announced a proposed merger of STAR with the South York Multi-Academy Trust, SYMAT. One of the key considerations with our decision to proceed further with this was the alignment of our respective Values as we start this new journey.

I'd like to thank all of you for your contributions to our Community - our incredible staff and colleagues working in and around the schools and centrally, our governors who volunteer to support the schools, PTA members, and my colleagues on the Trust Board. Alongside them are our pupils, parents, carers and other supporters. Each of you play your part in adding meaning to our values and bringing them to life. Thank you I hope you have a peaceful Christmas, are able to enjoy the time with those close to you, and very best wishes for the new year.

Regards

Nick Sheppard

Children in our federation have been incredibly active this term, and are certainly enjoying school life! Both schools have had a focus upon outdoor learning. As part of this work, we have been developing dedicated outdoor learning spaces so that classes can take their learning outside the classroom. At Saxton, we have worked with a local company called "This Green Moon" to create learning areas in our woodland. The work has been made possible through grant funding and incredible support from FOSS (our PTA). And what a result we have achieved!



Children really enjoy bringing their learning into this space and it has certainly opened up their curriculum to new dimensions. In Monk Fryston, children have been busy creating an outside classroom space on the school field. To do so, they have planted 450 new trees, many of which form hedges that will screen the new learning space.



It was hard work, but really enjoyable! The trees were all donated for free by the Woodland Trust, and contained a variety of native species that will bring colour and biodiversity into the school site. This is in line with our

environmental ethos and supports the work we do in upholding our Green Flag status.

The Eco Warriors at both schools also participated in a community litter pick on Sherburn Industrial Estate. This was organised by Cromwell Polythene as part of the 'We Are Sherburn' collaboration. Together with volunteers from a number of the businesses, we spent a morning in glorious sunshine picking up litter from the road verges, and surrounding buildings. We managed to remove 42 sacks of rubbish, which is amazing! We are pleased to have made a real difference in our community.



Our collaboration with Henry House Community School in Ghana continues. Children have followed the links we made last year by exchanging information about school life and the communities in each country. We even managed to do a live video call between the classes this term so that we could get to know more about the people we are corresponding with. We love finding out more about other children and it is definitely enhancing our understanding of global issues.

We would like to thank everyone for their ongoing support during 2024 and wish you a Merry Christmas, and a prosperous and enjoyable 2025.



Riverside Primary ~ Visit us here

It has been a very busy term here at Riverside. This term, Y4 have been learning all about the Egyptians. They have really enjoyed the topic, especially when they got to mummify each other!



This term, we have also started our weekly Family Groups. Each week, children from Reception to Year 6 meet together with the same adult to carry out activities together, discuss their thoughts

about something and get to know each other. It has been a lovely way to build relationships across the school!



We have also come together as a school community to help others who are less fortunate than we are. We had an amazing response to our Harvest Festival collection, which we shared between the local foodbank. It was lovely to come together as a community in St. Mary's Church and be thankful.



One of the most memorable moments this term was when we created our whole school poppy display as part of our remembrance activities. Our older children supported the younger ones to make poppies out of tissue paper which were then added to cloth and each poppy had a label with a name of someone from Tadcaster who had served in WW2.



Later in November, most of KS2 got to try Drumba; it's a combination of drumming and exercise that gets the heart pumping and was a big hit!

November also saw our first child reading to our latest member of the Riverside team, Salty



the reading dog! Both parties really enjoyed the experience and lots of children can't wait to read to Salty.

All this and we still have Nativities, panto trips and Christmas carol services to go! The Autumn term always covers such a wide variety of activities and events. Merry Christmas everyone!



It's been an incredibly exciting Autumn Term at Appleton Roebuck. The children have enjoyed a range of exciting learning opportunities as they've got to know their new classes and teachers. As you will see from the photos, our children have enjoyed several educational visits and have explored the outside as part of their learning journeys, which is the way that our curriculum is interlinked at



school.

For those of you who would like to take a deeper look, you can visit our school website. If you navigate to our newsletters page, you'll be able to catch up on all the wonderful weekly items for the past term.

These last few weeks have been of a festive nature. Our enterprise event and many nativity performances have



been a huge success, and you really can't beat an evening performance of the nativity in Appleton Church. It's a special occasion that puts everyone in the festive spirit. From everyone at Appleton Roebuck, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Sherburn Hungate Primary School ~ Visit us here

The Autumn Term at Sherburn Hungate has probably been one of the most exciting terms ever, and that's for a number of reasons. Our greatest success has to be the launch of our Forest School; an outdoor classroom initiative that's boosted child and staff wellbeing while allowing the curriculum to flourish in the outside world. The children absolutely love it.



We also wanted to build on our active and musical talents and so it was our pleasure to introduce Drumba, which is a concoction of rhythm, dance and musical exploration that's second to none when it comes to whole class engagement. The teachers completed six hours of training to deliver this initiative. If you get chance to visit us, Drumba is almost always happening, so grab some drumsticks and put on your dancing shoes!

Meanwhile, our exciting curriculum continues to evolve and our learning journeys have really flourished, enabling our children to know more and remember more of their learning. You can see what we've been up to on our website (Scan the QR Code) and there's a week-by-week breakdown on our weekly newsletter page.



We're also supporting lots of our families during this festive time by engaging with Yorkshire Children's Charity, who have provided presents, clothing and wellbeing products so that no-one goes without this Christmas.



From everyone at Sherburn Hungate, we wish you all a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to 2025, when the STARMAT becomes Yorkshire Learning Trust. It's going to be an exciting time for everyone!

Wow, what a busy term we have had! It's been a period of growth, learning, and achievement, and I'm immensely proud of the hard work and dedication shown by both our staff and pupils in making our school even better.

Our commitment to nurturing the whole child has been evident in the weekly Thrive lessons, where pupils have explored the complex world of emotions. These sessions have provided valuable tools for understanding and managing feelings and skills that will serve our children well beyond the classroom.

The curriculum has been rich and varied this term. Across the school, pupils have delved into fascinating topics such as light and electricity, the local history of Kellington, including its coal mining heritage, and the far-reaching impacts of the Industrial Revolution. It's been wonderful to see our young minds engaging with these subjects, drawing connections between the past and the present.



The recent art afternoon was a resounding success. Pupils studied the work of Albert Namatjira, creating their own masterpieces inspired by his style. The transformation of our school into an art gallery, welcoming parents to view the children's work, was a highlight of the term.

Our younger pupils had the opportunity to get active and have fun at the Trust Zumba workshop, an event that perfectly encapsulates our belief in the importance of physical activity and creative expression.

The school was filled with festive cheer during our spectacular performance of "It's Christmas". The solos, duets, singing, and dancing showcased the talents and hard work of our pupils. It was a joy to see their confidence shine through on stage.



As we close this term, I'd like to express my gratitude for your continued support and engagement with our school community. The successes we've achieved are a testament to the strong partnership between home and school. Finally, I'd like to wish all our families a safe and happy Christmas. May this festive season bring you joy, rest, and quality time with loved ones. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new year, ready for another exciting chapter in our school's journey.

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

As the holiday season approaches, our team came together for a fun-filled wreath-making workshop. We enjoyed festive drinks, listened to Christmas carols, and unleashed our inner artists. Check out some of the beautiful creations! We hope everyone had a wonderful time and are looking forward to more festive celebrations to come.



We're excited to announce that we're taking steps to welcome our school dog, Bobbie, on a regular basis! To ensure everyone's safety and well-being, the Blue Cross charity recently visited our school to educate our students about responsible dog interactions. Bobbie has already made a few guest appearances and has been a big hit! The children love showing her their work and spending time with her. We can't wait to see the positive impact Bobbie will have on our school community.



This year, we were thrilled to host Shooting Stars Productions for a captivating performance of Dick Whittington. Our students (and staff!) were mesmerized by the colourful costumes, catchy tunes, and hilarious antics. We couldn't resist joining in on the fun!



To further enrich our students' theatrical experience, we're planning a trip to the theatre next year. Oh yes we will! Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

BBC's Richard Bilton visited our A-Level Media students recently. Richard has reported for Panorama since 2007. Before moving to Panorama, Richard was the BBC's Special Correspondent for the News at Six and Ten. He reported from New York in the aftermath of 9/11 and has covered wars in Iraq, Lebanon and Sri Lanka. He exposed child labour in Brazil, people smuggling in Senegal and the extent of climate change in Antarctica. Richard shared some of his reports with our A-Level Media students including the disappearance of Madeleine McCann.



Our students were particularly interested to learn how broadcasting is put together, what goes on behind the scenes, how stories/features are sourced and how they can get established and start a career in journalism.

Many Year 7 students found a Roald Dahl character poster on 13th September (Roald Dahl's birthday). They won a bespoke chocolate bar if they could name the book that the character appears in. We had nine lucky winners!



Students at Sherburn High have been involved in several activities to celebrate Non-Fiction November. KS3 students all had a library lesson based around non-fiction research and fact-finding. Rewards were given to students who found the most interesting facts.

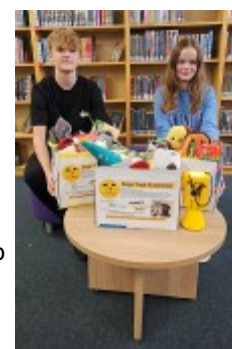


We also held a form time competition for all year groups. Students had to guess which celebrities were reading non-fiction. A prize was awarded to the group who got all answers correct.

Students who were seen reading non-fiction throughout November were entered into a prize draw with a chance of winning a mystery prize!

Students at Sherburn High School are donating items for their local Dogs Trust Centre on York Road throughout December. We have had an array of contributions including toys, treats, food and coats!

Our students and their families have been incredibly generous and we look forward to delivering everything to the Centre at the end of term.



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

It has been a fantastic autumn term at Brayton, full of great learning and lots of exciting activities. The children came back in September raring to go, and it was lovely to welcome our new nursery and reception children into our growing school community.

The highlight of the term for our year 6 children was their residential in October. They spent three days away from school taking part in a wide range of outdoor activities, developing their teamwork skills and resilience along the way.

There have been several other trips this term, with year 2 and year 5 visiting mosques in Leeds and York, and year 5 also spending time enjoying the art at York Art Gallery.

Many of our children from across school have enjoyed taking part in sporting events with the other primary schools in our Trust. These have included Zumba, bench ball, tag rugby and cross country. These are great opportunities to visit other Trust schools, and children welcome having the opportunity to get together for some friendly competition with children from across our primaries. Huge well done to the rugby teams for their wins in both age groups!



It has been lovely to hear so much music drifting through school this term. Children have had the chance to take part in weekly sessions with Rock Steady Music, creating small rock bands and developing their skills on a variety of instruments. We are looking forward to hearing them show off their new skills in some performances after Christmas. Our KS2 choir have been busy practising their Christmas songs, and performed at the recent village lights switch-on in front of a large audience of the local community.

We were delighted to be told a few weeks ago that our early years unit has been awarded £1500 through the Tesco Stronger Starts blue token scheme. This money will be put to good use improving the outside space. We are also busy improving our fantastic outside spaces by launching OPAL play in January. This will transform our playtimes, providing access for all children to much wider play provision, helping to ensure their time outside is rewarding and enjoyable.

The last few days of term are packed with lots of Christmas fun, including a visit to church for our Christmas worship, and a chance for some enthusiastic singing and dancing at our school discos. We will all be ready for our Christmas break when it comes!

We wish you all a safe and peaceful Christmas.



As we approach the end of what has been an exciting term, we find ourselves reflecting on the incredible journey we've shared so far this year. Our pupils have truly excelled, making brilliant progress with their learning and demonstrating their potential in numerous ways.

Some of the highlights of the term were undoubtedly the school trips to Lotherton Hall for our Reception and Year 1 pupils and our Year 6 residential to Kingswood. These experiences beyond the classroom are invaluable, enriching our children's understanding of the world around them and sparking their curiosity.



We are thrilled to share that our ground source heating system is now up and running. This significant step forward not only reduces our carbon footprint but also aligns with our commitment to environmental responsibility. It's a practical example of how we can make a positive impact on our planet, and I'm proud that our school is

leading the way in sustainable practices.

The recent school Christmas productions were a true testament to the talent and dedication of our pupils. Watching them sing, deliver their lines with confidence, and truly shine on stage was a joy to behold. These performances not only showcase their abilities but also build self-assurance and teamwork skills that will serve them well in all aspects of life.

Our sporting achievements have been equally impressive, with notable success in tag rugby, cross country and playing football in the Selby district quarter finals. These victories are a reflection of our pupils' hard work, team spirit, and the excellent coaching they receive. We celebrate not just the wins, but the sportsmanship and personal growth demonstrated by all participants.

To our wonderful pupils, staff, and parents – thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm. Your commitment to our school community is what makes South Milford Primary such a special place.



Finally, I'd like to extend my warmest wishes to all our families. May your Christmas be safe, joyful, and filled with precious moments with loved ones. This break is a well-deserved opportunity for rest and rejuvenation, and I hope you all make the most of it.

Tadcaster Grammar School ~ Visit us here

Our Music and Drama teams are constantly encouraging students to try new opportunities - early in September auditions took place for our whole school production **Legally Blonde Junior**. We received a huge number of requests to take part in this great show and have been impressed by the ongoing commitment those students taking part have shown so far. Performances are planned for 11th, 12th and 13th February 2025 at 7.00pm (doors open 6.30pm) Tickets are now on sale via Ticket Source ([please click here to order](#)).

In September Mr Rodaway gave Year 7 and 8 students the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. TGS is very fortunate to have a large number of instruments available to lend to students if they are interested in trying a new skill. Expecting a handful of students he was overjoyed to be met by almost 30 students all keen to learn a cornet, trumpet or trombone! **Brass Club** now meets each Thursday lunchtime where Mr Rodaway (supported by year 11 and 12 students who have been learning instruments out of school for many years) teaches the younger students. The progress these year 7 and 8s are making is tremendous and we can't wait for them to perform at our Christmas Concert on Wednesday 18th December. ([Tickets are available via Ticket Source](#))



We are delighted that so many of our Sport teams have seen great results this term - CONGRATULATIONS to all students for their enthusiasm and commitment to all sporting activities and fixtures - we are very proud of all your achievements.



Special mention should go to a few students who have told us of their great achievements: **Tom (year 11)** has recently been selected for the U16's



Yorkshire Rugby Pathway; **Oliver (year 11)** on his selection for play again in the England Men's Under 16 Squad (football).

Just before the half term break our House Champions invited students to take part in the year Just Dance activity as a **reward for consistently upholding our core values**. Well done to all students (year 7 through to year 13) who enthusiastically took part in this fun way to start a school day.



Finally, on Monday 16th December we will welcome our former year 11 and 13 students back to TGS for the **Senior Awards Celebration Evening**. It is always wonderful to see so many students receiving their exam certificates in front of their families, staff and friends. We would like to say huge congratulations to everyone who worked so hard for their exams and wish them the very best of luck for their future.

Forest School Holiday Clubs

Pupils from the primary schools in the STAR Multi-Academy Trust were able to access forest school holiday clubs during the summer holidays, due to a partnership between the schools and a local business.

Enfinium, who are based at Ferrybridge power station, provided grant funding to allow some children to access the clubs for free. These took place in part of Bishop's Wood between Sherburn and Selby. The funding also provided transport to the club for those who needed it. The activities were open to all primary aged pupils, and the grant funding enabled those children who most needed it to take part.

The club was run by Treetops Forest School, and children had opportunities to undertake forest activities including den building, arts and crafts, and cooking over an open fire. They even had snacks and a hot meal provided. 65 children benefitted from free places, with the majority coming from the Sherburn area.



We were absolutely delighted to be able to offer this opportunity to our children. Those who took part thoroughly enjoyed it, and it was wonderful to be able to give them the experience. The venture is a reminder of how powerful effective partnerships between schools and local businesses can be in our community.



STAR MAT Governance

Local Governors: The Unsung Heroes of Our Schools

What does a Local Governor do?

Local governors are volunteers who play a crucial role in the governance and strategic direction of our schools. They work as a group of people (the 'Local Governing Board') alongside the Headteacher and staff to ensure the school provides a safe, high-quality, and broad education for all its pupils in line with our values and aims.

During this term, our local governors will typically have:

Attended Local Governing Board meetings: These meetings take place 6 times a year and involve discussing strategic plans, financial reports, and performance data.

Participated in additional meetings: Governors often serve on working groups such as one for finance. These working groups delve deeper into specific areas of school life.

Visited the school: Regular visits in line with planned monitoring activity allow governors to meet with staff and pupils, and gain first hand insights into the school's operations.

Reviewed school policies: Governors play a key role in reviewing and approving school policies, ensuring they align with best practice and legal requirements.

Made strategic decisions: Governors work with the Headteacher to make important decisions about the school's future and the school's priorities.

Asked lots of questions: Governors hold the Headteacher accountable for the school's performance and ensure that the school is meeting its objectives.

Reviewed community engagement: The Local Governing Board ensures the school is engaging with its community and stakeholders.

Participated in training and development: Ongoing training is strongly encouraged. All governors have access to a training platform and new governors undertake an induction programme. This term, all governors will have received safeguarding training, and role-specific development such as attending Safeguarding, SEND and Health & Safety forums. By dedicating their time and expertise, local governors make a significant contribution to the success of their schools. Thank you to all our governors!

We have vacancies for governors across the Trust. If you are interested in becoming a school governor, please see <https://web.starmat.uk/governance/governor-information-and-vacancies/> for further information or contact Rachel Greenhalgh, Head of Governance, at clerktogovs@starmat.uk.

STAR EATS

STAR EATS: A Delicious Success Story

We're thrilled to share that our school meal provision, STAR EATS, is going from strength to strength! We're now proud to serve over 70% of our primary school children, and the numbers continue to grow with each passing term.

Rising Popularity

We've seen a fantastic increase in the number of meals served each term, a testament to the delicious and nutritious food we offer. Our new menus have been a huge hit across all schools, with pupils eagerly anticipating each mealtime.

Supporting Local Businesses

We're committed to supporting local businesses, and we're proud to partner with Starkeys Butchers In Sherburn to provide high-quality, locally sourced ingredients.

A Festive Feast

Next week, over 2000 pupils across all 10 STAR EATS schools will be tucking into a delicious Christmas dinner. It's sure to be a festive treat!

A New Chapter at Sherburn High School

With a full term under our belt at Sherburn High School, we're continually reviewing our service and welcome any feedback. Your input helps us ensure we're providing the best possible dining experience for all students. We're excited to continue in our quest to serve up delicious, nutritious meals and are looking forward to even more success in the future.

