



The STAR
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



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

THE NEWS LETTER



Kestington Primary School



CEO UPDATE



March 2024

Dear Parents/Carers, Students and Staff,

We hope this newsletter finds you and your families well and looking forward to the upcoming break. As we approach the Easter holiday break, we wanted to provide you with this wonderful update of life in and around STAR. As every term goes past, we become more and more of a family, with schools, staff and young people taking part in shared events, training and learning. There are some wonderful stories in this newsletter and loads of happy smiling faces – I hope you enjoy reading about life in your school and around STAR.

We are really proud of our schools and all they offer. We also have lots of work going on TOGETHER, such as our new Writing Strategy which is being launched over the coming four terms – you can read more here: <https://web.starmat.uk/about-us/curriculum/>

Next term promises lots more excitement, not least of course our core assessment periods (good luck to all involved), but also our Student Leadership Conference (involving all schools) and our big Science Share event at The Education Exchange, for our primary schools.

As ever, we want to express our gratitude for your ongoing support throughout this term. I hope that the Easter break provides an opportunity for students, staff and parents to recharge their batteries and spend quality time with loved ones, hobbies (and perhaps some chocolate too!).

Wishing you all a peaceful and enjoyable Easter break.

From the Chair of the Trust Board: Nick Sheppard



This term it feels like it hasn't stopped raining; I am hoping that we're on the cusp of Spring. Spring, of course, is when trees, plants, and flowers bud, and start to grow and bloom. Plants need many things - the right environment, with water, light, warmth, and soil - to grow. These perfect conditions come together in the Spring. I am incredibly proud of the work that is being done across the Trust to support staff and pupils. As a Trust with around 650 employees, and 4500 pupils, we have a responsibility to support the wellbeing of those key stakeholders in our organisation and I wanted to take this opportunity to share a little of what is being done in this area. Our senior leaders help concentrate our focus on wellbeing, and managing stress in the workplace. All schools have been working on two key strands of our Wellbeing Charter – focusing on what's working well and what we could do differently with regard to communication and workload. We have an active group of staff who regularly meet to discuss menopause matters, information sharing and support. This group has recently been tasked to produce a Trust-wide help-sheet for employees and managers. Increasingly, as a society we recognise, acknowledge, and endorse that having good mental health makes life easier. It helps us to identify, accept and deal with challenges that life can throw at us, uncertainties, and to make and keep good relationships with other people. It helps us learn. Employee wellbeing is good for people and an organisation, creating positive working environments where individuals and organisations can thrive and want to be.

Pupils are able to develop their potential, and learn creatively, building and enjoying positive relationships with others and feel a belonging to their school community. I hope you too are able to look after your mental health and wellbeing.

Following International Women's Day I'd like to pay tribute to our exceptional employees, volunteers, and stakeholders and thank them for their inspiring example to each other and the young people we are entrusted with the privilege of educating and nurturing to become a part of society and societal change. This year's campaign theme for International Women's Day 2024 is Inspire Inclusion. Inclusivity is so important - inclusive learning and teaching recognises all student's entitlement to participation, respects a variety of learning needs and removes barriers. Inclusivity, more broadly, recognises individuality and, in bringing together diverse individuals, allows the sharing of different perspectives and experiences, encouraging tolerance, a wider mindset, and change. In our schools we value diversity, equity and inclusivity and the importance of individuals growing up, making their own choices, and shaping their own identity.

Why do I think this matters? Without "Spring" ... inspiration, understanding, tolerance, and education, society doesn't change or grow and bloom; we want the young people in our Trust to have broad horizons, and have the greatest opportunity to achieve them, and when they do, to play their part. It is so good to see and hear, on top of the achievements of every pupil, about these aspects of our Trust and its culture.

So thank you to you all for being the Spring. I wish you a good Easter break.



The Spring term has been an incredible time in both our schools. Children have enjoyed a wealth of exciting topics and have really immersed themselves in their learning. Our older pupils have certainly enjoyed investigating space. They have been fascinated to find out about all the features of planets, stars and galaxies and have used their knowledge to write entertaining pieces including letters to alien lifeforms! Monk Fryston had a visit from a planetarium, whilst those at Saxton created models of the lunar cycle. Children in Lower Key Stage 2 have been learning about volcanoes, and made models which erupted on the playground. Those in Key Stage 1 and EYFS have enjoyed writing amazing quests and solving puzzles. Both schools participated in the Big Spring Clean by removing rubbish from the school environment and the surrounding area. We cleaned pond areas, picked up broken toys and plastic, and made sure that there was no litter on the playing fields. Older children did a litter pick in the roads around the schools and did an amazing job. Not only has this helped our environment, but it has also helped us to be good neighbours



Our schools are proud to be part of a Phunky Foods project this year. We have received specialist training and support in delivering food and fitness sessions to children throughout the schools. They certainly enjoy these and have made some really tasty and healthy recipes. We think that we might have the next Heston Blumenthal learning with us!



On 8th March 2024, Lyn Tate completed 25 years' service at Monk Fryston School. This is an incredible achievement – well done! Lyn was initially employed in the old school building and moved across to the new school when it opened in 1999. She is an incredible servant to the school and the Trust, and we are delighted to acknowledge her achievement.



Riverside Primary ~ Visit us here

It has been another busy term here at Riverside. At the start of term, we found out that we had been awarded £1,000 by the Tesco Community Grants Scheme, which is going towards a revamp of our EYFS outdoor space.



In February, we sent a large



contingent of children to Manchester for the amazing Young Voices event. The children, staff and parents loved it! It's such an important event in our calendar and really emphasises how important music and singing is at Riverside!

Riverside!

At the end of February, our Year 6 children went on their residential visit to Peat Rigg. They braved the cold to have an amazing time and got to try out all sorts of adventurous activities, including abseiling from a bridge. The teachers are always the stars of the show as without them, these trips couldn't happen; they got to have their revenge on the children in the Nightline activity, though!



As part of our World Book Day celebrations, Author, Emma Beswetherick, came into school to lead an assembly and writing workshops with Year 4. She was such a hit, she had to sign over 100 of her books which the children had bought!



We are preparing for our Year 3 and 4 production of The Rocking Romans 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!).

When it comes to a successful term, I think we've most certainly exceeded expectations this Spring. I am delighted to announce that our school attendance is in the top 10% of all primary schools and similar-sized primary schools in England; a real achievement and commitment to strong outcomes. We didn't stop there though. I received a letter from the Right Honourable Damien Hinds MP to congratulate our school on being in the top 200 (highest 1%) of primary schools in England for multiplication success in the Y4 times tables check. A wonderful achievement and testimony to the hard work of everyone involved.

It's been business as normal when it comes to learning, with a range of exciting trips and activities linked to the learning journeys taking place. Visits to museums, residential visits, theme days and even a Battlefield visit have all been on the learning menu.



Finally, we managed to get the Appleton Roebuck Podcast off the ground too. Now into its fifth episode and recorded entirely by pupils, we're gaining followers rapidly on Spotify. Why not give us a follow (Search RoePod on Spotify or [Click Here](#)).

You can also find our weekly newsletters and further information about Appleton Roebuck Primary School on our school website



Sherburn Hungate Primary School ~ Visit us here

Since the turn of the new year, it's been incredibly busy at Sherburn Hungate with so many exciting learning experiences taking place across all classes. As I mentioned in our Autumn Term news piece, we're continuing to grow in numbers and it's great to welcome so many new families to TeamSHP.

Our big focus for the term has been the development of the new Forest School.

Miss Weston, one of our new and aspiring lead teachers, has taken the lead on this project, and the work to make this exciting space come to life is almost complete. Our next step is to make the Forest School become a full part of our curriculum. It's a very exciting time.

It's also been business as usual. All our children (and staff) made a special effort for World Book Day, dressing up as their favourite book character.



Visits to exciting learning locations, such as the National Railway Museum in York, have brought our learning journeys to life.



We can't wait for the Summer Term. The light nights mean our competitive sports schedule can really hot up and we can get outside much more. Our teachers in KS2 will also be utilising the balcony learning area too, because we know many of our children love to learn outside.



If you'd like to know more about the wonderful things going on at Sherburn Hungate, please visit our school website at www.sherburnhungate.net.

It has been a busy year so far at Kellington. We have expanded our nursery to offer 30 hours of provision and have worked incredibly hard to develop the learning environment. The children are loving their learning experiences in our early years' classroom and have had a great time welcoming in parents for stay and plays, learning to read and write and exploring the world around them. This term the children have tried foods from around the world in the form of a chinese banquet, taken part in a forest school session and have explored the school grounds. To end the term, they have welcomed some duckling eggs and are excitedly waiting for them to hatch.



Following weeks of dedicated practice sessions, 15 of our children performed as part of the Young Voices choir in Sheffield. Our children joined over 4000 others to sing, dance and have an amazing time! The children thoroughly enjoyed watching the Urban Strides performance, backing a famous soul singer and watching a hugely talented 13 year old drummer take centre stage. We were so proud of how our children conducted themselves and the joy they took in this fantastic opportunity.

Our JLT have been very busy this term, very busy indeed! To begin with, the children decided to focus on reducing our energy bills in school and becoming 'greener'. They launched a poster competition and held a lunch time club to ensure all members of the school community who wanted to enter could.



JLT took the entries and took a democratic vote for which posters they felt were the most eye-catching. These poster winners were announced and their poster printed and put up around school. We have been really lucky to be able to have Siobhan in school to lead on our spring Forest School offer. Each of our individual year groups have had the opportunity to go into our Discovery Zone to build dens, whittle, create boggarts and cook delicious food. Our children have wrapped up warm, braced the elements and had nothing but smiles on their faces.



This term, our children had an art afternoon where we focused on the works of the famous artist, Alma Thomas. We began our artist focus with a whole school assembly where we learned about her style of art, what inspired her works and why she was revolutionary for her time. The children then used familiar mediums through which to explore the skills used to create similar art and then a famous piece of her work to base their artistic interpretations on. We displayed our art in the hall for our parents



and carers to see at the end of the day. We were so proud to share this with everyone that we spread the news even wider by inviting the local newspaper to our event! Kellington children are becoming more and more famous as the year goes on!

Kirk Fenton CE Primary School ~ Visit us here

We can't quite believe it is already the end of another term! As always at Kirk Fenton, it has been a busy few months full of lots exciting events and great learning.

One of our favourite events every year is the Young Voices concert in Sheffield Arena. Our Young Voices KS2 choir had been practising the songs and dances for months, and it was a fantastic day of loud singing and enthusiastic dancing.



All things history have been a focus this

term. Key stage one welcomed a visitor from the Battle of Towton and had an exciting morning finding out about this local historical event. There were lots of artefacts for them to investigate and they thoroughly enjoyed dressing up as soldiers.

There have been several trips out of school to investigate different periods of history, from visits to the Yorkshire Air Museum to find out about early flight, to adventures at Skipton Castle.

The highlight of the term for year six was the exciting time they spent in the North York Moors at an outdoor learning centre. It was lovely to see how their resilience and teamwork skills grew throughout the week, with lots of children stepping out of their comfort zone to tackle their fears.



Another feature of this term has been the sporting events we have taken part in with the other Trust primary schools. Children from across the school have taken part in various tournaments, thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to participate in friendly competitions with the schools in our Trust community.

Throughout the term we have been thinking about how we can be courageous advocates, working together for the good of others, as we continue to work towards achieving the Global Neighbours Silver Award. Our year four children decided that our local area could be made safer for the community were there to be an introduction of a 20mph speed limit outside the school. They wrote letters to the parish council to share their concerns, and spent an evening outside school gathering signatures for their petition. They are hopeful their voices will be heard!



The term ends with two of our favourite events of the year: World Book Day and British Science Week. We spent World



Book Day celebrating our favourite authors and stories; it was lovely to see so much enthusiasm for the magic and wonder of books. We are looking forward to a week of science to finish

the term, when we have some exciting science workshops planned.

We hope you have a lovely, peaceful Easter full of spring sunshine.

World Book Day was a huge success at Sherburn High. The students were invited to get involved in lots of different book/reading activities and competitions throughout the day. Our 'Catch Your Pet Reading' photo competition was hugely popular with staff and students capturing their favourite animals reading. The winner received a prize and they were also given some tasty treats for their pet too!

All students were given a World Book Day token to ensure that they could get a free promotional book.

'Blind Date with a Book' was so popular that all the books were gone in just 20 minutes!

We had to ask for book donations to keep the initiative going throughout World Book Day week. All books were wrapped in brown paper with a few clues as to which type of book was inside. The students were really excited to get involved.

We hid nine golden tickets around the school site. Students who found one were able to claim a bespoke World Book Day chocolate bar.

Students who had library lessons on World Book Day had a bookmark design competition and the best entries won some fabulous prizes.

Mrs Law started in post at Sherburn High as the Learning Resource Centre Manager in November 2023. She wanted to make it her mission to promote a love of reading and make the library a space where students feel safe, supported and encouraged to be the best that they can be. It's so important for our students to have positive role models and inspirational people who they admire and respect. So, she decided she wanted to create an aspirational display for them. The students gave suggestions of some public figures they would like to hear from.

We then wrote to them and asked them to provide one piece of advice that they would give to our students along with a signed photograph so that we could create an eye-catching display in school. The list from our students was extensive and very varied, as



you can imagine! So far, we have had responses from the Prime Minister, Sir David Attenborough, Jeremy Clarkson, Graham Norton, the ITV Calendar



news team, Dame Judi Dench, Grahame Hall (The Dogfather) and Kevin Sinfield. We are extremely grateful to all who have written back to us as we know that many of these people are incredibly busy.

It was a pleasant surprise to get a phone call from Keir Mather's office asking if he could visit the school to personally deliver his response. Visits like this mean that the students get a real insight into who they really are and their line of work.

Our Year 10 student Leaders and Head Boy and Girl had a Q&A style session with Mr Mather in February. He was very personable and happy to talk about how he started his career in politics. It was a great opportunity for Mr Mather to see how hard-working and dedicated our students are at Sherburn High School. We had a lovely article published in the Yorkshire Post on 26th February to highlight the event. For a full round up of school news and events, please visit www.sherburnhigh.co.uk or find us on Twitter @sherburnhigh

Brayton CE Primary School ~ Visit us here

Thanks to our links with Selby RUFC, we managed to get tickets for the England Senior Men's Team open training session at the LNER Stadium, York. This was a fantastic chance for our children who had competed in the STAR Tag Rugby in the autumn to see rugby skills at the very highest level and they were amongst a capacity crowd at the stadium for the sell-out event.



For this year's World Book Day we had another whole-school theme, this time of the Circus; with all classes working on a shared book, The Midnight Fair, by Gideon Sterer. We saw some very creative ideas for outfits: for the day we were a school full of strongmen, acrobats, animals, clowns, ringmasters and many more, including a human cannonball. Having a whole-school theme and a book that every class shared really brought everyone together, with the added fun of some retro fairground games for everyone in the Victoria Hall.



The KS1 team have trialled running a week of phonics workshops this half term, when family members have been able to come along and join in with the daily phonics session to see for themselves how it works. These have followed on from the information meetings on how we teach phonics and the Y1 Phonics Screening Check, and have been so well attended we will look at adding another session in for next time. In the same week we had another of our open classroom sessions, giving all families the chance to have an informal look at what their children have been up to, as well as being able to look around the classrooms.

Mr Fash-Hill and Mr Osborne applied to the Premier League Primary Stars for new girls' football kits and found out their bid had been successful. The girls could very proudly wear these at their match against North Duffield earlier this month, coming away with a well-deserved win!



On Wednesday 21st February, 62 members of the Young Voices choir performed at Sheffield Arena - the largest children's concert in the world! We took pupils from Key Stage Two and had an absolutely fantastic time: singing, dancing and watching the amazing Urban Strides performing on the stage. Lots of hard work in the months beforehand paid off and we were proud of each and every one of our singers. Following the amazing success of our Young Voices after school club, we have recently started a drama club for Key Stage 2 which has had a huge uptake. We cannot wait to see what amazing performances are in store for next term!



We have taken part in a number of different sporting tournaments during the Spring Term and have had great successes. 20 pupils from Year 3 and 4 attended the Basketball Tournament and came 2nd and 3rd. In addition to this, last week pupils attended a Dodgeball tournament where we came 1st. We have also hosted the Tri-Golf



tournament this term, which was a huge success and fantastic time was had by all. Additionally, this term we have enjoyed Speed Stacking sessions in school, where all children participated in a variety of games and activities to further develop their skills. As part of their learning this term, Year 5 children had an incredible day being scientists at Magna Science Adventure Centre.

Here they developed their knowledge of the stars and planets with a brilliant interactive workshop, even discovering how rockets get into space with an exciting (and explosive!) practical experiment. They also had the opportunity to explore the four pavilions investigating how levers and pulleys can help to transport heavy rock and dirt more easily, developing their understanding of forces, and being amazed by the fire tornado!

This term, the Junior Leadership Team have been working with pupils and staff across school to identify ways in which we can improve our school further. One of the areas identified has been the structure of lunchtime and OPAL play. As a result, the JLT have worked with everyone to ensure their views have been captured. They have also been capturing pupil voice for how to further improve OPAL play and this term has seen the arrival of more digging equipment and den building materials.



For World Book Day this year, our learning was based on famous authors. Across school, the children were immersed in books by Julia Donaldson, Roald Dahl and David Walliams where, from their inspiration, they worked in collaborative groups to create a chosen character from one of their stories. There were some fantastic creations displayed in the hall and everyone loved getting creative. Our JLT rounded off the day, reading Oi, Frog! to the whole school to celebrate our love of reading.

Tadcaster Grammar School ~ Visit us here

The first term of 2024 has been another busy one for all at TGS. Our football, netball, hockey and rugby teams continue to display great team spirit, commitment and ambition and we've celebrated many **sporting successes**. In February our Sixth Form students had a fabulous week skiing in Madesimo, Italy. They enjoyed super weather, great skiing and the best company. We hope the forthcoming Year 9 ski visit to Livigno will enjoy similar good skiing conditions and weather. Closer to home, students from all year groups were treated to a visit to the LNER Stadium in York to watch the England Rugby Squad continue their preparations ahead of the Round 4 clash against Ireland at Twickenham - not even the constant rain could dampen the spirits of all those who joined the trip. In February, Mr Parkinson was delighted to present Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh Awards to over 100 students.



Each year Year 9 students are given the opportunity to start the Bronze Award, and each year we're delighted so many students take on the challenge to learn new skills, volunteer in their local community and complete expeditions. Huge congratulations to those year 10 and 11 students who have completed their awards!

Theatre trips are a key feature of our students' diaries - this term year 10 and 11 students have had the opportunity to see A Song for Ella Grey, a Pilot Theatre production in association with Northern Stage and York Theatre Royal, returning to York Theatre Royal to see Jekyll and Hyde. 160 students went to Leeds Playhouse to enjoy a recent production of Macbeth. TGS is incredibly proud to offer every student the opportunity to experience the Arts and explore their creativity.

Whether they enjoy music, drama, art or design, our staff encourage all students to explore their creativity. **We saw this in practice in February with our whole school production of High School Musical Jr.** Both



evening performances were sell outs with record numbers of tickets sold to students and their families, staff and the wider TGS community. This was another great performance reflecting the dedication and talent we have in the school - this, and the musical showcase concerts allow the TGS community to celebrate the talent we have in our school.

As we celebrated World Book Day, we were delighted to welcome two celebrated authors. **Mark Morris**, an English author known for his series of horror novels, although he has also written several novels based on the BBC Television series Doctor Who, ran a series of writing workshops for our Sixth Form students where they were able to explore different styles of writing and how each can be used with the greatest effect. We also welcomed **Christina Gabbittas**. Christina worked with Humberside Police whilst researching for No More Knives in 2019, and after the success of this book, North Yorkshire Police asked her to work on a sequel. She conducts extensive research talking to Police personnel and those affected by crimes associated with County Lines.



Keep up to date with our news and events by visiting our [website](#), follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter/X](#) and [Instagram](#).

Football success for Tadcaster Grammar School student!

We really do love to hear of the successes our students enjoy with any activities out of school, as well as celebrating achievements within school. Earlier this term we were delighted to hear that Oliver Boast, a year 10 student at Tadcaster Grammar School, had been selected for - and attended - an England U15 camp.

Oliver has been playing football since he was young, initially with his local Bishopthorpe White Rose team, and also for York School Boys. At the age of 7 Oliver joined the Leeds Football Academy and has continued to work hard with regular training sessions in Thorp Arch. He tells us that he has particularly enjoyed the experience of playing in the many tournaments organised by Leeds Football Academy in the UK as well as travelling to play in tournaments internationally.

Recently offered a Scholarship at Leeds Football Academy (commencing July 2025) we're sure everyone will join us in congratulating Oliver on his success so far - we can't wait to see him progress even further. Oliver Boast is definitely a name to look out for in the world of football in the future.

Thank you to Oliver and his family for sharing these photos showing him at a Tournament in Belfast, Premier League Futsal Tournament, signing his contract with Leeds Football Academy (age 7) and more recently at the England U15 Camp.



STAR MAT Governance

Become a STAR Governor

The STAR Multi-Academy Trust is a thriving community trust based in the Selby area, with 11 schools in both primary and secondary phases serving nearly 4500 students.

Our mission is simple: to deliver an outstanding education to enable every young person to flourish and realise their full potential.

Could you join us and help our STRATEGIC PLAN become a reality?

Now, more than ever, community schools and community Trusts such as STAR need the skills, insight and knowledge that governors from the wider community can bring. We have a small number of vacancies and would be delighted to hear from motivated individuals interested in joining Local Governing Bodies of our highly performing schools.

A full induction process and ongoing support and training for the role is provided.

For further information, please visit <https://web.starmat.uk/governance/governor-information-and-vacancies/> or contact our Head of Governance at clerktogovs@starmat.uk.



Estates and Facilities

Sustainability

We have achieved more success in delivering our decarbonisation plan across the Trust. A recent SALIX application (government funded decarbonisation scheme) has been approved and will enable us to remove the burning of heating oil at Appleton Roebuck and South Milford Primary schools. We will be installing air source and ground source heat pumps in schemes worth over £700k.

Once completed we will have removed oil from all our primary schools and this will enable us to progress to looking at the secondary schools, removing gas from primary schools and the installation of solar panels across our Trust.

We have also started the procurement of looking at our waste services and how they can be improved trust wide. This will include how waste is managed and where it is disposed of.

Projects

We have lots of projects starting over the next term and into the summer months. These include further safeguarding fencing schemes, replacement of water services, replacement of rotten wooden windows, heating controls, replacement fire doors, refurbishments of external classrooms and new furniture for classrooms across our Trust.



STAR EATS

STAR EATS continues to provide meals for all our primary school children. This week we have celebrated Easter with our Easter themed menu. Uptake across our Trust continues to improve and new dishes have proved popular.

We have also started to invest in new ovens to help reduce energy, waste and increase operational efficiencies.

Next steps are to look at how we further engage our older students, looking at what other options can be made available to increase uptake and look at the transition into our secondary schools.



As always, we would love to hear if you have any suggestions and welcome any feedback; please contact us at stareats@starmat.uk

Rob Holah
Head of Estates and Facilities