



It would be impossible to start this introduction without expressing my gratitude and thanks for the work and dedication of all our staff and Governors this year. The support and compassion shown within our organisation has been incredible and I know that the children we are here to serve will have benefited in many ways.

Some organisations will have slowed their pace of developments during the last year, but the articles within this

edition demonstrate that FMAT have certainly not slipped into this frame of mind. The pace of change is clear and we must always remember that it is our 4,500 students who will be the recipient of the benefits we achieve.

Curriculum has been a topic of discussion for many years now, but perhaps never has the true meaning of curriculum been bought into such sharp focus. Our students have continued to receive a broad diet of lessons over the last few months, but it's the wider curriculum experience that has been under intense pressure. How many trips, visits, shows, sports fixtures, opportunities for work experience etc. have been missed over the past year? I would urge you all to consider this carefully when thinking about how to shape our students experience over the next 18 months in particular!

Year 11 and Year 13 students will be experiencing a very different end to their "examination" courses this year. I myself know only too well the pressure this puts on students and how this impacts their feelings of missing that "rite of passage", as my own two children are in years 11 and 13. It is absolutely essential that all our staff approach the centre assessed grades process with absolute professionalism and use cast iron evidence to reach decisions. The two extremes of over inflating grades and under estimating student capability must both be completely avoided and I look forward to our students receiving fair grades for the work they have demonstrated.

Finally, I would like to mention Mark Rhatigan, Director of Education. After 35 years in education, Mark is retiring. He has worked tirelessly to improve the lives of children in many different settings and has always been passionate to ensure any barriers or disadvantages for students are overcome. Most of you will not realise that Mark should have retired last year, but his commitment to supporting students through the pandemic and lockdown shone through when he agreed to continue for as long as possible. It's that level of dedication that I will remember in Mark and I wish him a very happy retirement.

MR SIMON JONES | CEO

FEATURED INSIDE

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CONNECTING WITH DIRECTORS

GOVERNANCE THAT IS FIT FOR PURPOSE

Being part of a MAT is something we all continue to learn about and we are still evolving the way we want FMAT to work, over the last year we have made some very exciting and positive steps in the right direction despite the presence of our unfriendly pandemic.

We have been taking steps to ensure that we have further strengthened our governance team, structure and approach that is fit for the purpose of supporting and challenging our academies and the executive that oversee them. The old governance model no longer suits the broader and more complex nature of MATs.

We started with 2 basic questions:

- What are our academies doing?

- How do we know?

If we don't know then the Regional Schools Commissioner(RSC) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) will see our governance as weak and will hold us accountable. They expect the governance of a MAT to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Hold our academies to account for their educational performance for our students
- Oversee financial performance and make sure our money is well spent

We draw the requirements of our governance wider than this through our Mission of: Enriching lives; transforming futures. We are committed to developing all our students to become well round, informed citizens who have fulfilling lives and exciting career opportunities.

We have a 2-layer model of governance, each are equally important and cannot operate without the other.

Associations are our locally based eyes and ears, and increasingly will be helping hands for our academies. Over the last year we have been recruiting new and energised associates to join our more experienced colleagues with the objective of increasing the difference we make to student outcomes and children's life chances. These associates provide the close quarter scrutiny of what is happening in our academies and over time colleagues in school will become more familiar with their faces as our visits into school increase.

The Trust Board listen to what is going on in our academies through 4 sub-committees that receive information from the local Associations and from the FMAT executive team. The sub-committees cover all FMAT activity being Education; People; Finance; and Audit and Risk. It is at these committees where our directors review strategy, policy and progress against our plans to make sure we are doing the best for our students and staff.

For this structure to be effective these 2 layers must be mutually supportive with good communications and well-trained associates and directors, who are clear on their role and who are able to challenge and support our academies in the right way. This work is ongoing but increasingly it means we are sharing of ideas, knowledge and concerns that leverage the benefits of working as one governance team within FMAT. Only in this way will we have Governance that is fit for purpose.



CONNECTING WITH DIRECTORS

GOVERNANCE THAT IS FIT FOR PURPOSE

WE KNOW! THANK YOU!

We have been genuinely overwhelmed at the efforts of FMAT staff during the last year as you have sought to maintain student's education in what have been the most difficult time for schools ever. We would like to thank you all – our teachers and teaching assistants, our cleaners, our estates team, our leaders and our numerous other colleagues – for putting our children first in your working lives.

Equally important but lost in the maelstrom of the last year are the efforts that have been made to make FMAT financially secure. This has not been easy and a large number of you have been impacted by the financial rigours of the last 12 months. Our leaders and finance teams have had to face difficult and sometimes very unpleasant decisions, but the result as we begin to emerge from this latest lockdown is that FMAT has not only restored financial stability but we have rebalanced our spending to focus increasingly on improving the provision for our students.

TRUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PEN PORTRAIT

Having graduated with a law degree, I then qualified as a chartered accountant, and, after a further six years' employment with KPMG, I left to pursue a career in industry. I subsequently worked in a variety of large, complex organisations including Tarmac, Experian and Rightmove, in senior roles.

A little over seven years ago, I joined the Ministry of Defence as Chief Financial Officer for its procurement business and then, since February 2015, in a broader business management, governance & assurance and transformation role within the headquarters of the Director General of the Defence Medical Services (DMS). I am now CFO in a part MOD- owned joint venture repairing components for the F35 Lightning fighter aircraft.

I have been married to Penny for 28 years and am a father to 3 grown up children (two of whom attended Fairfax) and grandfather to 3. I live near Burton on Trent and in what spare time I have, I am an enthusiastic but distinctly average golfer and enjoy playing Sax and walking our young Boxer, Max.

SIMON SMALL | CHAIR OF THE FMAT TRUST BOARD

CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | THE BOURNVILLE JOURNEY

The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity. The fears are paper tigers. You can do anything you decide to do – Amelia Earhart

This week marks the one-year anniversary of lockdown, we are also one year and 10 weeks into our journey back to "Good" at Bournville. In January 2020 there was much to do and a real urgency to make change quickly. Rapid change is taking place at Bournville with a real sense of purpose to the extent that a visitor sent me the following message after leaving Bournville last week:

"It was a real pleasure to see the students engaged in their learning and I was particularly impressed with the quality and amount of work that was completed by the children in their exercise books... there was a real focus on creating an environment that allows the learner to focus on learning. High expectations of behaviour were evident in all classrooms I visited and support of vulnerable children was a clear priority."

Suffice to say we were not the school they expected to see. It is interesting to reflect on how we have become the school outlined in the quote when we were so far from that a year ago. What have we done? The most important, and significant change we made was to develop staff understanding of the student body and their needs.

The narrative was that 34% of the students were on the SEND register and that the students were not that bright. The reality:

- There are large numbers of very bright children

- Only 10% of the school have a diagnosed SEND with the biggest group, those students who have been diagnosed with, and are medicated for, ADHD
- Some of our students are extremely vulnerable with high instances of trauma, this was exacerbated in lockdown
- Vulnerability had been conflated with SEND
- Unwanted behaviours are a sign of distress or unmet need
- Diagnosing the need and supporting students produces positive behaviours where students are successful
- An ordered environment has produced certainty for our students, zoning the school, splitting lunch time and escorted movement to specialist rooms
- Using the mantra, 'we care about you and want you to succeed', coupled with tangible improvements has made students believe we care, we have arranged; mentoring, Action Jackson seminars, an aspirations program and much more.

Our narrative very quickly became some of our students are bright and they are needy not naughty. Planning for stretch and challenge and then teaching to the top has raised expectations; improved behaviour for learning and created the focused environment articulated by our recent visitor.

The Academy Improvement Plan for the quality of education may seem simplistic. It focuses on three key areas of the lesson cycle:



CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | THE BOURNVILLE JOURNEY



The mantra, **'we care about you and want you to succeed'** is as relevant for all staff including leaders as it is for students.

- Written Do Now that promotes recall and practices skills and knowledge
- Short, clear and precise explanation
- Substantial deliberate practice that lasts for at least 30 minutes and in quantity is about 2 pages of work per lesson

Now the focus on 30 minutes deliberate practice each lesson may seem excessive and I would counter with, you learn to walk by trying and falling over and trying again! The expectations are clearly shared with staff and students and revisited regularly. Everyone knows the expectations, staff and students know that we look for this in learning walks and importantly once per fortnight book looks are part of the quality assurance cycle in leadership team meetings. There is nothing more important to talk about in leadership meetings than the quality of education as evidenced by what students are able to do in their books. The results of this are very evident. In 2019 progress in mock one was -1. Mock one for the currently year 11 in December 2020 was over half a grade better, students know more and can do more because they have practiced and are supported and encouraged to do so by scaffolding and challenge.

Obviously, the improvement journey is not just about one thing. There have been a multitude of actions which have enabled the improvements:

- Retime tabling – more than once
- Consolidating resources so that all students have a common learning environment
- Restructuring to balance the budget
- Investing in the school environment
- Introducing new structures

There is one other crucial pillar for improvement that has enabled rapid progress and that is the investment in high quality training for staff; leadership coaching and a full teaching and learning program from the Ambition Institute. The mantra, 'we care about you and want you to succeed' is as relevant for all staff including leaders as it is for students.

What next then? There are lots of areas that need further development however the next big challenge is the "Bournville Buzz", that buzz of excitement when the school football team has beaten the local rival school 5-0, the buzz at show time when the atmosphere is febrile because something amazing is about to happen, the sense of pride that students have in their own successes and those of their school. I have a plan...

MISS M GREEN | HEAD OF ACADEMY

CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | REWARDS SYSTEM

It was encouraging to see our students return from lockdown. Students were overwhelmingly happy to return to the academy after the long closure, and the staff were certainly pleased to see them.

Thanks must go to our covid testing team, led by Mrs Colvin, Mrs Walsh and Mrs Zahida, ably supported by some of our team of examination invigilators. We tested our students with minimal disruption to the smooth running of the academy, and I am pleased to report that we had no positive tests. This is testament to our students and staff for following the guidelines for keeping safe during the pandemic.

In always looking for areas to develop in the academy we are currently reviewing the rewards system. Students are being rewarded more often for "doing the right thing", and a range of rewards are available to students, ranging from stamps in planners, certificates, badges and academic colours and a queue jump pass for the canteen.

Students will receive academic colours for dedication and excellence in the curriculum and extra-curricular participation. All students will be able to achieve half or full colours when they participate in a series of school activities in and out of lessons. We have a "menu" of curriculum-based activities which will allow all students to achieve half or full school colours in all areas of school life.

MR S MALLETT | HEAD OF ACADEMY

REWARDS ACHIEVEMENT LADDER

ACHIEVEMENT POINTS	REWARDS ACHIEVEMENT CRITERIA
15 POINTS	Awarded by Form Tutor • Well Done stamp/sticker in planners
30 POINTS	Awarded by Form Tutor • Form tutor postcard home
50 POINTS	Awarded by Head of Year • Queue jump pass for canteen for 2 days
70 POINTS BRONZE CERTIFICATE & BADGE	Awarded by Head of Year • Bronze certificate issued in assembly • Queue jump pass for canteen for 1 week
100 POINTS SILVER CERTIFICATE & BADGE	Awarded by Deputy Headteacher • Silver certificate issued in assembly • Erdington Academy pen • Queue jump pass for canteen for 1 week
150 POINTS GOLD CERTIFICATE & BADGE	Awarded by Head of Academy • Gold certificate issued in assembly • Parents informed by Year Leader (email/phone) • Queue jump pass for canteen for 1 week
200 POINTS PLATINUM CERTIFICATE & BADGE	Awarded by Head of Academy • Platinum certificate issued in assembly • Parents informed by Year Leader (email/phone) • Queue jump lunch pass, you + 1 friend for 1 week
300 CERTIFICATE	Awarded by Head of Academy • Head Teacher certificate issued in assembly • Parents informed by Year Leader (email / phone) • Queue jump lunch pass, you + 1 friend, all term • £5 shopping voucher
SUBJECT POSTCARDS	Awarded weekly/when appropriate by Subject Teacher / Faculty Leader • Top Boy and Top Girl • Most Improved Boy and Most Improved Girl
HOT CHOCOLATE / MILKSHAKE FRIDAY	Awarded monthly by Assistant Headteacher Student of the month, invitation for you + 1 friend
PIZZA	Top ten attendance and homework submissions from each year group These will be arranged through the year for the most deserving students
REWARD TRIPS	

HOW TO ACHIEVE REWARD POINTS

- AMBITION**
 - Completing homework
- DEDICATION**
 - 100% attendance in a week
 - Attending OOHL
 - Top 10 attendance and homework submission
- INTEGRITY**
 - Acts of honesty/fair play
 - Kindness
 - Excellent assessment results
- EXCELLENCE**
 - No behaviour points in a week
 - Work
- TRADITION**
 - Volunteering

CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

STAFF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROJECT

THE COMPETITION

The 'Achieve' lockdown programme was originally created to help build resilience and independence in young people attending Erdington Academy. The 'Achieve' programme contained 20 activities which focused on promoting positive, healthy minds.

In the third lockdown we used the principle of the 'Achieve' programme to create a staff wellbeing competition under the same format. Staff were going above and beyond looking after the welfare of the students, but it was also important that we looked out for each other during this difficult time.

The Achieve challenges asked teachers to send in their evidence of 20 completed tasks. Once an individual task was completed a letter of the alphabet was sent to the teacher which formed an anagram of where the competition prize of a £45 Just Eat voucher was hidden. The Prize Money was denoted by myself, Mr Halstead and Mr Mallett. The competition was launched through our weekly staff briefing and has a fantastic take up with Mrs Baskerville being the eventual winner.

MRS S MABBETT - ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



Anyone who knows me will tell you that I love a competition, so when I saw the e-mail about the Achieve activities for staff, I was eager to get started. I've been a leader at a youth adventure unit for 7 years and I've been missing our activities and adventures, so the challenges on the booklet were perfect.

They were broken down into work, life, practical and home skills so there were a wide variety of activities that I could take part in, depending on my mood (or if I wanted to get dressed). Some of my favourites included learning a new skill (needle felting), creating a portrait of another member of staff, identifying a trip to take once lockdown is over (Scandi road trip, here we come!) and creating a playlist of happy songs (I challenge anyone to listen to "Mr Blue Sky" by ELO and not feel happier!).

I think the reasons that I found the booklet so useful were having something to focus on outside of work, having an end goal, and something to look forward to (FOOOOD!) The hardest part of the entire thing was the anagram (I even got my family involved in trying to solve it) and the sense of excitement when I realised it was "in the shed on the allotment" was ridiculous. I arrived at work extra early the next morning to run down to the allotment, in the mud, and retrieve the prize.

It was stipulated that we had to use all of the voucher at once, so a feast of Mexican food and McDonalds (for the teenager), topped off with a box of Krispy Kremes was the order of the day. I really appreciate the safeguarding team organising this activity, and I'm ready and waiting for the next one.

MRS PEARSON

PUPIL PREMIUM CHAMPION - MATHS



THE PARTICIPATION

CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

This year started the same as 2020 ended for many people. That's the reason why I started the food donations for vulnerable students and families. Over the start of lock down we managed to enhance the food parcels with generous donations from businesses in the local community.

Once the food vouchers were given out we thought why not do something slightly different and do something for all students to get involved in.

A friend of mine is a YouTuber and an Artist who draws mainly Marvel characters. He has over 570k followers and on some of his videos has over 1.7 million views on You Tube. He kindly donated some items so we could run a whole school Art competition along with Mr. Daniel.

He kindly gave me some really great illustrations and art prizes for our winners, so that's what we did, we set out a competition for the whole school to draw any character they chose and enter.

We put it in our SMHW platform as an Art competition and also on our School Twitter.

We ran the competition over 2 weeks and we had around 80 entries.

The caption we went for was 'You have to be in it to win it'.

It really was a great success and the quality of the drawings was amazing, it had a real good 'buzz' and competitive feeling to it.

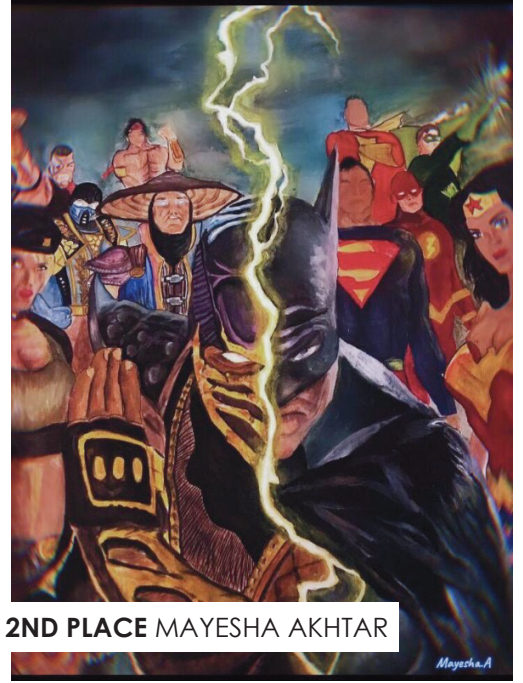
The students enjoyed the competition and the suspense of who won was tense.

ART COMPETITION





1ST PLACE JASLEEN KAUR



2ND PLACE MAYESHA AKHTAR



3RD PLACE CHLOE B



4TH PLACE TASNIM TASNIMAH



5TH PLACE KETURAH B

06.02.21-07.02.21

Above are the top 5 winning pictures however due to the talent the top 10 winners all received a prize.

Every student who entered was given a certificate and achievement points for their hard work.

A big thank you to Artology for gifting the prizes, to Mr. Daniel for setting the criteria, getting the entries sorted and arranging the judging of the competition, along with the other Judges of Mr Mallett and Ms Thom.

MR Z KHAN | INCLUSION MANAGER

CONNECTING WITH FAIRFAX

HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | A ROAD OUT OF LOCKDOWN

I am writing this article just ahead of students returning from lockdown. This lockdown, things have been very different to the first lockdown, and I wanted to take the time to recognise the contributions and efforts that members of our community have made during this period.

We have been proud of our students' resilience during this period, and their commitment to their online learning. We have been grateful of the support of our students' parents/carers and the numerous emails they have sent the Academy thanking teachers and support staff for their hard work.

As Head of Academy, I have felt privileged to have such a dedicated team who, in the most trying and uncertain of times, have pulled together to ensure the impact of this time on our students is minimal. Teaching Assistants, Cover Supervisors, Sixth Form staff and PE staff have worked tirelessly in school to maintain provision and routines for our most vulnerable youngsters and the children of key workers.

Teachers have delivered face-to-face teaching all day every day, tracking attendance and progress and receiving massive quantities of work to feed back on.

The Pastoral Team have conducted calls and home visits all week every week to ensure our students could access learning and to check on their well-being.

Our Admin Team have worked to process data, respond to queries, complete hundreds of recognition letters, all in order to maintain our high standards and our students' drive and ambition.

The Leadership Team have overseen provision in school, whilst continuing their usual roles and completing the ongoing and endless Covid related tasks.

Lastly, but by no means least, I want to recognise the work carried out by our onsite Testing Team. Completely outside of their normal routines, they have stepped up to deliver testing to over 1200 people.

So, in this FMAT Connect article I wanted to take the time to publicly thank all of the staff team at Fairfax for doing a fantastic job through the most challenging of times. #wearefairfax #proudtobefairfax #AmbitionRespectKindnessSafety

MRS D BUNN | HEAD OF ACADEMY



CONNECTING WITH FAIRFAX

MISS R CLARKE, ASSISTANT HEAD TEACHER | DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

In 1960, the founding headteacher of Fairfax School, Mr Gordon Philpott, first introduced the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. The scheme is aimed at challenging young people in Great Britain and the other parts of the Commonwealth to 'attain standards of achievement and endeavour in a wide variety of active interests'. The Award is a balanced programme of activities available to all young people between the ages of 14-25 that develops the whole person in an environment of social interaction and teamwork. Fairfax Academy is a licensed organisation, meaning that fully trained Fairfax staff volunteer to run the award, rather than us relying on expensive external providers. This keeps the running costs low and therefore enables students from all backgrounds to participate. Fairfax enrolls annually one of the highest number of students, compared with other licensed organisations in central England. Student participation and enrichment is at the heart of Fairfax, and we are delighted to report the following statistics:-

5423 STUDENTS



CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | YOUNG CARERS

'Better together; no-one left behind'

Pastoral care is a key priority for us at Smith's Wood. As with all children, we know that to be happy and academically successful our students need to feel safe, cared for and perhaps, most importantly, they need to feel that they belong. Our house system is carefully designed to ensure that we meet the pastoral needs of all of our students, whatever their circumstances may be.

We know that in the UK there are many young people providing care for other family members in the home. Often, they care for relatives without the knowledge of school staff. Unsupported their caring role can seriously impact their attainment, attendance and well-being. This is why we have prioritised our work in school to support these young people.

Who are Young Carers?

A 'Young Carer' is defined in Section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014 as: '... a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person ... this relates to care for any family member who is physically or mentally ill, frail, elderly, disabled or misuses alcohol or substances.'

They are often hidden and are particularly vulnerable during the Covid-19 crisis. Many have experienced an increase in their caring responsibilities or are caring for the first time. There are likely to be Young Carers in your classes; research shows that as many as one in five pupils in secondary schools are Young Carers.

Young Carers are recognised as a vulnerable group in need of early help. However, they are often only identified after a crisis. Many do not know that they are Young Carers or may not identify with the label. Young Carers are no more likely than their peers to encounter support services. This is why, at Smith's Wood, we have actively sought to find who our Young Carers are and do all we can to support them.

At Smith's Wood, a significant number of our students are Young Carers and because of this we have invested in a member of staff who, alongside her role of Head of Key Stage 3 Mathematics, also has responsibility through our house system, for supporting these young people. Our Young Carers are proud to be Young Carers; Miss Bartlett's role is to support them pastorally.

**CARERS
TRUST**

**YOUNG
CARERS
ACTION DAY
2021**

#YoungCarersActionDay



CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | "BETTER TOGETHER; NO ONE LEFT BEHIND"

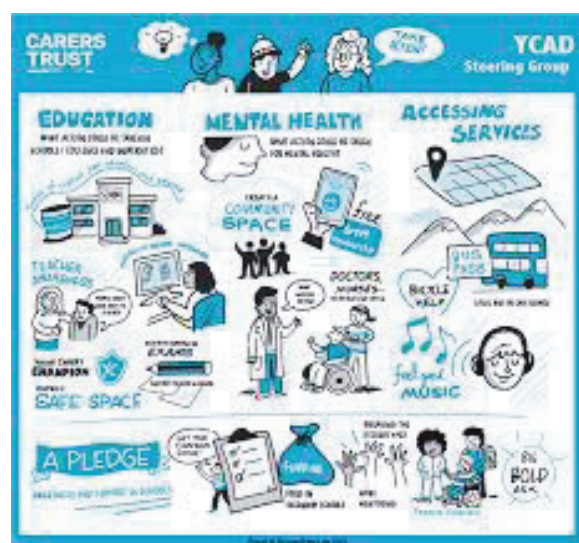
A range of support is available for our Young Carers at Smith's Wood, this includes;

- One to one support sessions
- Sharing of well-being resources
- Microsoft Teams weekly 'Drop in' session
- Weekly Newsletters for students and their families
- Well-being phone calls
- A designated Young Carers email address for all parents and students should they need it to request additional guidance or support.
- Awareness is raised for all students through resources being delivered as part of our daily mentoring programme.
- Resources are provided for staff in a shared area on the school network for them to access should they require additional information on further guidance.
- Staff and student noticeboards increase awareness and build confidence in identifying and supporting Young Carers.
- Termly reviews are completed with Young Carers to ensure we are up to date with their caring roles. (This was particularly beneficial after lockdown as many students caring roles have increased and/or many Young Carers may now feel more isolated or overwhelmed). This information is shared with the Carers Trust on a termly basis which has strengthened our Multi Agency approach in supporting Young Carers.

Young Carers' attendance at school can be affected by their caring responsibilities with an average of 48 school days missed or cut short per year. Nationally Young Carers have reported that, due to Coronavirus, many are not feeling confident to return to school. This is why we chose to really celebrate Young Carers Action Day.

Miss Bartlett, working in collaboration with the Carers Trust celebrated the outstanding work of our YC on the 16th March as part of Young Carers Action Day. Young Carers Action Day is an annual event led by the Carers Trust. It raises awareness and calls for action to increase support for young people with caring responsibilities.

#YoungCarersActionDay was about Protecting Young Carers' Futures and making sure that all young and young adult carers get the support they need to pursue their dreams. Young carers told us they wanted Young Carers Action Day to be about their futures, highlighting the incredible skills they have developed through being a carer – resilience, time-management and empathy, for example. These are all important skills, not just for young people moving into higher education - but also for those looking to enter the workplace. What's more, they are skills highly valued by employers.



We would like to thank our Academy Associates (Governing Body) for the support that they are providing to our work in supporting our Young Carers. Miss Bartlett has ensured that they have the understanding of the support in place for our Young Carers as well as the resources to consider the needs of Young Carers as part of their evaluation of the schools provision and how well it meets the needs of our students. A range of resources has been shared with Associates to support further collaborative work.

The next steps this term in supporting our Young Carers is to run a mentoring scheme with key students in years 9, 10, 11. This will involve Miss Bartlett in working with students to reflect on the positive skills they have gained that are transferrable in school and to further study and careers.

KATY CRAIG | HEAD OF ACADEMY

CONNECTING WITH THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

MARK RHATIGAN | DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

SOME REFLECTIONS

In a few weeks' time, at Easter, I retire after 35 years in education, 23 of which has been in England, the rest in Australia. I feel so fortunate to have been able to experience such a variety of settings and learn from so many committed and innovative people. Most of all, having the opportunity to teach and influence so many young people is a privilege.

I began teaching in 1984 in a comprehensive school in the northern suburbs of Perth, Western Australia. The community was multicultural, with many recent migrants from countries such as Burma, Malaysia and Vietnam and migrants from Britain and Ireland, of course. Despite the challenges faced by some families, there was a generosity of spirit that permeated into the school, making it a special place to begin my career.

The 1980s in education in Australia were no doubt similar to England in that there was no state or national curriculum and one was left to plan on one's own. There was no induction, no training year, I was shown the English stock cupboard and that was it! It was fortunate that, as a group of teachers, we wanted to work collaboratively, to plan together and share resources. In fact, way before computers, we would network with other schools also to ensure workload was shared and best practice was celebrated.

Fast forward to 2021; we have the advantage now that knowledge and resources can be shared so quickly and widely. As a Trust, we should be proud of what has been achieved over the past year; what is special is that the students have benefitted from the same generosity of spirit and collaboration I witnessed so many years ago. The FMAT community has certainly risen to the challenges this year.



NEW POST: TRUST PASTORAL LEAD

I am delighted to share some good news. Karen Cornell, currently Assistant Head at a school in North Warwickshire, will be joining the Central Team after Easter as Trust Pastoral Lead.

The role supports the academies in all areas related to Pastoral, including Safeguarding, Attendance and Behaviour. Karen has a wealth of experience in these areas, including working with colleagues in North Warwickshire on programmes that dramatically reduced exclusions and improved outcomes for young people.

I am sure you will welcome Karen when she visits your academy. A reminder that my successor, Martyn Jobling, is also starting after Easter and looks forward to meeting you all also.

Thank you

I have been fortunate to spend nearly 7 years in the Trust, being part of the team that first worked at Bournville in 2014 and returning to Bournville as interim Executive Head at a later stage. I have been fortunate to work closely with staff in all 4 academies. A particular highlight has been my Headship at Kingsbury/Erdington. I am so proud of what was achieved by all during that period and Erdington Academy does hold a special place in my heart.

There are too many people to thank individually but I am grateful to all who I have had the pleasure of working with. FMAT is now in the strongest position it has ever been and I wish Simon Jones (CEO) and all every success in the future.

MARK RHATIGAN | DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



CONNECTING WITH THE DIRECTOR OF HR

DANIELLE BILLINGTON | DIRECTOR OF HR



It was great to welcome all staff and student back on 8 March 2021, and there is a real sense of purpose and positivity in the air. Recruitment is still high on the agenda, and there are two exciting Trust-wide opportunities advertised on TES, Trust Lead English and Trust Lead Maths. If you wish to be part of our School Improvement Team and make a trust-wide contribution for the benefit of all our students, please apply.

We recently successfully recruited into the Trust Pastoral Lead role and are looking forward to Karen Cornell joining the Trust on 19 April 2021 to strengthen our School Improvement Team. At Bournville, a new Deputy Head, Matthew Else, and two new Assistant Heads, Kim Wheeler and Daniel Thomas, currently Associate Assistant Head at Bournville, have been appointed and are also due to start on 19 April 2021. Congratulations to all our new starters!

As a team, we continue to focus on larger pieces of work, such as standardising SCRs across the Trust

and electronic filing of key documents for all staff. Bournville School has been completed so that all our efforts in this area are now focused on Smith's Wood Academy.

We are also delighted to announce that our Recruitment, Apprenticeship and Training Advisor gave birth to a baby girl. Congratulations!

As always, if you have any queries or concerns regarding the HR service, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Each member of the HR Department will introduce themselves to you in the FMAT Connect publications for this academic year; this half term, it will be Shauni Lee, Payroll & Systems Officer, and Aiysha Tai, HR Assistant.

I wish you all a restful Easter holiday.

DANIELLE BILLINGTON | DIRECTOR OF HR



SHAUNI LEE
PAYROLL & SYSTEMS
MANAGER

I joined Fairfax Multi Academy Trust in December 2020 as Payroll & Systems Manager. Joining a newly formed team has had its challenges but I am lucky that I did not have to start a new job working remotely like the rest of the team and have continually received the support of my colleagues.

I have over ten years' experience in payroll and my previous role was Payroll Supervisor at an accountancy firm running a variety of payrolls for nearly 400 clients on a monthly basis. Although I have not worked directly in the education sector before, I have completed the payroll for multi-academy trusts for the past four years. Prior to this, I worked at another payroll company, helping to complete the payroll for in excess of 10,000 agency workers each week.

I was excited to join FMAT and expand my knowledge on academies, as well as bringing my own previous experience of academy payrolls to the role. I am responsible for ensuring the payroll department is working as well and effective as possible and to ensure all employees are paid accurately and on time. Furthermore, I ensure that our HR system is up to date and developed to its full potential. I look forward to working as part of the wider HR team to provide a supportive and competent service to the Trust.



AIYSHA TAI
HR ASSISTANT

I joined the FMAT HR Department in October 2020 as an HR Assistant. I am new to the education sector having worked for 13 years in a private sector setting.

My role entails supporting the wider HR team and provide a HR administration service to the organisation. During my time here, I have built my knowledge in safeguarding and safer recruitment processes with the help of my team and the Trust. I enjoy working with a great team and building new working relationships across the Trust.

Before joining the FMAT HR team, I worked in an Employee Relations environment within a well-distinguished, global and multinational company. I have gained valuable exposure to corporate sustainability, administration, HR, payroll, recruitment, talent development and resourcing within South America, UK, Europe, Asia, and Australia. I look forward to bringing my experience to my role and develop new ideas to support the Trust.

MEET THE TEAM

CONNECTING WITH FINANCE

TRACY STEVENS | INCOME AND GRANTS GENERATION OFFICER



FINANCE

INCOME AND GRANTS GENERATION OFFICER

A year ago, in April 2020 I got my dream job – Income & Grants Generation Officer. Until then I had been managing the lettings at Erdington Academy, generating between £70 - £100k of additional income each year to benefit our students and the delivery of the curriculum. An opportunity to replicate this at Bournville and Fairfax arose. After a visit to each site I knew this was going to be a walk in the park, both sites have fantastic facilities and I was keen to promote them. It did not take long before the community heard about the availability at both sites and I was inundated with requests from a variety of groups to visit with a view to making a booking.



**Services
For Education**
Music Service

Bournville was already hosting Services for Education Music sessions on 3 evenings a week and on Saturdays and they have continued to hire the facilities. In July we attracted 3 new well-established groups: MEZZO Dance Academy, who had a student on Britain's Got Talent this year, Phoenix Acrodance Academy and ASBBA Sports karate and Kick boxing club. All participants and parents speak very highly of the facilities available to them.

Fairfax have a fantastic sportshall and other really useful large areas. The sportshall is now fully booked with the addition of Sutton Archery Club, Wyndley Netball Club and Sutton Town Netball Club. Tae Kwon-Do Sutton Coldfield Club have started hiring the gymnasium. Another great success both financially and for our students and the community is the return of The Pauline Quirk Academy offering sessions in Comedy & Drama, Musical Theatre and Film & Television.



For Smiths Wood I am working with the PFI provider to ensure we maximise the opportunities at as well.

Erdington have continued to thrive with most of their existing customers and I have secured a couple of new groups as well.

Well.... 2020 what a rollercoaster year. All sites were hit hard as a result of the first lockdown. In September bookings started to return, groups were happy, we received lots of positive feedback. But it all ended in "tiers" -> TIER2, TIER3, 1 day in TIER 4. It became increasingly difficult at each site for the site team, no week was the same with some groups allowed and some groups not. Then LOCKDOWN 2 came in. Firstly, thank you to all the site staff for accommodating and supporting groups during a very uncertain time. All hirers from all three sites are desperate to return when it is safe to do so.

My objective with the facility hire is not only to generate income to benefit your Academy and our current students, but to promote our Trust facilities to the wider community and encourage parents to make that important decision to join our FMAT family. Therefore, I will be working closely with Keeley Clarke, Trust Graphic Designer to create exciting, catchy marketing content that will support your recruitment plans, watch this space!

The other new and exciting part of my role which is keeping me busy whilst the lettings are closed is additional income generation. I have met with a few of our colleagues to discuss potential funding opportunities and will be reviewing your School Improvement Plans to identify any future funding opportunities to support the specific needs of your Academies. I will work with you to secure funding to enhance the learning experience and setting for all our young people and staff.

PGCE, PP, PP+, LAC, EHCP are just a few of the acronyms I have had to decipher. As a Trust we attract a substantial amount of additional income for our students for a number of reasons, unfortunately the main reason is for our disadvantaged students.

My role is to support Academy leads to identify the funding due to our Trust and students and importantly to ensure we have received the funding. In doing this my role is to support in reducing the admin time that your Academy leads are spending chasing income etc and this will enable them to channel the funding directly to the individual students and make informed decisions which will have the biggest impact, quickly and efficiently for our most vulnerable students, which is why we are all here.

Joining the finance team has been a new area of work for me, but one I am thoroughly enjoying.

SOCIAL MEDIA

In order to improve our communication links and promote our Academies and the Trust as a whole, we would like to encourage all of our employees, Directors, Associates and parents to follow our social media sites. Links to social media can be found on our websites.



www.fmat.co.uk/

www.fairfax.bham.sch.uk

www.bournvilleschool.org/

www.bournvilleprimaryprovision.org/

www.erdingtonacademy.bham.sch.uk

www.smithswood.co.uk

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