



In schools, the start of summer brings a focus on examinations and tests, with a particular focus on Year 6, Year 11, and Post 16. Whilst there is the inevitable drive to support students within these year groups, it has been a pleasure to read about the range of extra-curricular activities delivered in every one of our FMAT Academies to a wide range of year groups. Examination outcomes are of course important, as they open up future opportunities for our students, but this must go hand in hand with offering the widest range of

experiences we can deliver. Reading this edition of FMATConnect, it is clear that we are delivering on our mission "Enriching Lives, Transforming Futures".

The work to improve our organisation for the benefit of all stakeholders continues at pace and I would like to thank staff for their continued work and collaborative efforts. Recently, colleagues from all our academies have been involved with work on videography, marketing, widening our professional learning offer, renewing the IT infrastructure including CCTV, parental engagement projects, attendance and punctuality strategies, rationalisation of assessment models etc. I hope that all our staff and students will benefit directly from this collective effort and the work taking place in many other areas.

As always, I ask that you contact me directly if you feel there are any areas we can develop further.

MR SIMON JONES | CEO

ENRICHING LIVES; TRANSFORMING FUTURES

FEATURED INSIDE

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CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

PRINCIPAL UPDATE

TUTORING

To minimise the loss to learning, we are using Government funding for additional tutors in Maths, Science and English. There have been some challenges along the way with trying to make the most of these additional resources such as not getting the teaching quality we expect, staff shortages in some subjects, establishing positive working relationships with new staff and vulnerable students quickly. There are the practical difficulties too, of all subjects fighting to work with the same students, new timetables to be drawn up, timetables that need updating constantly it seems and yet, with a little perseverance and a little luck, it is worth it!

Y11 student Hollie Mason has had Maths tutoring for three months, for two hours a week. She follows the usual curriculum that would be taught in lessons but at a pace that suits her. If she doesn't understand a topic, she is able to ask for further support and have it quickly explained to her. In sessions they

work on exam papers and work through them. The tutor picks up on mistakes and misconceptions, explaining and modelling to ensure understanding is there. This led to Hollie improving a grade in her second set of mocks and she tells me she goes into her actual exams feeling 'much better'.

There are many more stories like this, other students have told us that they understand the work better as they can ask questions and get more help in this nurturing environment. One student mentioned his grades specifically, saying mock results wouldn't have been as good without the tutoring. Other students talk about it making them feel good, reminding us that self-esteem and confidence are important effects of tutoring too. At its best then, tutoring has provided a depth of knowledge and nurture that goes some way to remedying gaps in learning and student underachievement.

Miss H. Poole – Assistant Principal



EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME

Whilst exam preparation and attainment are important so much more was lost from periods of lockdown. It is therefore really pleasing that we are at last able to return to a full extra-curricular programme of activities and educational visits too. Below you get a taste of the vibrancy of school life, with much more to come.

Commonwealth Games Good Luck Challenge

Congratulations to all the KS3 students who wrote a letter or designed a poster to send to athletes competing in the Commonwealth Games.

Students have enjoyed being creative but it is also good to see them thinking of others and getting excited by the upcoming Games, which take place in Birmingham this summer. (Miss L. Walton – Art)



Theatre Visits

There are so many benefits of visiting the theatre, from improving communication and social skills to pure enjoyment! With a successful Y11 visit to the Globe Theatre already this year, there is much more to come starting with a literacy project with the Speakers Trust for our students in years 5, 6 and 7. (Mrs J. Dovey)

CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

PRINCIPAL | MEET A HERO

TBlackwell Adventure

We understand the importance of praising students and giving them recognition when they consistently demonstrate Trust values. Our rewards programme is improving with a whole host of initiatives from weekly postcards to the end of term rewards trip. This changes the behaviour culture, giving students an exciting activity to work towards. We have made a good start! This week 100 students with the highest number of positives in years 7 to 10 were taken to Blackwell Adventure. They enjoyed zip wires, laser tag and much more, having tremendous fun and creating experiences with their peers, they will remember for the rest of their lives. Staff and students thoroughly enjoyed themselves and more importantly those that didn't get to go, want to be on the list for next time!

(Ms K. Wheeler)



Drumming Workshops

Following a successful performance at Birmingham Conservatoire for our drumming ensemble, we have provided all KS3 students with a unique opportunity in school. In music lessons they are enjoying drumming workshops delivered by experienced practitioners. A fully immersive experience for students, it leaves them with a lasting impression and promotes cultural diversity. (Mr D. Thomas)



School Sport

As well as a full extra-curricular programme focusing on basketball, tennis and cricket, we are still competing with local schools in netball and football. We are pleased to see participation rates improving, perhaps due to the sunshine. We are also relishing our role as School Games Organiser offering competitive opportunities for a range of schools in the local area. It was excellent to have our local schools visit for a cricket tournament recently. (Mr M. Payton – PE)

CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE PRIMARY

EASTER COMPETITION

In Bournville Primary, pupils were set a competition over the Easter holidays to create an Easter Hat or decorate an egg. We had some fantastic entries and to be quite honest, choosing winners was a tricky job for the judges. In total, 18 certificates and prizes were awarded and parents were sent a TOP SECRET message to attend an assembly on Friday to watch their children receive their prizes.

All eggs were then displayed in Primary and parents and pupils were able to take a look at all the entries. It created such a buzz that pupils who didn't enter were asking when the next competition will be so they can enter next time!

Winners:

Y1: Harvey & Elsie

Y2: Gabriel & Sophie

Y3: Isabel & Opal

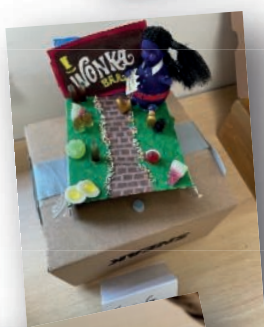
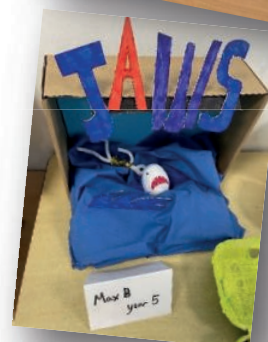
Y4: Alex & Heidi

Y5: Sina & Suniya

Y5/6: Seb & Max

Key Stage Winners:

Grant (Y1) & Anna-Maria (Y6)



CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

PRINCIPAL UPDATE

As we busily support our Year 11 in their final few weeks with us at Erdington, the Leadership Team at Erdington has given thought to how our students have been managing their revision against all the time pressures that come at this point in the year.

We have spent time over the past few months with staff and students discussing metacognition, and strategies we can employ to help us feel more in control of our own learning.

We currently have a focus on metacognition and intend to explore this more deeply next academic year as it helps all students to recognise their own cognitive abilities, direct their own learning, evaluate their performance, understand what caused their successes or failures, and learn new strategies. It can also help them learn how to revise – something that has been at the forefront of everyone's minds this term!

Research from the EEF shows that students are more likely remember information from a challenging task compared to one that is too easy. All teaching staff have been carefully considering how to make tasks in lessons difficult, but within reach, so that students can learn from their mistakes, and reflect deeply on what they have learnt. The training with staff and students has been very positively received and we are keen to share our findings across the Trust, so please do get in touch if you would like to know more.

MR SIMON MALLETT | PRINCIPAL



CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

ENRICHMENT DAY

On Friday 6th May 2022, Year 8 students were invited to attend a drama workshop provided by West End. In preparation for their studies of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, students engaged in a variety of activities to re-introduce them to Shakespearean language and the plot of this play. The workshop was led by The Crown's Jessica Aquilina, who introduced the students to key characters in the play through Drama and storytelling. The workshop began with a Shakespearean version of Splat which was renamed Pray Master; this was a fantastic ice breaker for students who were not familiar with each other. The warmup activity supported the Year 8s in becoming energised for the workshop ahead. To kickstart the excitement and to mark key symbols and moments from the text, students were to walk around the room; Jessica would then shout a number, and then the students would get into a group size of that number. Following this, students recreated images from the text under timed conditions such as a royal wedding, a flower, or an enchanted forest. Lastly, students were given the opportunity to dissect Shakespeare's choice of words by re-enacting several duologues from the play; these key scenes allowed students an understanding of the relationships between key characters. At the end of the session, we chose the top performer, second best performer and the third best performer in the class. The following students came out on top in their sessions: Halima Saeed (8X1), Elisha Salmon (8X2), Jacob N'zougou (8X3), Abdiraheem Mohamed (8Y1) and Jasha Majad (8Y3).

MARIAH HASAN | TEACHER OF ENGLISH AND PARTICIPATION LEAD



CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

ERASMUS+ INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

Last week as part of the Erasmus+ international programme co-funded by the European Union a group of students and staff visited Ceyhan, Turkey. This project links students from schools across Europe through exchange visits to develop their personal, social skills and to promote student's being adaptable to the labour markets, locally, nationally and internationally.

Schools from Italy, Portugal, Romania, Turkey and Erdington Academy represented the United Kingdom. For some of our students this was their first time abroad or on an aeroplane. Students took part in school life at the Turkish school, including lessons in Turkish, cultural activities such as traditional folk dance and songs. They also visited sites of historical interest including ancient homes carved into sandstone cliffs, and the famous 'Varda Bridge' which you may have seen on the James Bond movie Skyfall.

Our students engaged fully with students from all partner schools, meeting the families and parents of the Turkish students, whose welcome and generosity was overwhelming.

Our students presented information to the other participants about their own backgrounds, our school context, the variety of cultures in Birmingham and careers opportunities in the West Midlands. During the students' evaluation of their week as individuals, as a school and as an international party they produced a video which summarised their experiences with each other.

The visit culminated in a musical performance, exchange of gifts and planting of commemorative trees in the school grounds as a lasting legacy. The next exchange is scheduled for Northern Portugal in October.

Lisa Millward Lead Practitioner | Subject Leader of Girls PE | Careers Lead



CONNECTING WITH FAIRFAX

PRINCIPAL UPDATE

As we move towards the 2022 examination series, students at Fairfax are busy revising and improving their examination technique with the support of their committed teachers.

Thursday, 7 April was trial exam results day at Fairfax. Our students entered the gym with anticipation to collect their mock results envelope in the same way they will in the summer. As per the actual day, some students were content, some elated and others deeply disappointed.

Our students, results in hand, left the gym and headed into the hall for an assembly with Mr Johnson, Vice Principal. During his assembly, Mr Johnson signposted students to the competitive nature of the 2022 examination system and encouraged them to use their last weeks prior to the beginning of the exam series to make a real difference to the rest of their life. Throughout the assembly, Mr Johnson quoted some facts that encouraged our students to reflect:

- Students with 5 good GCSE grades earn on average £100,000 more than those without over their lifetime.

- 75% of adults in Britain are unhappy with their jobs.
- One in 5 employers say they would not recruit someone with less than 5 good GCSEs.

Mr Johnson reminded students of the extra provision available to them in school, but also of the techniques they can employ themselves to review three years of learning. At the end of the assembly, a video clip was shared about the importance of not giving up after set-backs. The message to students was clear, you do not need to be 'the best', 'the smartest' or 'cleverest' to achieve, but you do need to demonstrate perseverance. You need a sense of determination and a commitment to working hard. I hope our students sitting GCSEs and A Levels this summer find both those qualities in abundance!

Thank you to the staff who have worked so hard to support our students and to the students 'I wish you every success'.

MRS DEBORAH BUNN | PRINCIPAL



CONNECTING WITH FAIRFAX

ENRICHMENT DAY

Our latest Enrichment Day had a strong career focus with students taking part in various events. For Year 12, we were delighted to welcome visitors from Birmingham City University and Walsall College to present information regarding UCAS applications and apprenticeship opportunities.

In addition, we held 'Guess My Job' sessions with Year 9 and Year 11 students who were challenged with trying to ascertain what our visitors did. We had visitors from a wide sector of occupations including, Capgemini, Birmingham Children Services, BMet (Sport), Jessups, Solihull Council, Stoke-on-Trent Council, and HS2, with a variety of occupations ranging from mental health practitioner, psychologist, apprentice solicitor, housing and homeless officer, and civil engineer.

Our visitors also gave presentations to Year 11 and 12 about their career paths and the opportunities available to them. It was particularly pleasing to welcome back three former students to meet with our current cohorts and show them the possibilities that await them when they leave us at the end of their studies here. The feedback from our guests was overwhelmingly positive and we look forward to organising our next event.

MRS WENDY GRAY | ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL



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.

BOURNVILLE
SCHOOL

BOURNVILLE
SCHOOL Primary

ERDINGTON
ACADEMY

FAIRFAX
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

FAIRFAX
SINCERITAS LABORIS

SMITH'S WOOD
ACADEMY

www.bournvilleschool.org

www.bournvilleprimaryprovision.org

www.erdingtonacademy.bham.sch.uk

www.fmat.co.uk

www.fairfax.bham.sch.uk

www.smithswood.co.uk

CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

At Smith's Wood Academy we are overjoyed to be have reintroduced trips and extra-curricular opportunities following the Covid pandemic. Our Academy improvement journey has resilience and oracy at its heart and we want our students to recognise the importance of this as part of their education and lives! We have had a number of highly exciting opportunities for our students, too many to write about, but please let me tell you about our 3 biggest!

YEAR 7 VISIT TO ACKERS OUTDOORS ADVENTURE CENTRE!

Aligned with the Academy focus on resilience and communication, we took all of year 7 to the Ackers outside education centre in May. The students took part in a wide range of outdoor activities designed to improve their confidence and self-esteem by showing what they are truly capable of. The students took part in:

- Bushcraft
- Orienteering
- Climbing
- Orienteering
- Team working and a whole lot more!

The students left school with trepidation and came back full of energy and enthusiasm and were a credit to themselves. Huge thanks must go to Louise Ellis and to her team for organising this event for making the day such a success.



CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

Extra-curricular activities



YEAR 8 VISIT OF HIGHLY SPRUNG!

Using drama to help students regulate their own behaviour and to learn how to express themselves has proven to be a highly successful strategy for children who have suffered as a result of the covid pandemic. We want to give our students the opportunity to express themselves verbally and on stage so again Louise Ellis and Ella Poutney have secured the services of Highly Sprung - The UK's leading physical theatre company making work for and with children and young people. They create outdoor and indoor performances that tell stories through movement, gesture and dance. Stories inspired by humanity, science, and the complex world around us. Using their unique approach to theatre making, students work with experienced practitioners to gain new skills in exploring texts and topics in greater depth, as well as learning how to devise and present their own performance.

Year 8 at Smith's Wood have been especially affected by Covid and we are delighted that over 120 students in the year group will take part in the

performance and have the opportunity to watch Highly Sprung's CastAway, a stunning outdoor performance that explores the impact of today's throwaway society on our waterways. Featuring a unique gyroscopic flying machine, it presents a brand-new approach to aerial theatre. The all-female cast immerses audiences in an underwater world where performers dive, twist and float over 26 feet in the air to delight, inspire and captivate audiences of all ages. CastAway responds to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch – a floating island of everlasting plastic that has now grown to 6½ times the size of the UK. It presents an alternative, sustainable and more compassionate way of being and challenges us to consider our own actions in the face of climate change. With the weight of plastic now greater than the weight of humanity, what better time than now to take action?

CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

CLIMATE AWARENESS WEEK AT SMITH'S WOOD ACADEMY



We want to make our students global citizens who understand the importance of sustainable environmental protection. Steph Beaumont (Subject Leader for Geography) put together a week of informative and enlightening activities for all of our students that included a mass tree planting event supported by the Woodland Trust to help Smith's Wood work towards its aim of becoming net carbon zero by 2030. Steph had over 100 mixed trees delivered that were planted by the Academy Eco-club in the Academy grounds!



Steph also invited 'Love Solihull' into the Academy to present to year 8 and to organise a community litter pick around the Academy. The students, Steph and the Principal (!) collected over 20 bags of litter from the local area and all went home dirty but knowing we had made a little difference to our community!

Steph also arranged for Anthesis to present to year 10 as part of their GCSE Geography course about sustainability, particularly in the Solihull Community. The students were fantastic throughout and were completely enthused about how they could make a difference to their local community.



CONNECTING WITH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

WHAT THE EVIDENCE TELLS US:

As Literacy lead for the Trust my 'go to' resource is the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) Teaching and Learning Toolkit, which is an accessible summary of education evidence. When filtering the toolkit for highest impact on learners, reading comprehension strategies is second only to metacognition, with +6 months progress gained when implemented correctly. Through the explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies, learners are then able to apply them independently and develop crucial understanding of the techniques behind comprehending a text.

The EEF go further in offering evidence-based research on the explicit teaching of comprehension strategies in their guidance report *Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2*. Recommendation 3, 'Teach reading comprehension strategies through modelling and supported practice', is applicable at Key 3 and 4, as well as at Key Stage 2. Furthermore, there is evidence that 'disadvantaged students and students with lower prior attainment may particularly benefit from being explicitly taught reading comprehension strategies.'

The guidance report suggests the following strategies should be modelled and practised to ensure they become embedded and fluent:

- Prediction—students predict what might happen as a text is read. This causes them to pay close attention to the text, which means they can closely monitor their own comprehension.

- Questioning—students generate their own questions about a text in order to check their comprehension.
- Clarifying—students identify areas of uncertainty, which may be individual words or phrases, and seek information to clarify meaning.
- Summarising—students describe succinctly the meaning of sections of the text. This causes students to focus on the key content, which in turn supports comprehension monitoring. This can be attempted using graphic organisers that illustrate concepts and the relationships between them using diagrams.
- Activating prior knowledge—students think about what they already know about a topic, from reading or other experiences, and try to make links. This helps students to infer and elaborate, fill in missing or incomplete information, and use existing mental structures to support recall.

The EEF state that: "The potential impact of these approaches is very high but can be hard to achieve, since pupils are required to take greater responsibility for their own learning. This requires them to learn three things:

- what the strategy is;
- how the strategy is used; and
- why and when to use the strategy."



CONNECTING WITH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

PUTTING THE STRATEGIES INTO ACTION:

I trialled the use of explicit reading comprehension strategies with a group of Year 11 students at Smith's Wood Academy. In order to prepare them for their upcoming GCSEs, I implemented this strategy with both fiction and non-fiction texts. I spent some time explaining to the group about what comprehension means, and explicitly teaching each of the strategies above. As the research suggests, activating background knowledge is particularly important in reading comprehension and so I used maps, images and even videos to develop background knowledge before reading a text. Below is an example of close reading of a non-fiction text, whereby I anticipated the potential gaps in background knowledge – here, for example I chose 'Burma' as a place they may not have prior knowledge of and ensured I facilitated the building of that knowledge so that the rest of that sentence, paragraph and whole text made sense.

Using the guidance from the report, I discussed with the students, in detail and at regular intervals, what a 'strategic reader' does. We used this as a checklist to build their self-regulation and metacognitive skills. While the group now understand the strategies, and are mostly confident in how the strategies are used, more time is needed to embed them so they become fluent.

BUILDING BACKGROUND

Wexler points out that all of the comprehension strategies the National Reading Panel endorsed "rely on activating prior knowledge—which means they only work if a reader has enough prior knowledge to understand the text in the first place."

One crucial way to build background knowledge, is through the teacher reading aloud to the class. 'Read alouds' filled with rich language make it possible for students to build knowledge, vocabulary, and other comprehension strategies using text that is more complex and challenging than what they can read themselves. "Because listening comprehension outpaces reading comprehension from early childhood through at least middle school, teachers should use listening-level text (i.e., text that is difficult for many students to read) as part of a comprehensive plan with beginning readers through

Background knowledge

Predict

Clarify

Question

Summarise

Source A

It was in Burma, a sodden morning of the rains. A sickly light, like yellow tinfoil, was slanting over the high walls into the jail yard. We were waiting outside the condemned cells, a row of sheds fronted with double bars, like small animal cages. Each cell measured about ten feet by ten and was quite bare within except for a plank bed and a pot of drinking water. In some of them brown silent men were squatting at the inner bars, with their blankets draped round them. These were the condemned men, due to be hanged within the next week or two.

LO: TBA1 comprehend pre-1914 text for English Language Paper 2

Explicitly teaching children these strategies supports them to become strategic readers. What does a strategic reader do before, during, and after reading?		
Before reading...	During reading...	After reading...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Asks questions about the text.Activates prior knowledge.Makes predictions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Monitors understanding.Makes connections within and beyond the text.Makes mental models of the text.Updates and makes new predictions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clarifies understanding of the text.Revisits and revises predictions.Asks further questions.Reflects on their own reading.Summarises key points from the text.

intermediate and middle school years" (Fisher and Frey, 2014).

You can find out more behind the research into background knowledge and reading comprehension here:

- Yes, There Is Evidence That Building Knowledge Boosts Reading Comprehension (forbes.com)
- How Knowledge Helps | American Federation of Teachers (aft.org)
- BuildingandActivating.pdf (pbworks.com)
- Building Background Knowledge | Reading Rockets

CONNECTING WITH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO EXPERIENCE SUCCESS

All children have their own unique needs. Across FMAT we do everything we can to understand and meet these needs. For most students this is through high-quality learning with dedicated, skilled teachers and by regular contact with their form tutor. For some students, around one in five across FMAT, their needs require some support that is additional to or different from what is provided for everyone. Here we shine a light on the successes and achievements of just a few children who access this support. Read on to join us in celebrating some of the ways in which adults work closely with students so that they can overcome barriers and benefit from the enriching, transformative power of education across FMAT.

Exam season is upon us of course, and so many students are doing everything they can to give them the best chance of success. One example is a student in Year 11 at Smith's Wood Academy who has overcome great difficulty with regulating emotions, communicating clearly, and understanding abstract ideas. Through his own hard work, consistent support from teaching assistants, and clear advice from the school's careers advisor he is now exceeding expected GCSE grades. He is also ready for the next stage of education and has secured a place at college.

Yet the education across FMAT, and the successes of its students reach far beyond classrooms. Last term a group of students attended an outward bounds residential in North Wales. They had to overcome many different barriers including physical disability and learning difficulties. Our staff were brilliant in adapting activities to make them accessible, yet no less challenging. It was wonderful to see our students grow with self-confidence and see the pride in their eyes as they did things they did not believe were possible.

A new award for personal development was given this term to remember the life of a former Fairfax student. His parents wanted an award to go to a young person who always worked hard despite any difficulties that they faced. There were many worthy possible recipients but the hard work and commitment of one Year 10 student with a never give up attitude meant he was chosen to receive the award.

Summer is fast approaching and Fairfax Academy's Table Cricket team recently took part in the regional finals at Edgbaston Cricket Club. They won all three of their group games to secure a place in the final. The final was a very close match which unfortunately they lost by only 15 runs.

Another outstanding achievement this month came from a Year 11 student who gave a 30-minute presentation to a group of 500 consultants on what it is like to live with Crohn's disease. Her excellent communication skills and courage to share her experience of the impacts of this lifelong condition were very impressive. She successfully improved the medics' understanding of the effects of the disease, and was an outstanding advocate for all who suffer with Crohn's.

This term is of course a really important one for all students moving on to the next phase of their education, or a new school. So many young people across FMAT overcome difficulties to make a successful transition, and one student from Erdington Academy demonstrates this brilliantly. He was worried about being somewhere new, anxious about meeting people and the lessons. His family were also really concerned about how he may get on in such a big school. In term 1 his key worker focussed on building a strong relationship, meeting him at the start and end of every day, then talking to parents as well. With resilience coaching from his key worker, he developed strategies to ensure he was organised and did not feel overwhelmed by change. Over the course of the year this young person has genuinely flourished. By January 2022 he had 157 Achievement points, by April this was 246. He is now playing rugby after-school and the most recent feedback from staff in his was that he showed excellent effort in lessons and is always willing to contribute to class discussion. We are really proud of the journey this student has undertaken at Erdington Academy, who was empowered through the support of his key worker and quality experiences provided by his teachers. This is just one example of so many that demonstrate how the Trust's values, its skilled staff, and supportive families combine to meet children's needs.

SIMON LYNCH | TRUST SEN LEAD

CONNECTING WITH BUSINESS SUPPORT

ESTATES

Following a successful round of recruitment, I am delighted to welcome several new members of staff to our Estates Team; a big thank you to our HR team who have supported with recruitment and on-boarding.

Joining us as Premises Leads are Roger Bailey (Fairfax) and Luke Shurvinton (Erdington).

Roger has previous experience of working in a similar role in Leisure industry, whilst Luke previously worked for the Site Team at E-Act Academy.

We would also like to welcome Martin Robinson and Steve Brookes (Bournville), Steve Miller and Billy Dunn (Fairfax) and Patrick Darcy (Erdington) to their respective sites.

In helping our Teams move forward, a core support position has been recruited into at each site.

I am really looking forward to working with all our dedicated teams in delivering some exciting projects this year and also the impending launch of our new Parago software.

OLIVER MARSH | TRUST ESTATES LEAD



ROGER BAILEY
PREMISES LEAD FAIRFAX



BILLY DUNN
SITE TEAM FAIRFAX



LUKE SHURVINTON
PREMISES LEAD ERDINGTON



PATRICK DARCY
SITE TEAM ERDINGTON

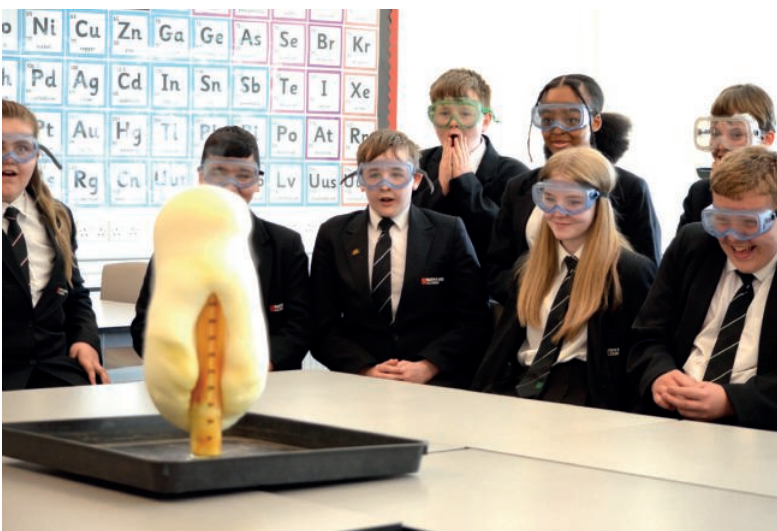
GRAPHIC DESIGN

The final filming has taken place at Erdington, Bournville and Smith's Wood Academies for our website videos.

We've had some superstar students volunteering to help us out, and staff setting up activities and experiments for us to film - I now know what elephants toothpaste looks like!

We're looking forward to receiving the first drafts and having final versions on our website landing pages in the coming few weeks.

KEELEY CLARKE | GRAPHIC DESIGNER



CONNECTING WITH BUSINESS SUPPORT



MUFFIN GETS BETTER THAN THIS!

The Central Office Team organised their now annual (we've had two) Bake Off. With minimal Covid restrictions this year we were expecting more cakes and the team did not let us down. We had cakes from The Exec, HR, School Improvement Team, Finance and Smiths Wood Admin.

Two days prior to the bake off, last year's winner (Tracy Stevens) was sabotaged and tested positive for Covid, all of a sudden there was a heightened enthusiasm that anyone could win!

Gemma invited our CEO Simon Jones to be our judge and he was honoured to be asked. Unknown to us at the time Simon particularly likes chocolate cake and dislikes sponge cakes.

The entrants had improved on their baking over the year and this was evident in the bakes. The team decided to name the bakes to make it easier for the judge to distinguish between them all.

We had Daffodils which everyone thought were real and a decoration for the table, Banana Split, Daisies, Death by Chocolate, Chocolate Concrete, Lemon Slider, Forest Moss (a very interesting spinach cake) Cheese & Chilli Scones, Rocky Road, Easter Feaster Frenzy, how was that chocolate egg balancing? Well done to Simone Gannon for transporting the cake on the day!

Great fun and a sugar rush were had by all!

Simon categorised the cakes by:



CONNECTING WITH BUSINESS SUPPORT

Now then I know you all want to know who won the 'Star Baker' apron for 2022..... well I am delighted to let you know that the overall winner Drum roll please: Lemon slider by Gemma Wyle who still can't believe she has won



So here it is.... whilst enjoying ourselves baking and eating, we were in fact raising money for Cancer Research, unfortunately a charity too close to many of us for our liking.

The Great Stand up to Cancer Bake Off Challenge was a way to bring some fun to our day and raise those much-needed funds to continue to fight against this horrific disease, many of our colleagues supported the bake off and between us we raised a whopping

£428.38

A special thank you to the bakers for baking, Mr Jones for judging, to Debbie Moore for stepping in and organising on the day due to Tracy's unfortunate bout of Covid and to all who donated! We do hope all the staff at Smiths Wood Academy that donated to try the cakes enjoyed them as much as we all enjoyed baking them.

TRACY STEVENS | INCOME & GRANTS GENERATION OFFICER



CONNECTING WITH STAFF REWARDS

PERKBOX - THE STAFF REWARDS PROGRAMME

As an employee of Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust, we offer you a staff rewards system called Perkbox.

Perkbox features discounts on goods and services, monthly free prize draws, wellbeing services, and either a free cup of coffee from Cafe Nero, or a free sausage roll from Greggs each month!

Perkbox is an on line platform, accessible [here](#), but you can download the app if you have a smart phone. If you do not have an account yet, just click the below.

Perkbox offers instant savings, such as 10% off Apple products, 6% off Argos, 8% off ASOS, and that's just the A's.

You can buy digital vouchers to spend in supermarkets, such as Asda, Tesco, Marks & Spencer, and the digital vouchers are great for big ticket purchases, such as 7.5% off PC World.

Finally, you can link your credit/debit card to get instant savings in some restaurants which may be useful.



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