

THE SPIRE NEWSLETTER

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER

Dear Colleagues,

This has been a remarkably busy term, but it seems that this is the sentiment every term!

So, can I begin by thanking you all for your hard work in making each school the success that it is.

There has been tremendous progress made since the last newsletter at the beginning of the Spring Term. I have to highlight the successful Ofsted inspection for St John's Primary judged to be Good in all areas. That is a real milestone and very much deserved. It reflects the hard work and commitment shown by Caroline Lowe, Headteacher, her senior team and all the staff at St John's Primary school. The good news for St John's Primary does not stop there, with us agreeing a deal for the Hub with the Local Authority resulting in them investing 1.8 million that will see a permanent four classroom block being built on site.

As you know we have been working with the Regional Schools Directors Office to progress the application of five schools to join the Trust. This will see, Walkwood Church of England Middle School, Catshill First and Middle School Federation, Aston Fields Middle School and Parkside Middle School joining in the next Academic Year.

WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

- A Message from the Executive Headteacher
- A Word of Introduction
- Headteacher's Message
- The Spire Teacher Training
- Staffing Structure



This will take the Trust to 9 schools in total in this first phase of expansion with over 4,000 children attending a school in a Spire Church of England Trust School.

We are proud of the ethos of the Trust, looking for opportunities to collaborate and share good practice whilst retaining the unique identity of each school. This is an exciting phase and we look forward to welcoming the new schools into the Trust in the Autumn term and indeed we have already started collaborating.

Can I congratulate those colleagues who completed their NPQs this term and we continue to partner the Church of England with this exciting offer of training and development for staff across the Trust. May I end by wishing you all a happy and restful Whitsun Break!

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Geraint Roberts'.

Geraint Roberts
Executive Headteacher (CEO)

A WORD OF INTRODUCTION

I am delighted to be able to make my first contribution to this newsletter as the newly appointed Executive Headteacher responsible for School Improvement and Teaching and Learning for the Spire Trust.

For those of you that don't yet know, I started my new role after the February half term holiday, having previously been Headteacher at Aston Fields Middle School for 14 years.

I think it is fair to say that it has been a hectic but very enjoyable start!

I have been busy visiting all of the schools in the Trust and attempting to get myself up to speed as quickly as possible about the various systems and processes each school has in place from a teaching and learning perspective.

It has been my pleasure to already have made the acquaintance of so many members of staff and I am looking forward to meeting more of you in the near future. If you do see me in your school, probably being shown around by your Headteacher/Head of School, please do feel able to stop and say hello.

Until then, I wish you every success as you move into the final part of this academic year.

Stephen Cox

Executive Headteacher

(School Improvement and Teaching and Learning)





ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

Written by Mrs. Alison Elwell

Since our last Spire newsletter, St John's Middle School has been a busy and vibrant place to be. Our pupils have had the opportunity to take part in World Book Day celebrations, with a menu of activities to choose ranging from dressing as favourite book characters, decorating pebbles with illustrations from favourite books to making wooden spoons into favourite characters. had a visit from Peter Bunzi, (auth

With prizes on offer for all categories. As part of the World Book Enrichment Day, each class chose a novel and author and decorated their form room door with images to represent the book to compete for the crown of winning door. The day was a great success with lots of book talk and a healthy amount of friendly rivalry to win the best door category. To further enhance the pupil's love of reading, later in March, we had a visit from Peter Bunzi, (author of Cogheart) the pupils enjoyed finding out about how his books develop from an idea to a bestselling novel.

Last term Year 7 were invited to partake in the poetry slam event and despite some pupil's reluctance to write and perform their own poetry, by the end of the day all the pupils were enthusiastically competing in a poetry off competition. The winning group went on to perform at the Swan theatre in Redditch to compete against other Worcestershire Middle Schools and they came home victorious, clinching first place. We were extremely proud of our pupils as we had highlighted on our School Development Plan that pupil's confidence in performance was a priority after it was affected by the extensive lockdowns. This achievement shows that our pupils are benefiting from the extensive opportunities they have been given and are regaining these important skills.



ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

Bikeability training is back up and running for our Year 5 pupils, this is an opportunity that we encourage to help keep our pupils safe especially given our local context and the number of Pupils who cycle or ride a scooter to school. This scheme will continue throughout the Summer term.

In addition to the activities above, our residential trips have started, with a Year 7 trip to Oakerwood. The Year 5, Year 6 and Year 8 trips are set to follow later this term. Additionally, a full program of extracurricular activities continues to be on offer to our pupils, with something for everyone.

News hot of the press, Will Warwick (Head of Geography) completed a 24 hour walking challenge to raise money for Primrose Hospice. Will walked around the school grounds for a continuous 24 hours aided by teams of pupils and staff, some who volunteered to keep him company throughout the night. A huge congratulations to Will for raising over £3000.

Looking forward we have lots of exciting activities planned for the summer term including a whole school production of Alice in Wonderland. The end of term will be here before we know it!

WILL'S 24 HOUR WALK FOR PRIMROSE HOSPICE

Written by Mr. Will Warkwick

I decided I wanted to raise money for the Primrose hospice after hearing of the extremely tough times that a number of our pupils and their families had been through as a result of bereavement and loss of family members and people close to them. I felt that I didn't want anyone to ever be in a position where they couldn't find support somewhere. Primrose hospice can provide this and help to guide people through dealing with heartbreaking loss.



The idea of a 24-hour walk was something inspired by Kevin Sinfield who has done some much to raise money for and awareness of MND and in support of his good friend Rob Burrows.

The walk itself was an amazing experience and I was blown away by the support that all of the staff, pupils, parents and local community gave. It was a tough challenge and one that really tested me all the way to the finish. When I was feeling low or needing some motivation, I tried to think of the difference that the money raised would make to people who need the critical care of the Primrose hospice. I am so pleased that we reached and breached the target - now at £3001, twice what I originally set.

I thank all of the people who gave their time, money and enthusiasm to making this possible



ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Written by Mrs. Caroline Lowe

The Spring term was a very busy term and filled with some great achievements. We reflect upon all the fantastic achievements of the pupils of St John's C.E Primary School. In January, an Ofsted Inspection of the school took place and we were delighted to announce that we had been graded 'Good'

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good

Here are some of things that Ofsted highlighted as a strength of the school:

- 'Leaders have set high expectations for what pupils should learn and how they behave.'
- 'The school's Christian Ethos plays a central role in school life.'
- 'Leaders have significantly strengthened the school curriculum.'
- 'Leaders are highly knowledgeable about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).....Pupils with SEND are well integrated into school like and have full access to the curriculum.'
- 'The local governing body provide effective support and challenge for leaders.'
- 'The arrangement for safeguarding are effective.'



ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

In February, a SIAMs (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) Inspection also took place. Again, we are delighted to announce that we achieved a Good rating from this inspection as well!

Here are some of the highlights:

- The curriculum, shaped by the Christian vision, provides rich learning experiences.
- The school is committed to the wellbeing of everyone in the school community and
- there is a strong focus on promoting mental health. The school is addressing the
- needs of all, including the most vulnerable, well.
- The four school values of love, truthfulness, forgiveness and friendship encourage pupils to practice reconciliation and enable all to live well together. This has created a culture of respect and dignity demonstrated through positive relationships and behaviour of pupils.
- Parents talk passionately of the school and how leaders and staff enable children to flourish academically, morally and spiritually.

The children continue to work extremely hard and show great enthusiasm and engagement in their learning. They take pride in their work and as a result have achieved some super success across the curriculum!

Over the Spring term, it has been lovely to welcome our parents and families into school for Book and Breakfast and also for our Easter Fayre. Both events were well attended and much fun was had by all.

In May we celebrated the King's Coronation with our own royal tea party. The children sang the National Anthem and the choir performed brilliantly with their coronation song. Although, a sudden downpour of rain got us all very wet at the end, a great time was had by all and it was lovely to see the support of so many parents, carers, family and friends.

Well done to all of our children and thank you to the hard work of our staff and the continued support of our parents and families!

TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Written by Mr. Daniel McEvilly

It was an honour and a pleasure to have been nominated by an anonymous member of our wonderful school community for the Special Educational Needs (SENCO) award and be a finalist of the Worcestershire Educational Awards. The awards evening took place on the 20th April at the Abby Hotel in Malvern and it was a wonderful experience celebrating the successes of the wonderful education that Worcestershire has to offer. I would like to thank whoever it was that nominated myself and Rachel Hickman and congratulate all the winners.





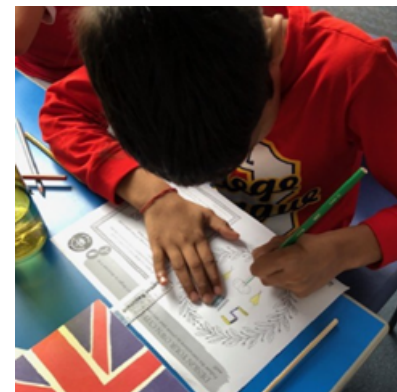
ST MATTHIAS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Written by Mrs. Virginia Beale

King's Coronation Celebrations

On Friday 5th May we celebrated King Charles III Coronation with a special afternoon tea style lunch; we wore red, white and blue and teachers designed a curriculum learning about the Coronation and King Charles III. We had a lovely day and at the end of the day we gave all the children and staff a special keepsake teddy to mark the momentous occasion.

Each year St Matthias CE Primary School decorate Lord Sandy's Spout Well as part of the May Bank Holiday, Water Festival celebrations. The weather was very kind on Saturday 29th April 2023 while the judges made their way around all 56 Wells across Malvern. On Sunday morning, we were told that our Well was awarded a 'GOLD' certificate! We were absolutely delighted with this achievement especially as we know that the standard across all the Wells is very high! Last year, we were also awarded the 'Lord Shorestone' trophy for the best Children's Well so we knew that another children's Well would deserve that this year. During the presentation on Bank Holiday Monday, our Well was called out and it was wonderful to see so many St Matthias children there to help receive our certificate. Then we were asked to wait for a moment, then they announced that we had also been awarded the 'Chairman's Cup.' We have not received this award before and while they were announcing this, they explained that our Well had so many different ideas linked to the theme 'Kings and Queens' that they were really impressed and we stood out to receive this extra award! You can imagine how shocked, surprised and elated we were! So a massive well done to all the children and staff again for creating such an amazingly dressed Well, which was enjoyed by so many people during May Bank holiday weekend! Our Well incorporated Kings and Queens of pop, a chess board with Kings and Queens, a Queen of Hearts chair and writing, Humpty Dumpty's wall with all the King's horses and all the King's men and an interactive world map where people could link the King's commonwealth countries and also Kings and Queens around the world!



ST MATTHIAS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Barney- Our School Dog

This term we have introduced Barney, our new school dog to the St Matthias family! He spent a half day a few weeks ago getting used to the noises, smells and business of the school and visited all the classrooms.

The children were very excited as Barney visited us for his first full day at St Matthias on Wednesday 3rd May. Not only did he visit Whizz Kids, our wraparound care, take part in our Worship, visit classes and meet some children on a 1:1 basis, but he also took part in a very special assessment. We invited a qualified Dog Trainer into school to assess Barney in our school surroundings which included, classrooms, walking around school, the playground and when he was in close contact with children. I am very pleased and proud to say that he passed his assessment with flying colours! I think the biggest test was when he was outside during a PE lesson, which had rather a lot of balls being thrown around and Barney behaved very well by sitting and watching and NOT even wanting to run after the ball! I think he knew it wasn't his ball! The assessor Lisa Jackson commented on not only how calm and well behaved Barney was at all times and in all surroundings, but also how well the children were informed on how to behave around Barney. She was very impressed and made the assessment that Barney is going to be great asset to our school! As we are a Trauma Informed School, Barney is going to be part of this intervention as a Therapy dog to help the children feel calm and able to talk.



WITTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Written by Mrs. Suzie Bourne

The start of the Summer Term has once again been full of life, energy and positive forward motion in school improvement. There have been significant impacts seen through the intervention programmes that we have run successfully with selected year 7, 6 and 5 pupils. Coupled with our internal assessment schedule, we have noted excellent progress in reading, writing, maths and spelling, punctuation and grammar throughout the school.



Particularly impressive gains have been made by the year 6 children, whose approach to preparing for and taking the SATs has been magnificent. It has been an absolute pleasure to see them increasing in confidence and applying their broadening knowledge skilfully. Irrespective of the final results, every child has given their absolute best and should be congratulated.

Beyond the classroom, Witton has shown the breadth and quality of enrichment activity on offer. Year 5 enjoyed a spell of dry and sunny weather with blue skies for their trip to Witley Court. These were perfect conditions for the art tasks they were focusing upon. Year 6 are completing a geography field trip to the River Salwarpe soon, and budding scientists will be enjoying the 'Big Bang' experience later this term. There is a day at the cricket planned for later this term, along with end of year celebrations for all and a trip to Drayton Manor for our year 7 leavers.

We are delighted to be hosting our first Careers Fair since the covid pandemic. We are very pleased that over 12 local employers will be represented and hosting sessions for year 5 and 7 pupils. We hope this will broaden their horizons and provide insight into the range of jobs and careers that are open to them.



WITTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Recent sporting successes include coming a very close 2nd in the U11 Girls Football County Cup final; bringing back many medals from the Droitwich Swimming regatta; representation at both District and County Athletics and cross country meets; and an impressive 12-1 victory in the local football derby amongst Droitwich Middle Schools!

One of our most phenomenal events this term was the school production of "Pantastic". The musical saw over 100 pupils both taking to the stage to sing, dance and act their socks off, or to support backstage and with technical roles, delighting full audiences for a 3 day run. Local first school children also came for a special 'matinee' show. The calibre of performances was remarkable - we are a talented bunch! A huge thank you to all the staff and parents who supported the show and helped it to happen.

Lastly, an update about Winnie, our school dog. In between chasing the squirrels on the school field during her walks, she has been busy as a 'reading dog' visiting lessons and listening to lots of children read. She enjoys a good mystery story to keep her attention, but has been known to nod off occasionally when she feels particularly relaxed! She even took a cameo role in Pantastic alongside our wonderful children.

Everything at Witton continues to go from strength to strength. We are justifiably proud of all of our children and have a well motivated, passionate and skilled staff team.



Initial Teacher Training

Written by Mrs Sarah Marsh

As a Trust we are committed to providing excellent teacher training. Across our schools we have a wealth of skills and dynamic staff, who we draw upon to provide mentoring and training.

With only a few weeks left in school, our trainees are busy applying for jobs. We would like to wish them every success and to thank those who have contributed towards their journey.

Many of our current staff completed their School Direct training with us and that is a real strength of the programme. The ability to 'grow our own' talent is incredibly important across our schools.

If you would like to know more, or get involved with mentoring, please talk to your Headteacher. If you know anybody who might be interested in a career in teaching please contact
SMarsh@spirelearningtrust.co.uk.



PGCE SCHOOL DIRECT PRIMARY + EARLY YEARS INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING

The Spire is now a lead provider for teacher training and in September we welcomed a new cohort of trainees. They are all doing extremely well. We work very closely with partner schools and this means we are able to train and effectively "grow our own" teachers. Our programme is very successful and last year 100% of our trainees gained employment. We are now recruiting for September 2023 and January 2024. If you are interested in a career in teaching please have a look at our website or contact Sarah Marsh.

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tel: 01527 832376

STAFFING STRUCTURE

2022/2023

Geraint Roberts
Stephen Cox

Jan Perrey
Paula Adams
Sarah Spence
Virginia Beale
Sean Chadwick
Lizzie Perrey
Phil Berry
Dan McEvilly
Katie Oakes
Sarah Pemberton
Derval Carey Jenkins
Sarah Marsh

Executive Headteacher/CEO
Executive Headteacher (School
Improvement and Teaching and Learning)
Chief Operations Officer
Governance and Compliance/Payroll Officer
Chief Finance Officer
Trust Safeguarding Lead
Trust IT Manager
Trust Digital Media and Marketing Officer
Trust Health and Safety Officer
SLE SEND
SLE Maths
SLE English
Trust CPD/NPQ Lead
ITT

TRUST CONSULTANTS

Mr. Barry Newton SLA

Mr. Neil Mills SLA

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YoungMinds @YoungMindsUK · May 30



Supporting someone who is struggling with their mental health can feel daunting. But it's really important to know that you don't need to be an expert to make a difference. And you don't need to have all the answers. Simply being there can be enough.

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↻ The Spire Church of England Learning Trust Retweeted



BeyondOfsted @BeyondOfsted · May 31



"...how we can make it [inspection framework] even better as a force for improvement, and supporting schools to continually improve and develop." - Dr Kulvarn Atwal
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Find out more about the enquiry here: beyondofsted.org.uk

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