



CEO welcome

As we approach the end of an incredible academic year, I have been reflecting on all that we have achieved together as a Trust family.

It has been a year where we have lived out our vision of 'do all you can' in every part of our school communities. Whether it is sharing in our values through worship and reflection, caring for the environment, supporting young people in Africa or helping other charitable causes, our pupils and staff exemplify and emulate this ethos every single day.

I take great pride in seeing our pupils flourishing in their classes and through inspiring co-curricular opportunities, showing kindness and consideration for others and becoming fantastic role models for our communities. As always, I am also amazed by the incredible people that give so much to our schools – our

staff and members of our wider community who always go above and beyond for our children. My thanks go to every one of you for all that you do.

Looking towards the summer break, I wish you all a happy and restful summer holidays. In particular, I'd like to give our wonderful Year 6 pupils a special mention, as they leave us for pastures new – I know they will shine brightly at their new secondary schools.

Warmest wishes,

Julie-Ann Hewitt
CEO



Uganda calling: Intrepid Deputy Headteacher heads off to Africa

An intrepid Deputy Headteacher has travelled to Africa to see first-hand how pupils from the Epworth Education Trust's schools are supporting children in Uganda.

Sarah Taylor, Deputy Headteacher at Westleigh Methodist Primary School, has embarked on a 10-day visit with Edukid - a charity that helps children living in poverty or conflict to access education.

Mrs Taylor said: "This really is a once in a lifetime experience and is the next step of our work that has been developing over the last two years."

As part of the trip, which is funded by the charity, Sarah will be visiting Kirombe Primary School and Kich Goma School, both in the northern region of Gulu. During the visits she will be meeting the children and their families, teaching some lessons, and discussing with them how children in the UK can support their aims and aspirations.

Sarah added: "I am heading over as part of a team of about 40 teachers, secondary students and Edukid staff from across the country to learn about how the education system works in Uganda. "Most excitingly though, I will get to meet and listen to the children we are working in partnership with. It is unreal. We are also taking lots of letters from our children, and hopefully

we will be bringing messages back. I really hope that this is the start of something special, that we can continue to support these children in Uganda throughout their education."

The partnership through Edukid is part of the ethos of the Epworth Education Trust.

Julie-Ann Hewitt, CEO, said: "Our aim is simple, and that is as a Trust we want to "do all we can". That is not just in terms of us helping others, but also in finding innovative ways to make learning across our schools as exciting and engaging as possible.

"Our pupils get as much from this partnership as I hope the 12 children from Uganda receive. It is fantastic for our children to learn about another continent and see how interconnected the world is. Small actions can make a big difference both here and somewhere else thousands of miles away."

When Mrs Taylor returns, she will be sharing her experiences with the 2,000 children across the Epworth Education Trust family.



Wesley Warriors raise valuable funds for Edukids

The first annual Wesley Warriors event - featuring a tough mudder, colour run and bubbles galore - has raised over £1,500 in aid of Edukids.

In a day full of fun for the whole community, everyone involved played their part in helping to raise funds to support two children who are sponsored by the school, throughout their education in Uganda.

Rhys Jones, Headteacher, said:

“We have had lots of positive feedback from parents who have now requested an annual Wesley Warriors. It was great to come together as a family to ‘do all we can’ for others and to show our courageous advocacy in supporting others less fortunate than ourselves.”

Learning about special places for Christians

Reception class pupils at Nutgrove Methodist Primary School have been learning all about special places of worship for Christians.

During a visit from the School Chaplain, Deacon Helen Coleman, the children found out about places across the world that have become the heart of Christian communities. These included a blow-up church, a café church, a house church, an outdoor church, and a forest church.

Deacon Helen explained that Christians can talk to God wherever they are – whether that is in a traditional church or a different type of place of worship.

One pupil said:

“My favourite church was the one on the grass because you could have a picnic while you worship Jesus.”

Rachel Bottell, Headteacher, said:

“Our sessions with Deacon Helen are such an important part of our collective worship and our Christian Values of ‘Love, Hope and Respect’ underpin everything we do.

“It was wonderful to see our youngest pupils engaging in conversations about their relationship with God and places that they could worship in the future.”



Education Sunday

Pupils from Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School have conducted a very special service for the congregation at Bedford Hall Chapel.

During the service, pupils from pre-school to Year 6 spoke about how their school curriculum has motivated them 'to do all the good they can'. This is based on three curriculum drivers that help to shape the curriculum, promote the school's aims and values, and address community needs - culture, diversity and possibilities.

Early Years and Year 1 pupils were very excited to talk about culture. The youngest pupils showed photos of different festivals they have celebrated, including Chinese New Year, Diwali, Easter and Christmas, while Year 1 children talked about how they had been inspired by work in the Methodist Artwork Collection and how they have recreated artwork on a chosen theme.

Diversity was discussed by pupils in Years 2, 3, and 4. Year 2 discussed what they had learned about Rosa Parks, who fought for inclusion for all. They spoke of their school being inclusive in the same way - a place where everyone is special and unique and equally valued.

Year 3 pupils talked about inspirational black people that they had learned about, including Malal Yousafi (an activist), Grace Nicols (a poet), and Simone Leigh (a sculptor), people who have all shown the importance of resilience and being a courageous advocate for what is important. Year 4 pupils then chose to talk about Pride month and how the LGBT+ community are valued and celebrated and celebrated as individuals - all linked to Bedford Hall's vision to 'love, without limits'.

Children in years 5 and 6 discussed different possibilities. Year 5 presented what they had learned about famous people who had persevered and never given up in order to achieve their dreams. While Year 6 pupils described the chances they have at school to discover and cultivate their talents and interests, as well as how joining clubs has given them the knowledge, abilities, and confidence to join larger groups outside of school and further their capabilities.

Kevin Meredith, Chair of Governors at Bedford Hall, said: "The children, parents and staff at school were all welcomed by our congregation, and always will be. The school ethos of learn, love, live: without limits was demonstrated and the children shined a bright light that morning in our chapel - we hope they come back soon."

Amy Burkes, Headteacher, added: "It is hard to find the words to describe how proud we were of the children for the remarkable Sunday Service that they delivered at Bedford Hall Chapel. Our school values are at the heart of our school, they represent the world around us, our children and our wonderful wider community. It has been fantastic to see the children speaking so confidently about how they live by our values every day."



iSingPOP

Earlier this term, pupils from Wesley Methodist Primary School received a visit from iSingPOP

iSingPOP is a singing, performance and resourcing project that encourages children and families to participate in Collective Worship in school, at church, and at home.

As part of the four-day programme, pupils across the school spent time learning ten catchy pop songs and dances based on important and inclusive Christian values. This culminated in an extra-special performance for parents – which they could get involved in too!

Rhys Jones, Headteacher, said: “What an incredible way to get our whole school community involved in collective worship by singing and dancing together.

“The children thoroughly enjoyed their time learning and performing the songs, it has really brought the importance of singing during worship to the forefront of our thinking and we’ll certainly be developing this further next year.”



The story of John Wesley

Year 5 pupils at Nutgrove Methodist Primary have brought the story of John Wesley to life as part of a presentation for the whole school community.

Featuring exceptional acting, singing and creative costumes, during their performance pupils also portrayed the history of Methodism, which was founded on John Wesley’s beliefs that everyone should have a close relationship with God and care about those who are in need.

Rachel Bottell, Headteacher, said:

“These ideals serve as the foundation of our school’s motto, “My Best, Always, Everywhere,” and we urge all our pupils to uphold them. A

particular highlight of the performance was singing “And Can it be,” a traditional Methodist hymn, which was composed by Charles Wesley, the brother of John.”

“Seeing the children presenting what they have learned about John Wesley and his connection with our school’s values was a privilege and made me incredibly proud. Our thanks go to all of the parents, carers and friends of our schools who joined us for this special occasion.”



Inspiring a love of music

Music plays a huge role in daily life at Westleigh Methodist Primary School, providing a variety of possibilities to assist and enhance the children's musical education.

During a special live performance from a percussion ensemble, pupils across the school were in awe when they heard music from across the world this term. They also had the chance to take part in DRUHM ALOUD during a jam-packed day of entertainment. This included taking part in 'Find Your Beat' sessions, which use the power of DRUHM to connect, break down boundaries, and give the children the courage to approach life in a positive way.

Year 4 pupils have also benefited from music lessons with Mr Parr from the Wigan Music Service, encouraging them to develop their musical skills by learning to play

a variety of percussion instruments from xylophones and samba drums to African hand drums and studying the genres of African djembe music and Brazilian samba music.

Karen Chadwick, Headteacher, said: "Through a wide range of musical opportunities we have inspired children to form a wonderful connection with music and to want to learn to play musical instruments. One Year 2 pupil described feeling 'totally amazing and ready to learn' after one of her music sessions, which was just the icing on the cake!"



A sense of adventure

An action-packed weekend was in store for Year 5 and 6 pupils from Summerseat Methodist Primary School when they visited the Anderton Centre in Chorley to celebrate the end of SATs week.

Taking on a range of land activities including archery, tree climbing, traversing walls and crate stacking, pupils embraced the opportunity try out lots of new experiences. A particular highlight included spending a day in the glorious sunshine on the water and successfully completed kayaking, paddle boarding, and XL stand up paddle boarding – making memories to last a lifetime with their classmates.

Julie Whittaker, Headteacher, said: "Our visit to the Anderton Centre was a brilliant way for pupils to explore the outdoor adventurous element of our PE curriculum, as well as building upon aspects of the PSHE curriculum that we have been focusing on this year.

"Our pupils worked together very well, encouraging one another to try new activities and supporting each other as a team."

Exploring the great outdoors

Year 6 pupils from Nutgrove Methodist Primary School have been exploring the great outdoors during a residential trip to Colomendy in North Wales.

Based in an area of outstanding natural beauty, the pupils took part in a series of activities to build confidence, resilience and life-skills. With highlights including caving and orienteering, it was also the perfect way for pupils to mark their final weeks in Year 6.

Rachel Bottell, Headteacher, said:

“Throughout their visit, our pupils were a credit to themselves and the entire school community.

“It was such a joy to hear pupils’ tales of their adventures, knowing that they had gained so much from their trip.”



En garde

A brand-new after school fencing club is proving popular with pupils at Wesley Methodist Primary School.

Rhys Jones, Headteacher, said:

“At Wesley, we are focused on our ethos of ensuring every child has every opportunity so that they can all shine like stars as children of God – it is this philosophy that drives us, every day.

“So, it has been amazing to provide the children with a new and thrilling sport to take part in. Throughout school our Key Stage 2 children who are a part of this club have been encouraging others to get involved and it is wonderful to be able to celebrate our children for shining through their talents.”



12 months to remember

Summerseat Methodist Primary School has been reflecting on an incredible 12 months, which has seen the school celebrated and recognised for the progress it is making.

Not only has the school received national and local awards, offered some incredible enrichment opportunities, supported charities and is projecting to secure some fantastic outcomes for children – but it has also been granted the rights to open a new nursery from September.

Julie Whittaker, Headteacher, said:

“It has been a fantastic year of achievement and praise.

“The jewel in the crown is, however, the fact that we are getting to open a fantastic new nursery provision. The reality is that we couldn’t do that if more and more families didn’t want to send their children to us, and the reason that they want to do that is that our school community is working tirelessly to ensure that our children get a fantastic, and fun, education.”

The new nursery will open in September, and will provide a fantastic offer for families that combines some of the school’s strong learning practice with great outdoor space and lots of fun.

Summerseat Methodist Primary School joined the Epworth Education Trust 18 months ago, and since then the school has gone from strength to strength.

Amongst the successes, Zoe Leyland was shortlisted for Outstanding New Teacher of the Year at the Pearson Teaching Awards, described as the “Oscars of the education sector”. In addition, Summerseat has recently been shortlisted for three awards at the Greater Manchester Education Awards. Children are also thriving in the classrooms.

Julie-Ann Hewitt, CEO, said:

“Summerseat Methodist Primary have exceeded all expectations this year, and they have flourished as part of our Trust.

“That is why, while this is a year to celebrate and remember, the future is even more exciting. We are looking forward to Ofsted coming to reinspect the school and I genuinely can’t wait to see what the community is going to do next. The staff and children are so positive and so eager to grasp every opportunity that comes their way.”



Celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Communities up and down the country thoroughly embraced the recent Platinum Jubilee celebrations and our schools were just as enthusiastic. Here are just some of our highlights:



Jubilee celebrations at Bedford Hall Methodist Primary

To mark the Platinum Jubilee, Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School was beautifully dressed with reams of bunting, flags, and balloons ready for a day full of celebrations.

Children in all classes participated in jubilee-themed crafts in the morning before members of the School Council attended a special ceremony when Reverend Wilfred opened the Jubilee Garden, featuring newly planted trees as part of the Queen's Green Canopy – a national initiative to encourage as many people as possible to plant trees that will bloom and grow for many years to come.

After a traditional garden party with afternoon tea and the gifting of commemorative coins for

every child, it was time to dance when the whole school welcomed parents for a party on the field to celebrate songs from 'through the decades.' Featuring significant songs from throughout the Queen's reign, there were special dance performances from Reception, Year 3, and Year 6 classes to cap off the celebrations.

Lisa Whittaker, Head of School, said: "Days like these create memories that the children will carry with them throughout their lives, it really was extra-special."



Party at the Palace

The lucky Mrs Kennedy, who teaches Year 5 at Rosehill Methodist Primary Academy, was joined by her husband to attend the Party at the Palace in honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

At the event, Mrs Kennedy was sporting a brooch that her grandmother received from the Queen as a gift upon her coronation. In Staly Cotton Mill in Stalybridge, where Mr. Kennedy's grandmother worked, the thread that was used to create the blue cloth that draped the chairs in Westminster Abbey on Coronation Day was spun. The same cloth was used to make that very special brooch.

Mrs Kennedy said:

"We're incredibly fortunate to have been part of such an amazing time in history, and it was a day that neither I nor my husband will ever forget."

Westleigh gets green thumbs up

Westleigh Methodist Primary School has been awarded the Eco-Schools Green Flag.

The accreditation acknowledges, rewards, and celebrates ecological achievements in schools – something which has been central to Westleigh Methodist Primary School's thinking since the pandemic.

Sheila Pilkington, Teaching Assistant, and one of the leads on the project, said: "We have always thought about the environment, but we thought it was important to strengthen our approach to give our brilliant children a target to aim for. The Eco-Green Flag was a great way to do this."

The children have become Wigan's versions of the wombles, with big clean ups and lots of work to understand how to reduce, reuse and recycle. They have even been working with the Local Authority to understand how to limit energy use and help the school become carbon neutral.

Mrs Pilkington added: "This is, hopefully, the start. We are already well on the way to securing the Green Flag Merit Award – which shows that the adults are taking this as seriously as the children. This would be a fantastic achievement for our whole community."





Breaking News – Summerseat Headteacher named Primary School Headteacher of the Year

We are delighted to report that Julie Whittaker, Headteacher of Summerseat Methodist Primary School has just been confirmed as the winner of this year's Primary School Headteacher of the Year Award at the Greater Manchester Education Awards, run by the Manchester Evening News.

The awards, which were held at the Macdonald Manchester Hotel, celebrated all of this year's finalists, included three nominations for Summerseat Methodist Primary School – Wellbeing School Award, Primary School Teacher of the Year and Primary School Headteacher of the Year.

Members of the school team that were in attendance, including pupils who are part of Summerseat's School Council, were over

the moon to see the school's achievements recognised at the prestigious awards.

Cllr Liam James Dean, Chair of Governors at Summerseat Methodist Primary School, said:

“It was an absolute privilege to see Summerseat nominated for three of this year's awards. We have such a phenomenal team and amazing pupils. Huge congratulations to Mrs Whittaker, we are so lucky to have you!”



Clean Air Day

Children at Rosehill Methodist Primary Academy certainly went above and above to spread the word in support of this year's 'Clean Air Day'.

As well as designing their own clean air hero costumes, pupils across each year group took part in a host of activities to mark their commitment to the initiative.

Reception and nursery children participated in several games and activities that were all focused on clean air. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils created comic strips featuring their very own clean air heroes and planted seedlings as part of their learning about the value of trees and clean air.

Children from Year 3 requested change in a letter to the council, which included their ideas for ways to make the air quality on the way to school better.

With the help of posters that had been prepared by Year 4 pupils, the school community joined together for a clean air demonstration, which was attended by Cllr Dan Costello, who took the time to listen to pupils' recommendations for improving the air quality in the local area. The

Year 5 children also had their own 'design a poster competition', with the winning entry set to go on display around the school to create year-round awareness of the clean air initiative.

While, Year 6 children participated in a pre-and post-event traffic data gathering exercise. On Clean Air Day, traffic was drastically reduced by 50%, which was an excellent outcome!

Topping off a busy day, Rosehill's Debate Club recorded a superb debate on the subject, which is set to air on Tameside's community radio very soon.

Rachel Bottell, Headteacher, said:

"We believe that it is incredibly important to empower our pupils to have their say about causes that matter to them. They delivered a very important message on Clean Air Day and they undoubtedly contributed to spreading awareness and enacting change for the better."