

BLUE KITE BULLETIN

Key Events:

TUES 1ST MARCH

GREENMEADOW
JOINS THE TRUST

WEDS 2ND MARCH

SBO NETWORK
MEETING

KS1 MODERATION
EVENT

THURS 3RD MARCH

KS2 WRITING
EVENT

TUES 8TH MARCH

CURRICULUM
BRICK

WEDS 9TH MARCH

SBC HEADS CONF

TUES 15TH MARCH

HEADS MEETING



George, aged six, from
William Morris Primary School

Go George!



We are incredibly proud of George (pictured above), who attends William Morris Primary School, for wanting to help people escaping the conflict in Ukraine. After watching the news and seeing people fleeing their homes, George wanted to make a difference. He set himself the challenge of running one mile every day in March, to raise money. George has already raised over £16,000 for the British Red Cross. Well done George, you are an inspiration. To read the full news article, please click [here](#). To support the fundraiser, you can donate via George's 'Just Giving' page – please [click here](#).

OUT OF THIS WORLD!!

As part of their science topic on light, Year 6 at Ferndale have been making holograms! Using their class iPads, plastic sheets and a heavy dose of ingenuity they have managed to bring their pictures to life and have been watching them dance in the air in front of them.



Marissa: "It was cool to see how four pictures can join together to make one 3D image."

Harley: "A challenging but fun experience - it took multiple attempts but in the end it looked amazing!"

James: "To see how some plastic can change the perspective of pictures is incredible! We learnt origami in metacognition in year 4 which helped with this lesson."

Mrs Hulin, Mrs Mann and Mrs Billingham have all been approached by film director, James Cameron, to start work on the Avatar films.



An Update from the Chief Executive Officer

As I write this newsletter, just for five minutes, the sun is shining outside. The storms of the week before last seem a dim memory, although I can see some black clouds moving in. Before the storms, we have been working through what has been the most challenging time of the whole pandemic for us in schools, with huge numbers of children and staff off school with little or no warning and everyone scrabbling for cover. It has been nothing short of heroic what you have managed to achieve and the way in which everyone stepped up: covering classes, taking on other duties, manning the office and playgrounds. It is times like these

that show exactly what it means to work in a school family, and indeed within a family of schools as we have all supported each other through these difficult times.

Thank you.

Our Central Team have worked over and above to make sure that all schools have the right information and make sense of the ever-changing guidance coming from the government. Our Headteachers – don't tell them this – but they are a fantastic group of dedicated and experienced school leaders who not only support their schools but provide steadfast support to

myself and each other on a daily basis. When we meet, there is a genuine sense of shared purpose and commitment to each other. Although today, they have been sending each other messages about Curly Wurlys!

Gary Evans, Chief Executive Officer

The Blue Kite Academy Trust



Growth and Development

It's always an exciting (and busy!) time when a new school joins our Trust, and I am very pleased to officially announce that Greenmeadow Primary School became part of the Blue Kite on March 1st. Although they have been working with us for some time, we look forward to them becoming more integrated into our work and joining in with our events.

The last few months has been an extremely busy time for us as there has been a sharp increase in the number of schools wanting to join us. We have adjusted our growth and development plan accordingly and are looking at how we strengthen our central capacity and team to ensure that we can deliver a quality service to our existing schools as well as cope with an increased number of schools which are coming our way. I can also confirm that both Lethbridge Primary and Robert Le Kyng Primary have been agreed by the RSC Advisory Board to join the Blue Kite Academy Trust. Watch this space for news on those...

As our team increases, I would like to keep everyone apprised of any new appointments we have. The latest person to join us is, Gemma Such, who previously worked at the Wroughton Federation. She is a very experienced School Business Manager and has joined our Operations Team working with schools on budget setting, due diligence and conversion. Welcome aboard Gemma.



Hello from Gemma

I am delighted to have joined the Central Trust team. Over the last 13 years, I have worked in Swindon Schools both maintained and academies in various roles but my most recent employment was in Wroughton, as the Federation School Business Manager. I have gained so much knowledge from working in various school settings and I am looking forward to sharing that with you. When I am not at work, you will most likely find me at a theatre; I love watching shows! I look forward to working with you all.

Behaviour and Safeguarding

You may not be aware that the Trust collects in safeguarding and behaviour information from all schools 4 times a year, which is then looked at by our Behaviour and Safety Board. On this board is a mixture of Trust staff, DSLs, Headteachers, Lighthouse staff and Sarah Turner, Safeguarding Advisor. At these meetings, we are able to pick up on trends affecting all of our schools and identify key areas for support or training. To this end, we have identified some key areas of training around escalation of vulnerable children with social services so that we can ensure that our families are getting the help they need, when they need it.

We are also creating a working party to examine peer-on-peer abuse in schools and how we can ensure we have a culture that works to address some of the issues raised in the latest Ofsted research.

Lighthouse

I am hoping that by now, everyone in our schools is aware of our Lighthouse team and sees them on a regular basis. They work across the Trust as an early intervention service: one team supports children with SEMH and inclusion issues and the other works as parent support. They are an invaluable resource to have as part of our toolkit to ensure that all children are in a place to access the best education they can get. They are a group of very experienced individuals who have a drive and passion for helping children needing support at home or in school.



COVID Update

Unfortunately, it seems that I mainly write to you all about COVID matters and so this will be the last word I say here on the matter. I wanted to reassure everyone that our team is working closely with solicitors and other professionals at a national level to ensure that we have appropriate and reasonable safety measures in places as we go forward to live with COVID, whilst at the same time still protecting our vulnerable children and staff.



Collaboration and Networking

LA Moderation

As many of you are aware, we have stepped in to support the Local Authority to fulfil their duties with regards to the statutory moderation process of Teacher Assessments in Key Stage One and Two. Our staff have been working hard to put together workshops, pass moderation tests and deliver training on top of their everyday commitments. A big thank you to all who have stepped up, especially Dan Clarke, who has been instrumental in pulling this together, to ensure that all Swindon schools have the ability to moderate properly and professionally.



BRICKS

As you will have seen at our January 4th meeting, many of our Bricks have been working hard despite the challenges faced with the pandemic. There is truly fantastic work coming out from these groups, which is only expected when you bring dedicated and talented people together. The next Brick is for all school and is a continuation of our work on sharing good curriculum practice and will take place on March 8th.

Inspire

Initial Teacher Training



Inspire Professional Development is now in its third year of delivering Initial Teacher Training (ITT) across Swindon and its surrounding areas. We offer a tailored and 'on the job' route into teaching, where trainees receive ongoing training and support from outstanding, experienced professionals. We have devised our own ITT curriculum which provides our trainees with theory, subject knowledge and invaluable classroom practice, to support them in becoming competent and confident teachers. We are exceptionally proud to report that we have resulted in 100% of our trainees achieving Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), with all securing employment. Our ITT programme has gone from strength to strength and in September 2021, the number of trainees we enrolled, more than doubled.

Presently, we have 16 dedicated and passionate trainee teachers who are now in their fourth term of training. They have just embarked on their complementary placement swaps, where they are gaining experience in another school setting and key stage. We have many of our trainee teachers working in our Trust schools, so do look out for them and say hello!

We are now in the process of recruiting our next cohort of trainee teachers ready for them to begin their teaching careers, in September 2022. We are delighted to share that we have already allocated 12 places on our programme, with further applications being received. If you are interested or know of anyone interested in becoming a teacher, do point them in our direction.

Further information can be found on our website, <https://thebluekitetrust.wixsite.com/inspire> or enquiries can be emailed to inspire@bluekitetrust.org.uk.

Early Career Teachers

Inspire Professional Development has partnered with Best Practice Network (an accredited lead provider) to deliver The Early Career Framework to both Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and Early Career Mentors (ECMs), across Swindon. We are currently working with 12 local primary schools where we are supporting 21 ECTs on their two year induction period. We have delivered many training events since September 2021, using a blended delivery model that takes advantage of a range of channels to provide learning. These include:

- Online conferences
- Face-to-face training
- Online facilitated workshops
- Self-study tasks

We are using materials and training resources provided by Best Practice Network, and the ECTs and ECMs both have access to a wide range of documents via their online platform. We have now completed the first three terms of a ECTs two year induction, covering Modules 1-3 of the ECF.



Promoting Wellbeing at the BKT

As we continue to grow we are committed to developing HR policies and wellbeing tools to support staff and to make Blue Kite a workplace where everyone can excel and be the best they can possibly be. We have recently established a People and Culture Committee of Trustees who will oversee the work of the central team. One of the priorities for this year is to look at implementing a structured approach to wellbeing and mental health support across the Trust.

Mental wellbeing is just as important as physical wellbeing, and maintaining both is an important part of staying fit and healthy. We want to

create the conditions and culture to promote staff wellbeing and provide the relevant tools and support. We are committed to:

- Providing employees with a safe, healthy and supportive environment in which to work
- Recognising that the health and wellbeing of our employees is important
- Providing a supportive workplace culture

Working closely with the schools across the Trust we are looking to develop a wellbeing and mental health policy. Over the next few days we will be sending out our first



staff survey to check in on how people are feeling so that we can start to look at areas that we can start to develop.



Support Your Physical & Mental Wellbeing

Confidential wellbeing support complimentary to your SAS insurance at no additional cost to you or your school.



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Pupil Wellbeing Services are also complimentary to your SAS insurance. Contact your policy administrator to arrange necessary support for your pupils.

Tracy House, 21 Wilton Way, South Norwiche, Dorsetshire, SP10 2DD

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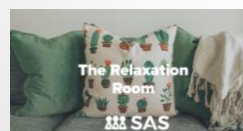
Wellbeing. For more information, please speak to our wellbeing team.



Wellbeing Tools

Schools across the Trust have purchased a wellbeing support package for all members of staff. This gives staff free access to a range of confidential services including face to face and virtual counselling services, physiotherapy, diet, health and fitness advice, menopause support and many other services. The poster sets out how to download the app.

As part of our comprehensive whole school wellbeing services, we offer Counselling and Mindfulness Support to insured staff.



Relaxation Room
Hosted by SAS wellbeing consultant Ask June, the Relaxation Room is a live webinar that covers topics related to mindfulness.

The Relaxation Room is available to all staff at schools insured by SAS.



Be Mindful
The only NHS approved mindfulness programme for schools. Over a four week programme, it will help instill coping strategies for stress and anxiety for the user.
Be Mindful is available to all staff at schools insured by SAS.

Support Staff Pay Award

Agreement has now been reached on the pay award for local government services ('Green Book') employees, covering the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. This means that all staff will receive a 1.75% pay award. The increase will be paid in April 2022 and will include arrears paid from April 2021.

Additionally, as part of the agreement, the NJC employers have agreed to recommence the review of Term-Time only working arrangements, which was paused at the outbreak of the pandemic and enter into discussions on homeworking policies, mental health support and maternity leave.

Pensions Updates

Changes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme from 1 April 2022:

Teachers' Pensions have advised that the final salary (legacy) scheme is closing on 31 March 2022. From 1 April 2022, all active members will build up their pension benefits in the career average (reformed) section of The Scheme. Benefits built up in the final salary scheme up to and including 31 March 2022 are safe and will form part of the member's pension when they retire.

Affected members do not have to do anything, their Teachers' Pension record will change automatically and from 1 April 2022 all pensionable service will be recorded in the career average scheme. Teachers' Pensions will be contacting members directly to advise them of this change.



Focus on your Finances

Do you know how to protect savings from future tax? How to utilise workplace benefits to make your money go further? Or even how small financial changes could potentially reduce your mortgage by years?

This is a 1 hour 30 minute interactive online course around the key aspects of financial planning. This course will give you information about how to maximise the value of both your take home pay and workplace benefits.

During the course you'll learn how to:

- Manage different types of debt
- Save and invest with confidence
- Budget like a pro
- Take steps to financial freedom



Wiltshire Pension Fund

Wiltshire Pension Fund is promoting financial education webinars to members of the LGPS. The following courses may be of interest to staff...



Pre-Retirement

Are your retirement savings on track? Do you know how much income your pension savings may provide? And have you thought about how much income you might need when you retire?

This is an interactive 2-hour 30 minute online course around the key aspects of planning for a financially secure future. This course is perfect for you if you are within 3 years of retirement and require more information about how to maximise retirement savings.

During the course you'll learn how to:

- Help you plan for the lifestyle changes ahead
- Maximise the benefits of your State and workplace pensions
- Make the most of your tax-free cash
- Understand the income options available from your pension
- Achieve your retirement goals

To find out what's included in this course please visit:

<https://www.affinityconnect.org/pre-retirement-online-2-hours-30-minutes-course/>

Click [here](#) to see the dates and book your place now.

To book your place, please click [here](#)

Policy Updates

An ongoing policy review is taking place by the Central Team and the policies below have recently been updated and agreed by the Trust Board. These are overarching BKAT policies that all schools must use. They can be found on the BKAT website: <https://bluekitetrust.org.uk/policies-and-reports/>

Investment Policy

This is a policy for the Trust as individual schools are not able to invest any of their budget, therefore, this policy is not required by a school and does not need to be on the school website.


Travel and Subsistence Policy

This is a policy for staff in order to claim travel expenses, therefore, you may want to include a link from the school website to the BKAT website for this policy.

Premises Management Policy

This should be read by the Headteacher, office staff and the caretaker/site manager to ensure an understanding of responsibilities. The policy does state that it should be read alongside the BKAT Health and Safety Policy and this is undergoing a few minor amendments and will be available soon.

School Business Officers will soon be receiving details of all the policies a school should have, and whether these are written by the Central Team or by the individual school.



"It is the diversity and range of our schools that adds to the overall strength of the trust. We ensure that the best practices from each school are shared and new cutting-edge methods for teaching and learning are developed through research and collaboration".

We are one team within one Trust, with a united purpose. We work as a family of schools and professionals to provide the best outcomes, experiences and care for our staff and pupils.

Our School Achievements

Ruskin Junior School

STFC Community Foundation got in touch with Ruskin to ask if their girls football team would represent Swindon Town FC at the Premier League Primary Stars Tournament in Cardiff. They had a fantastic day over the bridge and performed brilliantly losing out narrowly to Bristol Rovers in the semi-final. Ruskin even beat the team who won the competition outright during the group phase, which is even more of an incredible achievement! One of our girls received an individual award for sporting play and embodying the spirit of the game.



Catherine Wayte Primary School



Catherine Wayte are extremely proud to have successfully achieved the Swindon Schools Mental Health Award as part of their ongoing commitment to health and wellbeing.

World Book Day (celebrated over a week) was much enjoyed by all with children taking part in a range of book themed competitions, events and learning. As part of World Book Day, we enjoyed the relaunch of our 'Book Swap' initiative. In every class, children continue to work hard and try their very best and all at Catherine Wayte could not be prouder of them.

Ferndale Primary School and Nursery



Ferndale Primary and Nursery are very pleased to announce that they have been awarded the Young Carers Award, for the amazing support that is given to the young carers that they have at the school. Ferndale have achieved the award thanks to all the effort that Claire Hobbs (SEND teaching assistant) puts in to looking after our young carers, meeting regularly with the children and planning activities and events where they have opportunities to share their experiences and talk about any worries or concerns. We will be receiving a plaque in due course as recognition of the award.

Here is part of the email Claire received when being told she had been successful in gaining the award: 'I have spent some time today going through the criteria and the examples you showed me when we met, along with charter, policies and have verified these are linked to the school website. It was also great to see the link to Swindon Carers Centre site also. I am delighted to say the young carer award will be winging its way to you in the near future, a massive congratulations to the school, your continued support to young carers.'



Ferndale Primary School and Nursery



The above picture is a Tweet of a classroom door in Year 6, which was put up for World Book Day. All classes had to decorate their door of a book of their choice. The author was to be omitted so that each class, on World Book Day could come and look at the doors and research the authors. There was a prize for the class that got the most authors.

This tweet has been liked by over 50 people across Twitter and this includes people as far afield as Germany and USA. The author and illustrator of the book also commented on it!

Brook Field Primary School



The Brook Field School Football Team were crowned 'Champions of Wiltshire' on Wednesday 19th January, winning the Wiltshire Finals tournament for the first time in their history. Having won through to the finals in November by winning the Swindon Schools tournament, Brook Field attended the Wiltshire F.A. Headquarters in Devizes to compete against the top schools from Wiltshire, who had also won their respective qualifying event. From the very first whistle to the last, our team were sensational, winning all three of their group games to qualify for the semi-final.

A hard fought 2 – 0 win gave Brook Field their deserved place in the final, where they matched up against North Bradley. In what was perhaps their best team performance of the day, Brook Field won the final 3–0 and the children take their place in Brook Field history as their first ever winners. Massive congratulations go to: Louis, Billy, Samson, Ethan, Nathan, Vladimir, Adam, Alfie, Toby, Adam, Joseph and of course Mr Stowe! Well done everyone.

Brook Field Primary School

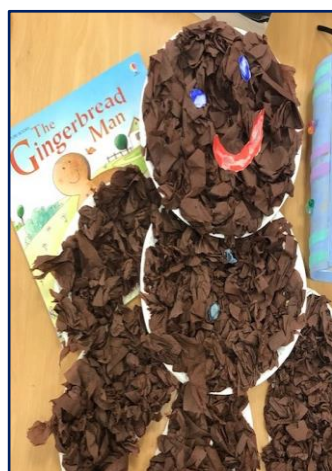


Children from every year group worked on our 'Under the Sea' topic during the first three days of the new term. We investigated different aquatic life and the seas or oceans where they might be commonly found. We explored the evolution of certain sea creatures and how they contribute to food chains in order to maintain sustainability for all kinds of life. We considered the impact we are having on the oceans and seas with our overuse of plastic and how we can make some small changes in the future. This work culminated in a fantastic new display, located in the Bottom Hall, with contributions from every single year group. It is beautiful and a reminder to all of our children just what we can achieve together.

Colebrook Infant Academy



Here are some photos from our World Book Day Competition. The children were invited to make the character from their favourite book. Here we have The Witches, The Gingerbread Man and Stick Man.



William Morris Primary School

The School Council opened our brand-new trim trail this week, which has had us all excited and exercising outdoors. The children have very much enjoyed using it, and we have been grateful for the drier weather.



Badbury Park Primary School



The children at Badbury Park have started the spring term in two of their favourite places.

We have been adventurous, ambitious and curious while enjoying our ever deepening mud hole and our camp fire at our Forest school.

We have been exploring every corner of the world via our new immersive room. This is the only room of its kind in a Wiltshire school. The learning opportunities are endless. We can dive deep under the sea, fly off to Egypt or step into Narnia. A wonderful way to ignite imaginations and carry out experiences that lockdown has put to hold, e.g. going to a beach, travelling on the Tube or laying under the stars.



Abbey Meads Community Primary School

It's been wonderful being able to reintroduce some of our activities that develop our children's cultural capital. We've had three residential trips, Christmas performances and class assemblies for parents, parent workshops on Maths and Phonics, author visits and we are looking forward to our summer Musical Extravaganza and our Year 6 Camp Out.



Greenmeadow Primary School



At Greenmeadow, we love reading and have enjoyed reading a range of books across the school this year. Recently, we took part in World Book Day where we shared The Three Little Pigs - building houses, making up our own version of the story and even watching an exciting version of the tale performed by our staff. As a homework challenge, some of our children took part in a challenge creating a creative piece to reflect a character or book. We were really impressed with the effort and quality of work produced.



Did you know???

Your Blue Kite Trust ID Badge entitles you to a discount in a number of shops at the Swindon Designer Outlet.

If you show your badge at the Guest Services Desk, North Mall, (adjacent to the food hall), you will be issued with a Privilege Card which entitles you to 10% discount in participating stores. A list of participating stores is available from the Guest Services desk

Even better, you can get a discount card every time you visit

Happy shopping!!!



A McArthurGlen Property



A McArthurGlen Property

The Blue Kite
Academy Trust



Greenmeadow

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