

## CONNECTING WITH CENTRAL OFFICE



Dear colleagues,

I hope that you are well and are looking forward to a well-deserved summer break. On behalf of the Trust's Board of Directors, thank you all for your hard work this academic year.

As you are aware, a significant proportion (47%) of our pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds; therefore, it is a reality of our roles that in order for our pupils to achieve their potential, they need the very best provision. I am under no illusion that the 'very best provision' requires a highly dedicated staff body so I would like to pass on my personal thanks for your work this year.

A key feature of our Trust is creating extra-curricular opportunities for our pupils. It is a significant fact that this year the range and number of these opportunities has significantly increased. Thank you to all colleagues who have helped run, facilitate or organise these events. You are helping to create memories for our pupils that, for some, will be life changing.

Earlier in the year I asked you to complete a staff questionnaire. I wanted to share with you some of the changes we are making as a result of your responses:

We are trialing new approaches to marking and feedback in order to improve staff welfare;

A staff well-being group has been established and is chaired by Debbie Bunn Head of Academy Fairfax. The group is looking at a variety of work-based reward schemes to support our employees. I look forward to updating you in the new academic year on these positive changes.

Please be advised that from September 2018, Mr Mark Rhatigan, current Head of Erdington Academy, will be joining the Central Office Team for one year, as Senior School Improvement Advisor. Mark will be supporting at Smith's Wood Academy as well as retaining Executive Headship of Erdington Academy. Consequently, Mr Simon Mallet will become the Head of Academy at Erdington.

I look forward to speaking to you all on Tuesday 4th September at our first FMAT training event. The focus of the conference will be how we can further improve the outcomes for our disadvantaged pupils. This event will be a wonderful opportunity for colleagues across the Trust to meet, collaborate and to reflect on our shared values.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a good summer break.

**CHRIS STEVENS | INTERIM CEO**

### FEATURED INSIDE

› **FAIRFAX** - HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE, INTRODUCING MR LARKIN, PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE SUCCESS

› **ERDINGTON** HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE, DEBATE MATE.

› **BOURNVILLE** - HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE, LEARNING BEHAVIOURS

› **SMITH'S WOOD** - HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE, MFL

› **FMAT GAMES**

# CONNECTING WITH FAIRFAX

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE

At Fairfax we believe in the value of participation. Our school, founded in 1959, was built on the principle that all students, regardless of background, should have the opportunity to thrive in more than their academic studies.

The summer term is always a busy one at Fairfax in terms of participation, with many activities taking place both through our formal curriculum and our extra-curriculum. Over the weekend of 9th June, 88 students completed their Duke of Edinburgh's Award Bronze Expedition. They demonstrated maturity and excellence in both their behaviour and skills, making us very proud. We also enjoyed some sparkling results recently in the Sutton Schools Junior Athletics Championships, with wins in 6 out of the 8 competitions and two 3rd places; a massive well done to those students competing.

During this period, a number of our Year 9 and Year 10 students have also headed off on their Geography field trips, again demonstrating great learning behaviours whilst developing their field skills.

In the coming weeks, our students have a plethora of opportunities in which to participate through Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award Expeditions, House

Athletics Day and SummerFest, plus a variety of year group visits including Iron Bridge, Alton Towers and Paris. We hope our students enjoy these experiences, as we really believe that students should have a broad variety of opportunities to develop and grow as individuals.

Possibly the most exciting adventure this term is for our students heading to Africa for four weeks with Discover Adventure.

Of course, all of this is only possible due to our dedicated staff giving up their time to plan and deliver these experiences. I know the students greatly appreciate it and so do I!

Wherever our youngsters are educated, I would encourage them to take advantage of the wealth of opportunities provided by our schools; learn new things, develop their cultural capital and most importantly make memories to last a lifetime. #wearefairfax #makingfairfaxproud.

**MRS DEBORAH BUNN**  
HEAD OF ACADEMY



# CONNECTING WITH FAIRFAX

## MR RICHARD LARKIN

As the newest member of the Leadership Team at Fairfax Academy, I would like to say how excited I am about joining both the Academy and the Trust. The rigorous two-day interview gave me the opportunity to meet both the pupils and staff at the Academy and confirmed to me that it would be a privilege to work in such a unique and positive environment.



It is going to be an exciting academic year with the 60th Anniversary celebrations and I look forward to working with the excellent pastoral team in my new role as Assistant Headteacher of Behaviour and Standards. One of my interview tasks was to prepare and deliver an assembly, which promoted one of the Multi-Academy Trust core values. It was a difficult task to pick just one value, as I share all of the values and see how they are of paramount importance to all of the learners in the Trust.

I am very fortunate to be experiencing a handover period with Mr Martin who will be retiring after 23 years of dedicated service to Fairfax. In his time at Fairfax, Mr Martin has had a wide range of roles with both a curriculum and pastoral focus. I will be taking on his most recent role overseeing school behaviour and standards. There is no question that Mr Martin's shoes are big ones to fill; but I am certainly looking forward to the challenge!

## MR RICHARD LARKIN

### ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER, FAIRFAX ACADEMY

## PARLIAMENTARY DEBATING SUCCESS!

After an 11 year absence, the trophy for the Sutton Coldfield School Parliamentary Debating Competition returned to Fairfax on Thursday 5th July.

Our debating team of Jamie Babington and Abi Darwin were worthy winners of the competition, held at Bishop Vesey's Grammar School for Boys, who were last year's winners. Hosted by Sutton Coldfield's MP, the Right Hon, Andrew Mitchell, we confidently debated diverse subjects such as proposing that 'Freedom of Speech should be protected at all costs' and opposing the view that 'Mobile phones should be banned in schools for both students and teachers'.

Fairfax will be the hosts for the competition in 2019, which coincides with our 60th anniversary celebrations.

## MS WENDY GRAY

### ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



# 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 new websites.

Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust | [www.fmat.co.uk/](http://www.fmat.co.uk/)

Fairfax | [www.fairfax.bham.sch.uk/](http://www.fairfax.bham.sch.uk/)

Bournville School | [www.bournvilleschool.org/](http://www.bournvilleschool.org/)

Bournville Primary Provision  
[www.bournvilleprimaryprovision.org/](http://www.bournvilleprimaryprovision.org/)

Erdington Academy | [www.erdingtonacademy.bham.sch.uk/](http://www.erdingtonacademy.bham.sch.uk/)

Smith's Wood Academy | [www.smithswood.co.uk/](http://www.smithswood.co.uk/)

# CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE

At Erdington we have been **STARS** over the last few weeks! The acronym STARS stands for

**S – Stand or sit smartly**

**T – Tracking the speaker**

**A – Actively engaged**

**R – Respect**

**S – Speaking clearly and confidently**

As you will see the STARS approach brings together our focus on tradition and high standards with our literacy agenda. We know that disadvantaged students in particular often lack the confidence to speak clearly and

confidently and we want to build that confidence to help them succeed in the future.

As a result, we have been promoting a range of lesson and tutor activities that develop speaking and listening skills and also some staff have volunteered to run after school programmes. Ruby Davies and Tavelah Robinson (English and Drama teachers) have written about the Debate Mate programme in the article below. It is lovely to see that the programme has had such an impact and we look forward to even more students taking part next year.

**MARK RHATIGAN**  
**HEAD OF ACADEMY**

# CONNECTING WITH OUR ERDINGTON

## DEBATE MATE



Erdington Academy is extremely proud to have been a part of the Debate Mate programme for over 7 years now! This programme has helped many of our talented, opinionated and passionate students channel their skills into

high-quality debating and communicating. Dealing with challenging topics such as crime and punishment and the death of the high street – the after-school club has certainly been an interesting hub of activity this year.

Once again, we were fortunate enough to take two squads of students from Years 7-10 to the University of Birmingham to compete against other secondary teams regionally. They tackled tricky topics such as urban planning but performed extremely well, winning 4 out of 6 matches. Individually, our students excelled also with one student in Year 9 overcoming 'stage-fright' to win 'Most Improved Speaker', beating over 500 pupils from across the region. Similarly, one of our Year 9 students - who only joined the school in Year 8 - won an award at the same event. Two out of three regional awards went to pupils of Erdington Academy – an incredible triumph of which we are very proud.

As an English teacher at the school, I am enthused and inspired by the quality and creativity of our students. They have worked so hard to better themselves as

speakers and the communication skills they have learnt will only help them achieve whatever they want to in life – at the moment we have a few budding lawyers and businessmen in the club!

I am delighted that Debate Mate will be continuing next academic year and even more excited about the prospect of a Debate Mate alumni event in the summer term. You never know, some of the students we will be welcoming back may have even finished those law or business degrees by now!

**MISS DAVIES | TEACHER OF ENGLISH**



# CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE

As we enter the final stages of this academic year and begin to reflect on what we have achieved, I am heartened to see the dedicated approach colleagues have taken in adopting the Teaching for Excellence model and the positive impact this is having on teaching and learning at Bournville. Aply led by Charlotte Cross and the Ambassador Team, CPD has been outstanding and colleagues at all career stages along with students across the age range have commented positively on Tfe through stakeholder voice.

Another FMAT value, that of ambition was demonstrated by a group of students from Bournville, Smiths Wood and Erdington who were fortunate enough to attend an Enterprise Day hosted at Bournville by PwC who kindly offered to work with our youngsters during a recent 'One Firm One Day' event. Holly Poole, Acting Assistant Headteacher organised the day which was a resounding success.

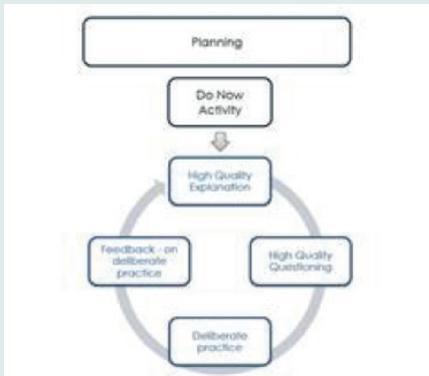
**MRS JOANNE COTTLE**  
Head of Academy

# CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

## LEARNING BEHAVIOURS

I wanted to share with you all the work we have done here at Bournville on our Teaching for Excellence model and our next steps.

### Teaching for Excellence Model



All staff have been trained in teaching in this way and have all had extensive CPD, read the Science behind it and watched an expert teach in this way. To move forward, we are now introducing students to this model and to what we expect from them, their LEARNER BEHAVIOURS, we are explicitly teaching them how to be good learners using the Acronym DARTS, see attached poster. A team of ambassadors started with what behaviours we wanted to see in our learners and from there we developed the skills and attributes we want to teach, promote and reward in all our school community.

### At Bournville we:

- Do what's right, not what's easy (Integrity)
- Actively listen (Dedication)
- Respect everyone (Tradition)
- Think deeply (Ambition)
- Speak confidently and clearly (Excellence)



We will be doing lots of work on this in Summer 2, including delivering assemblies and lessons to children and we will of course be rewarding students who are displaying these behaviours.

We are in the early stages of this, but it is an exciting time for the school in moving forward and we will be sharing this model and the next steps with parents

at our next Parents' Forum and with our new students at Induction in July. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would be interested in seeing our work on this.

**Charlotte Cross**  
Assistant Headteacher Teaching and Learning

# CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE

### "We teachers are rather good at magic, you know"

*Professor McGonagall, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows (J.K Rowling)*

I don't think that a day goes by when I fail to be humbled by the dedication of staff in their support of our students. Every day at Smith's Wood I come across colleagues going that extra mile; going beyond the roles and responsibilities detailed in their job descriptions. They do this with no expectation of thanks; they do it simply because of who they are and what they believe in. I know this is something that leaders in Bournville, Erdington and Fairfax observe daily also; this is one of the reasons that we lead the schools that we do. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff for all they have done over recent days, weeks, months and indeed years to prepare our Year 11 students for their examinations, which thankfully are now behind us! Let's hope we have worked our magic.

When the days are tough let us not forget just how magical this profession is. I know it doesn't often feel magical when you are checking your students to ensure they aren't wearing their trainers (again) or when you are

working late at school and not seeing your own family and friends. What you do is magical though; you transform lives, which is the best kind of magic. You give students a chance that may never have a chance or, according to others, do not deserve a chance. You include those children that have been marginalised by their peers or by society. You are able to make children that often do not feel safe or have a safe place, feel wanted and cared for; you provide a haven and respite that many of our children need.

Take a moment to look around your classroom when you next teach. Look at the lives that you touch and shape; that IS magic. We are good at magic, let us not forget and let the magic continue!

**KATY CRAIG | HEAD OF ACADEMY**



# CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

## DEVELOPING LINGUISTIC SKILLS AND BROADENING HORIZONS

The MFL department recognises the importance of extra-curricular activities to enhance pupils' language skills. With this in mind, since the beginning of this academic year, we have provided pupils with the opportunity to attend the MFL Independent Learning Club every afternoon after school. The club is aimed at those pupils who cannot access the Internet at home to complete their study or those who simply prefer to work at school with the support of a member of the MFL department. As part of the study programme, class teachers require pupils to tackle a range of interactive activities, linked closely to the skills that they will need to develop for the new style GCSE. By attending our Club, pupils are given access to school computers and headphones while also receiving the time and support they need to stay on top of their study.

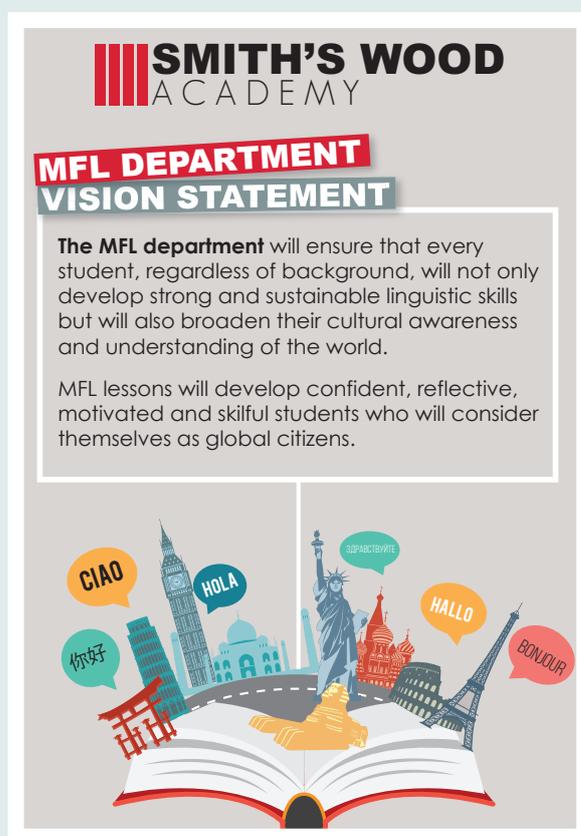
At the beginning of June, thirty-three pupils also had the opportunity to enhance their language skills by visiting La Fosca in Spain for a PGL water-based activities holiday. Pupils from years 8, 9 and 10 travelled by coach through France and into Northern Spain before reaching their destination on the Mediterranean coast, 75 miles north of Barcelona. The five days that followed were packed with activities including snorkelling, kayaking, and sailing. Visits to the nearby town of Palamós and to the wonderful city of Barcelona gave pupils the opportunity to immerse themselves in Spanish culture and to gain confidence in their Spanish language abilities by shopping and visiting museums and cafes. Memorable highlights of Barcelona included the beautiful Sagrada Familia cathedral, the Olympic stadium situated high above the city and the shopping opportunities provided by walking down La Rambla.

The MFL Vision Statement is a pillar of the department and we are confident that our extra-curricular activities reflect

this. By enabling pupils to visit other countries, this will broaden their cultural awareness and understanding of the world. Equally, the aim of the Independent Learning Club is to develop motivated and skilful students whose hard work will produce strong and sustainable linguistic skills.

**SIMON CASANOVA**

**HEAD OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**



# CONNECTING WITH FMAT

## FMAT GAMES



This year has seen the inaugural FMAT Games.

The purpose of the games is to increase the number of opportunities that students have to participate in competitive sports.

The heads of PE all met for a planning meeting in September, and initial dates and events were planned. Each academy organised and hosted at least one event, which was held as a central venue event. Students scored points for their academy based on their performances, and also for participating.

The response from staff and students across the Trust has been fantastic!!

Over 320 students have participated in 7 sports; Football, Basketball, Netball, Trampolining, Table Tennis, Badminton and Athletics. Teams scored 10 points for winning, 8 points for runners-up, 6 for third and 4 points were awarded to the team in fourth place.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved; the students, PE teachers, site and office staff (for organising transport), and of course the Heads of Academies for allowing students to leave some lessons early to travel to and from venues across the Trust.

Next year' events are already being planned, and some new events are included. Watch out for news about Climbing, Swimming, Archery, Rugby 7s and Hockey.

Congratulations to the staff and students from all of the Academies and bring on 2018/19!

