

## CONNECTING WITH CENTRAL OFFICE



I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to the MAT and wider FMAT Community.

Having only been in the post for two weeks, I am already appreciative of the welcome, support and openness I have experienced. During this time, I have listened extensively and have met the central team, several external advisors, the trustees and managed to spend a full day in each academy.

I bring with me a wide range of experience of working in Schools, Academies and MAT's. Also, prior to starting as a Chemistry Teacher in a School in Nottinghamshire in the mid 1990's, I worked as a pharmaceutical chemist and also within the financial sector.

During my career within the education sector, I have held pastoral and subject leadership roles, led on curriculum development, been a Principal twice, worked as an Executive Head over three secondary academies and worked as a Deputy CEO of a large MAT. Fortunately, I have been able to work with primary, special and secondary academies, ranging from special measures to outstanding, within both rural and urban settings. I am very much looking forward to using these experiences to develop FMAT for the benefit of all the students we serve.

Finally, I would like to reinforce the fundamental fact that we are one organisation; the Academies are the MAT and the MAT is all of its Academies. I intend to work tirelessly to ensure that this is fully understood by all stakeholders, so that we maximise the benefits of being part of this precious community.

**MR SIMON JONES | CEO**

## FEATURED INSIDE

- **FAIRFAX** - HEAD OF ACADEMY - CELEBRATION EVENING
- CHARITY WEEK
- **ERDINGTON** HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE - ENGLISH FACULTY
- YOUTH SPORT TRUST
- **BOURNVILLE** - HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE - GOLD REWARDS
- **BOURNVILLE PRIMARY** - YOUNG VOICES
- **SMITH'S WOOD** - HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE - SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS CONFERENCE
- HOUSE SYSTEM



# CONNECTING WITH FAIRFAX

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE

It was a real pleasure earlier this term to attend our annual Celebration Evening and to see so many of our students picking up awards in recognition of their commitment and achievement.

The evening's awards were punctuated with the winning and runner-up performances from our Eisteddfod festival that took place in December. The performers brought a real energy to the evening and I enjoyed the acts tremendously. Our students that took part in the Schools Shakespeare Festival also presented a ten minute excerpt from Romeo and Juliet which showcased the students' talents for responding to challenging text.

I was delighted to welcome our guest speakers, Alf Jenkins and Dave Mitchell, two of the original teachers, when Fairfax originally opened in September 1959. Their address to the students were thought provoking and an enjoyable insight into their time at Fairfax and how the traditions and the soul of the school remains. The traditional values we hold at Fairfax remain at the heart of everything we do. Celebration Evening, originally known as Speech Day, is another example of how we believe in maintaining our ethos and values.

As a school leader, it is important to know when change is necessary, but I believe it is just as important to know when to stay true to traditions. We are proud of our long-established values at Fairfax, and we are very proud of those students that uphold them. #ambition #dedication #integrity #excellence #tradition

**MRS DEBORAH BUNN**  
HEAD OF ACADEMY

## CHARITY WEEK

Also in January was charity week at Fairfax. Each house votes on which charity to support and then compete to see who can secure most charitable funds to award their chosen cause.

This year, many of our students have been particularly moved regarding the fires in Australia and three of our houses chose to support charities fundraising for fire relief. Our fourth house voted to support Macmillan Cancer support.

Charity Week is a really important part of life at Fairfax, where all the students and staff get involved in all kinds of activities for good causes.

During the week the motivation and energy in the air is almost tangible, with the students determined to collect as much money as possible. The staff get involved too, with teachers often willing to do all kinds of funny things to raise a laugh and some money.

At the end of charity week 2020, the winners were Coventry, who raised an amazing £1321 for Macmillan, with Stratford – who raised £578 for the Australian Bush Fire Relief Fund - in second place.

Warwick came third with £443 with Kenilworth fourth with £376.

**MRS RACHEL BOYCE**  
DEPUTY HEAD OF ACADEMY



# CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

## ENGLISH FACULTY

We have recently partnered with the National Literacy Trust and the University of Birmingham as part of 'Birmingham stories'. Birmingham Stories is a campaign to raise literacy levels and change the life stories of young people and adults across the city. We are working with them on a series of engaging activities to spread awareness of the importance of, and exploring the joy of storytelling and literacy at every stage of life.

There are lots of exciting forthcoming opportunities for a variety of our students including: Story Exchange, Story Writing Competition, Student Literacy Champions, Birmingham City Poets and Story Exchange.

Mrs Atherton (KS4 leader in English) recently attended the Birmingham City Poets launch and was excited about what this will entail! The selected class will firstly complete some lessons jointly planned/resourced by the National Literacy trust with Mrs Atherton. Then they will visit Birmingham library to work with some of the team there to develop their ideas further. Finally, staff from 'Memoryhme' will come to Erdington to deliver a 2 hour workshop to edit and practise their poems.

The culmination of this is that some of our students are selected to publicly perform their poetry alongside students from other schools in the project during the summer term. Students will also have a chance of having their poetry published and possibly even recording an audio version for Audible.

As well as the opportunities from our partnership with 'Birmingham Stories' we have been working with the RSC too! As part of 'subject passion day', staff attended CPD session focusing on the teaching of 'Macbeth' which was enjoyed by all. The RSC are coming in to work with a group of 30 Year 11 students developing their knowledge and understanding of 'Macbeth' and finally those 30 Year 11 students will be going to watch a performance of Macbeth at the Globe theatre as part of their Enrichment Day!

**MRS SIMONE MABBETT** | AAHT ENGLISH & DRAMA

## YOUTH SPORT TRUST

A very dedicated team of Young Researchers were selected to attend along with other groups of researchers from Greenwood Academy, St Edmund Campion and Queensbury School. This was to launch the latest project from the Youth Sport Trust to redesign school sporting competition for the future using student voice.

The project is running from now until the Easter holiday. The challenge they have to complete, is to design questions around why students do or do not participate in sports, clubs and competitions across as many schools and as many students as possible.

They were trained up by Dr Niamh Reilly from the Youth Sport Trust and the ex Olympic rower Annie Vernon. They will be attending as many events and clubs as they can between now and the end of next term. Their research will join up with three other HUBS around the country to decide how schools will change their competition framework for the next academic year.

This project is supported by Miss Kavanagh and Miss Johnson. Good Luck to all and I will look forward to meeting you at competitions in the future.

## MS CRUMP

KINGSBURY SCHOOL SPORT PARTNERSHIP



# CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE

It has been a pleasure to see our new Gold Rewards system bring so much pleasure to staff and students over the last fortnight. We ended last week with a fantastic performance from up and coming stars No Native in the PPC. Students who had gained 10 gold lessons and no more than two red behaviour points were invited to this enthralling performance by recently signed artists. The atmosphere was truly brilliant, and both staff and students have commented on how lovely it was to see those students who consistently do the right thing, demonstrating integrity and dedication in their lessons, being celebrated and rewarded for their efforts. We are all looking forward to seeing which up and coming stars the next rewards event will bring to Bournville.

### MISS MOIRA GREEN

HEAD OF BOURNVILLE SCHOOL



# CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE PRIMARY

## BOURNVILLE PRIMARY, YOUNG VOICES

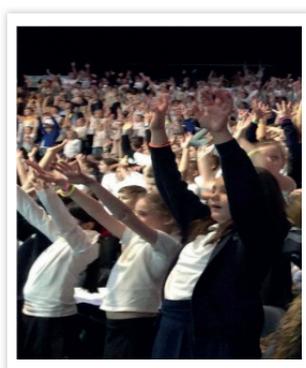
In January, Bournville School Primary Choir proudly attended the Young Voices Concert at the Genting Arena! Young Voices is now in its 24th year of staging full-scale arena concerts nationwide and is the largest children's choir concert in the world. Over two million children have now taken part in it and we are so pleased and excited to begin this yearly tradition. The children had spent time practising the eighteen different songs and dance moves during their lunchtimes and after school. The thirty members of our choir were then able to perform the songs alongside the 6000 other children from schools all over the West Midlands! It was an amazing experience

for the children, and they really enjoyed themselves. Even though it was a long day and the children did not arrive back to school until late, the children have already asked if we are able to go again next year! Due to taking part in this amazing experience, the children have already grown in their self-belief, self-motivation and confidence.

All the staff and parents were incredibly proud of the children and we are looking forward to hosting our own showcase of the songs to parents and peers in March.

### MRS REBEKAH CHAPPELOW

HEAD OF BOURNVILLE PRIMARY



# CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE

At the end of January Deb Slater, Access to Learning Consultant, and I had the opportunity to attend a national government led conference - **School Exclusions: Alternative Provisions and Moving Forward**.

The conference provided attendees with an opportunity to hear the latest initiatives from schools and regulatory bodies alike, as well as gain a greater understanding of the different issues involved in responding to and reducing school exclusions. Delegates were able to listen to case studies demonstrating successful approaches to dealing with factors related to school exclusions, including: support from local councils, racial disparity in school exclusions and Pupil Referral Units, along with guidance as to how they can apply initiatives within their own schools and organisations.

I found the day to be informative and thought provoking and brought back many prompts for discussion within schools and amongst leadership teams. One keynote address I found particularly powerful and would like to share with you some of the key ideas raised.

### **Keynote Address: Mental Health, Trauma and Exclusion: A Review of Recent Evidence for Schools delivered by Andy Bell, Deputy CEO, Centre for Mental Health**

This presentation made the direct association between challenging behaviour, mental health and trauma. Young people who show challenging behaviour are more likely than average to have been exposed to trauma and to have struggles with their mental health. In some cases, challenging behaviour is a symptom of trauma. Trauma and challenging behaviour are connected by several pathways, any or all of which may apply to different extents to different individuals:

1. Trauma causes challenging behaviour;
2. Challenging behaviour causes trauma;
3. Challenging behaviour and trauma are independently caused by a common factor.

As practitioners working in schools we should be aware of the protective factors associated with good mental health and likewise the risk factors for poor mental health;

<b>PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR GOOD MENTAL HEALTH</b>	<b>RISK FACTORS FOR POOR MENTAL HEALTH</b>
Strong parental attachment	Violence, neglect and abuse
Positive parenting	Bullying
Having a decent income	Poverty and inequality
Security (e.g. living in secure housing and being in a safe neighbourhood)	Discrimination and injustice
Social connection	
Fairness	Homelessness and housing insecurity
	Crime (and fear of crime)
	Traumatic Events

# CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

## CONT.

Andy Bell spoke in detail about the inequalities in risk and identified the groups of children and young people at higher risk to include;

- Children whose parents have poor mental health;
- Children with disabilities and physical illness;
- Young people from some BAME communities;
- LGBT+ young people;
- Children from low income or homeless households;
- Looked After Children;
- Children with neurodevelopmental conditions.

## **The importance of schools and educational settings**

Andy identified the biggest influence on a child's mental health, outside of the family unit, to be school. This is a huge responsibility that falls to us. It is obvious, therefore, that a significant investment in mental health support in schools is necessary.

As leaders and practitioners in schools we have a duty to think about a range of factors that could positively influence the mental health of the children that we care for;

- curriculum reform; the impact of what we teach and how we teach it. Is there a place for a greater degree of social and emotional learning?
- our school environments. Can the physical environment, as well as the social aspects of our environments, contribute?
- our approaches to discipline; a positive approach to managing behaviour is necessary. Are their aspects of our behaviour policies and practices that need to be re-aligned?
- the impact that staff well-being can have on the well-being of our young people. Pupils need to work alongside trusted adults and form trusting relationships – staff well-being needs to be nurtured to truly allow this to happen.
- the role of evidence based parenting programmes. Many of our parents need our help? Are we in a position to support them to better support their children?;
- can we take steps to become 'trauma-informed' schools?

Andy Bell, through research, had identified that "Most parents ask for help but few families receive any...".

### **Is there more we can do as a family of schools to paint a better picture for our parents?**

It is straightforward; trauma causes challenging behaviour. Challenging behaviour causes trauma.

### **Is there more we can do as a family of schools to paint a better picture for our pupils?**

**MRS KATY CRAIG | HEAD OF ACADEMY**

# CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

## THE HOUSE SYSTEM

In July 2019 Smith's Wood Academy took the decision to relaunch the House System; we felt that this was vital in order to establish strong relationships between pupils, pupils and teachers and to reinforce identity within the school community. We set about choosing appropriate House names that epitomised our Trust values: Excellence, Dedication, Ambition, Integrity and Tradition. The pupils were made very much part of this process, this house names were decided from suggestions made through mentor groups.

The Smith's Wood Academy House names are:

- Parks
- Pankhurst
- Luther King
- Hawking

Since September we have provided a whole variety of opportunities for pupils to become involved in House Activities including:

- Ready, Steady, Cook
- Ready, Steady, Create
- Ready, Steady, Ping Pong
- Ready, Steady, Swim

Some of these events have involved 'teams' that included staff and parents. They have been extremely positive events with numbers increasing with every competition; the atmosphere created by those involved has been excellent and it has been wonderful to see the pupils having fun and fully engaged with the competition. In order to ensure that the House Competitions are inclusive, we have also completed our first enrichment day where every year group had the opportunity to compete during the school day.

The opportunities we offer will continue to be regular, broad and plentiful; our aim is to offer a community event at least every half term. When pupils from different backgrounds and cultures come together to work towards the same goal, they learn to work together, develop an understanding and tolerance of different ideas and attitudes and a greater awareness and understanding of the world around them. These are essential life skills.

**LOUISE ELLIS**

**ASSOCIATE ASSISTANT HEAD OF ACADEMY  
(CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTS)**



## 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/)

**EXCELLENCE.**

DEDICATION.

**AMBITION.**

INTEGRITY.

**TRADITION.**



**FAIRFAX**  
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST