



This latest edition of FMATConnect outlines another wide selection of achievements by our students, having clearly being well supported by our staff.

I know that recently a huge amount of work has gone into supporting our students through a wide range of TAG activities and I want to thank all those who have supported this intensive process. Whilst there is more to do to support our Year 11 and 13 students over the

next few weeks, I hope that all of our students look back at this period of their lives with the knowledge that they were offered all of the best possible support we could provide.

Over the last two weeks I have visited each academy and have again been pleased to see the progress being made in many areas. I have been able to see first hand the impact of our recent investment plans and I know there is another large amount of work planned in each of our academies for later this year. It has also been really encouraging to see staff consider which area of academy life can be improved. Recently, I was discussing Academy Improvement Strategies with one of our leaders and it was great to hear that plans for next year were being focussed on what could be done differently to improve the academy for its students, rather than what extra work could be done. It's a timely reminder to reflect on the fact that schools do not necessarily improve by working harder or doing more, but rather reflecting on what is being done currently and using evidence based research to consider how to do things differently and more effectively in the future.

Within each edition of FMATConnect, new staff are introduced to us, but sometimes we also have to bid farewell to colleagues. On this occasion, I want to take the opportunity to say farewell and thank you to Katy Craig, Head of Smith's Wood Academy, who will be leaving us at half term after two decades of dedicated service to all of the staff and community of Smith's Wood. Also, I would like to thank Danielle Billington, Director of Human Resources, who is leaving us at the end of June after 5 years of overseeing considerable development within our MAT. I wish both Katy and Danielle good luck in the future!

MR SIMON JONES | CEO

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# CONNECTING WITH DIRECTORS

## FMAT PLANNING : WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH GOVERNANCE?

Active and involved governance requires that our Associations and MAT Board have a very good understanding of what is going on in our academies and also how staff teams, senior leaders and the central team are working together to realise the benefits of being part of one MAT, FMAT.

The activity of our Associates and Directors has been mainly limited to reading reports and online meetings over the last 12 months; this has been disappointing for all involved. The easing of restrictions will mean we can visit academies more. We will be making planned visits to look at particular aspects of school life, to talk to staff and students to hear what they are experiencing, what's going well and what isn't. We are also looking forward to attending celebrations, plays, concerts and all the other school events we've missed during lockdown.

There is an exciting and busy summer half-term ahead, as focus switches to a review of this year's activities and our plans for the future. Several things are in place and planned:

1. The last cycle of governance meetings is starting and the individual 2020-21 Academy Improvement Plans (AIP) and the FMAT Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) will be reviewed to make sure we have completed all the tasks we set ourselves.

2. At the Association meetings and at the Education Committee we will also review the Academy Self-Review documents to understand the progress we have made and the areas that need development in future.

3. Finally, we have just completed our first Governance 360-degree survey so that we can get a picture of our governance process from all those involved. We received some good feedback in many areas which has identified very clear areas for development. This will inform our Governance Self-Review document.

In June, the directors are getting together with members of the Executive Team to:

1. Review activity against our FMAT mission: Enriching lives; transforming futures. We know our staff have worked hard to deliver our vision and particularly "first-class pastoral care" despite being stretched as never before. Our Mission and Vision have never been more relevant.

2. The discussions will cover the strategic direction of FMAT as we refresh thinking around our 3-year Strategic Plan which has 2 more academic years to run.

3. The above will inform our discussion with the Executive in establishing the FMAT Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) for the next school year. Much remains to be done with the curriculum and outcomes. We need to get even better at working together as an effective MAT. This thinking will then feed into the Academy Improvement Plans 2021-22 that the Heads of Academy will be developing before the end of the year.

It is an exciting term for FMAT as we set course for the next 12 months, seeking to improve the outcomes for all the students at all of our Academies, with our eye towards the horizon and the opportunities we have to shape our future!



# CONNECTING WITH DIRECTORS

## WE KNOW! THANK YOU!

As many of you will be aware we are losing two of our senior leaders this term. Katy Craig, Head of Smith's Wood Academy and Danielle Billington, Director of HR, have both made a huge contribution to our Trust over the years they have been with us. They have been key in steering our Academies, our staff and students through the very challenging last 18 months. Although we are now parting ways, much of what they have put in place and done will benefit our students for many years to come. We wish them both well and hope they find success in their future roles and careers.



Since my appointment this January, first impressions are very positive and I am looking forward to working with the current Board, the three new Directors and the Executive in the months and years ahead to help FMAT achieve all its' objectives.

Having spent the last 20 years founding, growing and eventually selling what was acknowledged to be an outstanding software company, I am under no illusion with respect to the need for well-managed and motivated management and staff, if FMAT is to achieve its potential.

I have been piloting a Link Director role, focusing on CEIAG, working with the Careers Link Associate from each Association and Academy Careers leads and their teams. Already this has seen the beginnings of a cross MAT team able to share experiences, data and best practice. The intention is to visit each academy every term, review activity, past, present and future and support events with planning and presence.

The link role has allowed me to get to know Associates and staff with respect to a defined area of activity and I think this is something that will be repeated across many other aspects of Associate and Director activity.

The resource allocated to CEIAG and Safeguarding is a world apart from what I remember in my time as a disengaged and disenchanted east London Comprehensive pupil. The world is of course a very different place, but some things do not change. I know from experience how much more difficult it is to get a good start in a career with qualifications that don't do you justice and don't compare well. I will be doing everything I can to support those involved in teaching and learning to provide the very best start for all FMAT students.

**BARRY COOPER | DIRECTOR**

PEN PORTRAIT



# CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | GOOD NEWS AT BOURNVILLE

At Bournville we are on a mission to become a school of first choice in our community where students excel; in their academic studies, in the wider curriculum and as school and community leaders. Broadening the horizons of our students is an absolute priority so that they can imagine a successful future in a fulfilling career. As part of our work with the community we applied to become a hub for Schools Sport Games and I am delighted to say that this week we found out that we were successful in securing the honour of hosting this. Our student leaders will benefit from the opportunity of working with a wide range of partners to deliver on this exciting project.

The excitement doesn't stop there... we are part of the brilliant club!

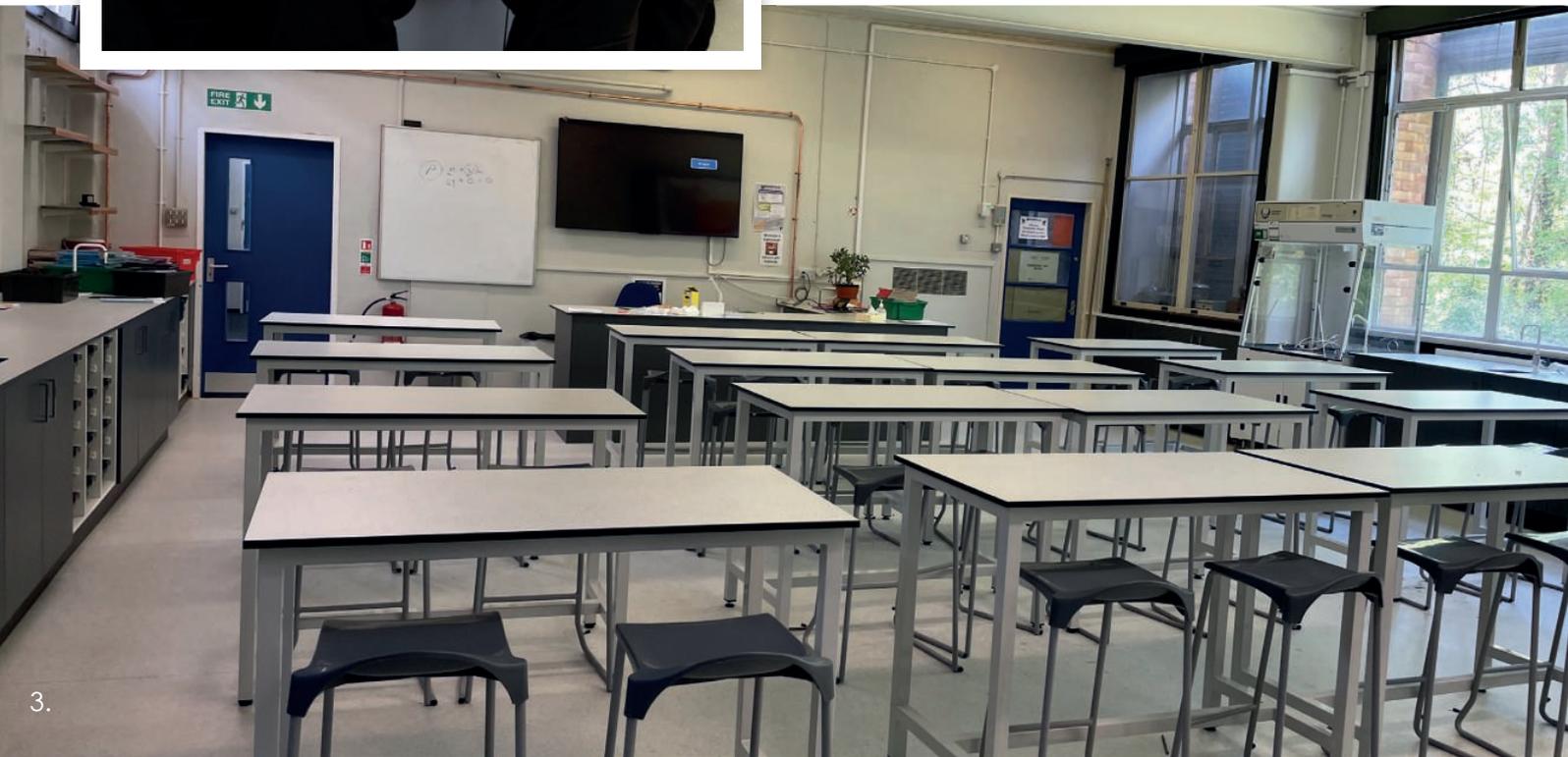
"The Brilliant Club exists to increase the number of pupils from underrepresented backgrounds progressing to highly-selective universities."

The first Brilliant Club graduates at Bournville have been working with students and staff from Trinity College Cambridge Science Department, affording Bournville students the opportunity to learn about, and aspire to be part of, the very best universities. Covid has meant that the courses have been online and so far, our students really enjoyed the experience.



Millie said "Cambridge University is one of the oldest universities in the country and considered one of the best in the world! In order to get there, you will obviously need good grades but they also look for students who give a good attitude, have potential and who aren't afraid to take chances. It has really made me think about my future and has persuaded me to try and get into Cambridge University"

That's the spirit Millie!



# CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | GOOD NEWS AT BOURNVILLE

Speaking of good attitude, potential and not being afraid to take chances, James Whiting is an ex-student who left Bournville School in 2008. Since leaving he studied Business Management at UCB, went onto work in Marketing and then founded The Skinny Food Co in 2018 with £3,000. It is now a multi-million pound venture. Forbes labelled it as 'one-to-watch' in Europe. James and his business partner have family members who are diabetics and wanted to produce suitable food products, catering for their needs. They started small at a local trade fair and the business has quickly grown. They now employ 40 people at their base in Nottingham and are predicted to earn £30 million in profits by April 2022.

James will be returning to Bournville, to share his unique journey of success inspiring the next generation of students.

MISS M GREEN | HEAD OF ACADEMY



James Whiting, ex Bournville student and founder of The Skinny Food Co.

## 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 websites.



[www.fmat.co.uk](http://www.fmat.co.uk)

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

[www.bournvilleschool.org](http://www.bournvilleschool.org)

[www.bournvilleprimaryprovision.org](http://www.bournvilleprimaryprovision.org)

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

[www.smithswood.co.uk](http://www.smithswood.co.uk)

# CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | ENRICHING LIVES

Erdington Academy recently held our final Enrichment Day of the year.

Covid restrictions prevented us from bringing in visitors to present the usual array of workshops and so we took the opportunity to celebrate the Commonwealth Games being hosted in Birmingham.

Teachers from all subjects had the brief of using the Commonwealth Games as a stimulus to explore in greater depth parts of the curriculum that we may not otherwise visit.

Students and staff both said that the day allowed them to express themselves in ways that "normal" lessons do not allow.

Thanks to the staff for planning exciting lessons and engaging activities that celebrated Birmingham hosting the event next year.

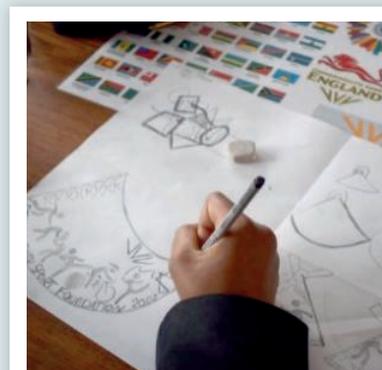
**MR SIMON MALLETT | HEAD OF ACADEMY**



In **catering**, students learned about cuisine from different parts of the Commonwealth and took the opportunity to cook and taste food from around the globe.



In **Humanities**, students discovered the rich geography and history of the Commonwealth, learning about different countries, their culture, and languages.



In **Technologies**, students designed and created pieces that reflected national flags and culture from across the Commonwealth.



In **Maths**, students used geometric form to explore from the commonwealth, including using origami to create art representing countries and the Commonwealth Games.



Students in **Physical Education** played traditional Commonwealth sports, including archery



In **music** students learned the rhythm of African drums.

# CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

## SPORTING SUCCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES AT ERDINGTON



During the lockdown, the Youth Sports Trust launched a nationwide fitness competition called "The Ultimate Warrior Challenge". The aim of the challenge was to get young people participating in a range of home fitness challenges. Points were awarded to each competing school from across the country for the number of students that participated and submitted their scores online.

I am extremely pleased to say that Erdington Academy had the most students participate in the country, in all year groups. We are extremely proud of the dedication and commitment that the students showed during a time in which their physical, mental and social well-being may have been negatively affected due to the pandemic.

Moving forward from the pandemic and building on the momentum of the success of the challenge the P.E department at Erdington Academy are providing a range of opportunities for our students. Firstly, we have established strong links with Aston Villa who are providing our students with 3 sessions of football coaching and delivering an accredited Level 1 Sports Leadership Course. We have also continued our work with Erdington Rugby Club which has enabled us to gain access to top level coaches from Wasps RUFC and the Lawrence Dallaglio foundation. Through our rugby links, we are extremely fortunate to have ex-professional rugby player Aleki Lutui, who played for and captained Tonga in the rugby world cup 2007, 2011 and 2015. Finally, we have built strong links with Warwickshire CCC, who are providing our students with top level cricket coaching on a Friday.



**MR BROTHERTON | SUBJECT LEADER – BOY'S PE**

We have a variety of CEIAG events planned for this term. These include Year 10 blended work experience in June and visits to BMET College, Aim Higher next steps career pathways workshops during PSHE lessons. We are also supporting Year 11 with their destinations and have NCS (National Citizen Service) in school to encourage students to sign up to their amazing programme in the Summer after they leave Erdington Academy.

Throughout the pandemic as part of our careers provision at Erdington Academy we have signposted virtual careers events and encouraged all our students to use 'Unifrog' online careers platform.

One specific virtual work experience has been with Medic Mentors. Students in Year 10 and Year 11 who are interested in a career in medical sciences had the opportunity to apply and take part in a virtual work experience. Hafsa Malik in Year 11, along with a number of other students have been inspired by these events. Oppostie is the feedback from her virtual work experience.

**LISA MILLWARD | CAREERS LEAD**



"I took part in a 6-month virtual work experience programme with Medic Mentor and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to gain an insight into working in the medical industry. We followed multiple patients as they went from diagnosis to treatment and follow up, which was provided by real doctors and a multidisciplinary team. We looked into various aspects of medicine- some of these including the NHS constitutional values, gynaecology and obstetrics, intensive care, general practice, surgery and geriatrics. Each session was unique, informative and intriguing.

Initially, I was unsure of how useful a virtual work experience would be and whether it would be interactive enough for me to learn however, as a student I was able to ask the medical team questions to clear any confusion. I found that participating in the virtual work experience allowed me to work from the comfort of my home and still get the live, realistic experience I wanted. My favourite aspect of the work experience was being able to see a real-life nephrectomy, which is the removal of a kidney, because I was able to see first-hand how important skills like communication, leadership and teamwork are in medicine.

Overall, this work experience equipped me for working in a medical career because I was taught how to examine and treat patients, the structure and values of the NHS and the skills doctors need. I was able to identify that I would be most suitable for working with children as I felt like I would be able to empathise and understand them more. Consequently, I recommend all students who are interested in becoming doctors, vets or dentists to participate in this incredible work experience. It will not only look great on future applications, but it will also open your eyes to a world of countless possibilities."

MEDIC MENTOR LIVE VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE

# CONNECTING WITH FAIRFAX

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | IN MEMORY OF CATHERINE WHITE

In memory of Catherine White. A member of the Fairfax family since 1976

Catherine White joined Fairfax as Catherine Hughes-Jones in 1976. Following a short battle with cancer, Cath passed away in March 2021; Cath remained an active part of Academy life until the beginning of this year.

Cath was truly 'Fairfaxian' and spent her years at the School teaching English and working in the pastoral team to ensure students at Fairfax achieved their very best.

Cath was an exceptional teacher of English and instilled a passion for her subject into many of the students she taught. Her high expectations of students were well known and students always rose to the challenge in her classroom.

As Head of Coventry House, her passion in pastoral care shone through, working with her students to ensure their attendance and effort were strong, along with their participation in all House events. Cath was affiliated with all Houses through her time at Fairfax, but her strongest link was with Coventry and Stratford House.

Cath loved to see students achieve, and one of her favourite duties was reading out the names of the awardees at Celebration Evening. Cath took a sense of pride in every student's achievements.

During her years at Fairfax, Cath attended many camps at Dyffryn Ardudwy and supported many students in House activities and particularly the annual Eisteddfod performing arts festival.

As Pastoral Assistant Headteacher, she focussed on the behaviour, attendance and well-being of students with a view to removing any barriers that prevented Fairfax students from achieving their very best.

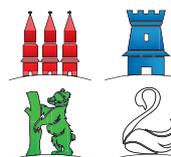
Since retirement, Cath continued to contribute to the English Faculty by coaching students ahead of their GCSE examinations and also became the play and written and spoken word judge for The Eisteddfod. Cath thoroughly enjoyed watching students perform and thrive in extra-curricular activities.

Most recently Cath took up the post of governor with responsibility for safeguarding and, as with all of her positions at the school, completed the role with commitment and tenacity.

Cath's legacy will live on at Fairfax, and we are pleased to introduce a memorial award in her honour. The House Champions Award will be awarded to the House who have performed best across our 'big three' events, The Eisteddfod, the House Athletics Championships and the Swimming Gala. We look forward to welcoming her husband Kim and sons Jamie and Alex to Fairfax to present the award in her honour.

Rest in peace Cath, Fairfax remembers you.

**MRS D BUNN | HEAD OF ACADEMY**



# CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENT AT SMITH'S WOOD

At Smith's Wood we take great pride in aiming high and achieving well in all that we do. We aim to recognise and celebrate academic and extra-curricular achievements as part of our daily work. At Smith's Wood there are a range of rewards that are available to students, ranging from daily awards for effort and academic progress shown within lessons, weekly, half termly and termly rewards, in addition to our prestigious Academy and House Colours and our annual awards ceremony.

As you can see below, there has been lots to celebrate at Smith's Wood this year!

### MRS KATY CRAIG | HEAD OF ACADEMY

#### DOING WELL WITH CARROTS!

Carrot awards are a lesson by lesson reward which students receive for their efforts and contributions within lessons. When students get to a 25 milestone, rewards are triggered. So far;



#### Incredibly...



Good job Chloe!

#### TOP 10 CARROT ACHIEVERS THIS YEAR

- Chloe Weston
- Toni Harris
- Tamzin Clarke
- Lauren Caffery
- Chloe Harris
- Danielle Vale
- Elise Vaughan
- Katie Boyce
- Ryan Hopkins-Williams
- Amelia Houghton

#### REWARDS ASSEMBLIES

Each half term each year group celebrates collectively the achievement of their peers through a half termly rewards assembly. Students are nominated by departments for their efforts and progress within lessons over the course of the half-term. Many of these assemblies have been remote this year, but the message, as ever, has been the same, recognising those making a positive contribution to learning within the classroom. Last half term there were 114 departmental awards given to students across years 7-11 in recognition of their fantastic efforts. This reward is an ever-growing reward and one that students are becoming more accustomed to receiving.

A special "well done" must be said to these students who are regularly receive multiple nominations from departments;

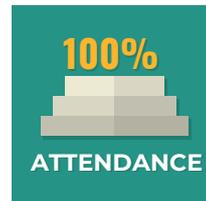
- Riana Fernando
- Ruby Simms,
- Charlie Ann Ashley,
- Oliver Murray
- Diore Ndoye
- Harmony Carter
- Ryan Hopkins-Williams, Jahmeila
- Arnold-Moors
- Jodie Grace Maguire
- Roxi Bull
- Mason Silver
- Lidya Keleta
- Isabel Cox
- Casey Handley
- Dylan King
- Oliver Morris
- Kadie Warner
- Sianna Shah
- Daniella Vale
- Rameya Farquharson
- Summer Jiggers
- Idil Hersi

# CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENT AT SMITH'S WOOD

## YOU HAVE GOT TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT!

Each half term a reward is given in recognition of students' excellent attendance. Even in the midst of a global pandemic SWA still have hundreds of students who are maintaining 100% attendance. In recognition of this, a film viewing, with popcorn was arranged in the Theatre for each of the 5 year groups. The students were very appreciative of this and enjoyed some down time from what has been a very trying term for many, as a result of Covid-19.



Students who maintain their 100% attendance for the academic year shall receive their Never Been Absent (NBA) lapel badge. Students who maintain 96% attendance and above for the whole of the academic year will be invited to an end of year reward trip, traditionally this is a choice between ice skating at Planet Ice or attending Drayton Manor.

## STARS SHINING BRIGHT

'Star of the week' is a weekly reward where students are acknowledged for their efforts within lessons. This is a reward which students really enjoy and actively try to achieve within their lessons

This academic year over **350 pupils** have been named as star of the week across the differing subjects and faculties. There are too many names to mention here, but these students know who they are and they know that we think that they are superstars!

## CORE VALUES

As above, this is an annual blazer badge which is given to students for positive behaviour over the course of the academic year. This is the second year which this reward has been awarded and it is lovely to see students now wearing two separate Core Values badges on their blazers with pride.

To date, over half of the school population are on track to achieve their core value badge at the end of this academic year.

## HOT CHOC WITH THE HEAD OF ACADEMY

A weekly award where students are invited to have a hot chocolate in the boardroom with the Head of Academy during mentor time on a Friday morning. One student per year is nominated each week from the pastoral staff and this is a real opportunity for Mrs Craig to let our students know just how proud she is of them.



# CONNECTING WITH SMITH'S WOOD

HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE | CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENT AT SMITH'S WOOD

## HOUSE COLOURS

This is a reward which is led by Mrs Mace and Mrs Ellis and is the newest addition to celebrating student achievement at Smith's Wood. Over 700 students have participated in house competitions this year; a truly amazing contribution to school life! Recently, 39 students across the academy received their junior colours for house participation.

Isabelle Edwards 8B	Lacey Gallett 8B	Lewis Moger 8B	Nowaf Abagana 8B
Josh Evans 8C	Brandon Kemp 8E	Levi Davis 8E	Milan Hudson 8E
Lailie Bartone 8F	Armani Donaldson 8H	Liam Woodford 8H	Molly Clarke 8H
Lauren Caffrey 9A	Mitchell Coppin 9C	Roxi Bull 9C	Jack Devlin 9D
Neco Daniels 9E	April Jagers 9G	Kallum Ryder 9G	Mason Silver 9G
Ryan Towner 10F	Shanti Coleman 10F	Shenae Reid 10F	Faith O'Gara 10G
Chloe Weston 10B	Chloe Williamson 10D	Dylan Allcock 10F	Mia Brown 10F
Ross Burrow 11A	Kieran Raybone 11B	Dylan Wigley 11C	Mckenzi Houghton 11C
Jorja Jarvis 11D	Mea Mezzone 11E	Ryley Reynolds 11E	Cole Fennell 11F
Benjamin Knight 11G	Daniella Vale 11G	Joshua Steadman-Smith 11G	

## ACADEMY COLOURS

Arguably, our most prestigious event is our bi-annual Academy Colours Ceremony. What makes 'Academy Colours' different to other awards at Smith's Wood is the commitment over time that the recipient needs to have demonstrated. Typically, students will have shown real dedication to the work within a particular faculty for staff to consider nominating them for the faculty award. This makes Colours extremely prestigious to win. This is reflected in the Colours display on the central corridor of the Academy.

In addition to a certificate, students receive a specially designed cloth badge to be worn on the blazer lapel, recognising which faculty (or faculties) have made the award. Over time, some students who have made exemplary progress in a variety of areas of the academy will receive a 'rainbow' of colours on their lapels.

We last awarded Academy Colours in January of this year with a total of **91 awardees** celebrating achieving a colour. It is clear from our Hall of Fame below that many of our fantastic students are in receipt of multiple Colours – an amazing achievement by any measure.

## MRS KATY CRAIG | HEAD OF ACADEMY



**SMITH'S WOOD ACADEMY**

**Colours - Hall of Fame**

8 Colours -	Lucy Male (July 2018), Georgia Hasker (July 2019)
7 Colours -	James Bott (July 2016), Gilana Tipper (July 2019)
6 Colours -	Liam Wetton (Feb 2015), Chrissy Evans (Feb 2017)
5 Colours -	Matty Carter, Thomas Newbold (July 2014), Louis Price, Luke Sheldon (July 2016), Kye Adams, Christopher Green, Thomas Harwood, Katie Roney (Feb 2017), Lewis Carlin, Ethan Chu, Chloe Sheldon, Luke Henry Thomas (Jan 2019), Robyn King (July 2019), Ann-Marie Lewis, Daniel Locke (Jan 2020)
4 Colours -	Harry Carter, Laura Price (Feb 2014), Chloe Collins, Amy Hackett (July 2014), Tia Bramwell, Tia Buxton, Amy Carlin, Loren Frost, Lacie Millward, Mia Wade, Alice Ward (Feb 2015), Brandon Carlin, Deanna Chalmers, Nicholas Jackman (July 2015), Jayce Whittam (Feb 2016), Kristiana Hall (July 2016), Dylan Garfield, Amelia Northall, Winnie Stowe, Caitlin Wiffen (Feb 2017) Charley Bramwell (Jan 2018), Sam Harris, Oliver Hatch, Joshua James, Ben McAvoy, Mason Rogers (July 2018), Alex Rose (Jan 2019), Liam Caldicott, Leigh Davis, Joyante Dunrod, Holly Evans, Emily Hart, Aimee Mae Jukes, Demi Russell, Jacob Daniel Smith (July 2019), Jack Rolph, Ella Thomas, Ben Townsend, Shaun Wiffen (Jan 2020), Katie Boyce, Alisson Charlot, Tamzin Clarke, Jasmine Field, Sere Kaba, Daniella Vale (Jan 2021)



# CONNECTING WITH THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

MARTYN JOBLING | DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

I would like to start by thanking everybody for the warm welcome that has been extended to me since I took up my position as Director of Education and I look forward to getting to know those of you I haven't had the opportunity to meet just yet.

I am extremely excited to be taking up this position and am looking forward to working with you all as we continue to increase standards across the organisation and work together to improve standards and educational outcomes for the children we serve, so that they may move on successfully to the next stage of their lives.

I am new to working in this part of the world, but I have been working in education for 21 years. Much of my career has been spent in the Nottinghamshire area where I have been a Headteacher twice. My first headship was at highly successful and oversubscribed 11-18 academy to the north of the city. I was part of the team which significantly improved the quality of education for the children from an Ofsted notice to improve through to outstanding leadership. Following this I was promoted to Principal where I then led the academy through further successful Ofsted inspections and internal reviews by the MAT we were part of.

For the past three years I was Headteacher of a re-brokered academy in an area of significant deprivation in the south of Nottingham. This presented me with new and unique challenges, but was a challenge I had always wanted to take on from very early in my career, as I passionately believe that postcode should not be allowed to define your educational experiences and with that your future life chances. During my time at this academy, we were successful in significantly improving the quality of education the children received, increasing the opportunities they were afforded and putting the school firmly on the track to good.

I undertook this challenge and my new role as Director of Education as my passion in education is around levelling up and ensuring that those children from a more disadvantaged background receive

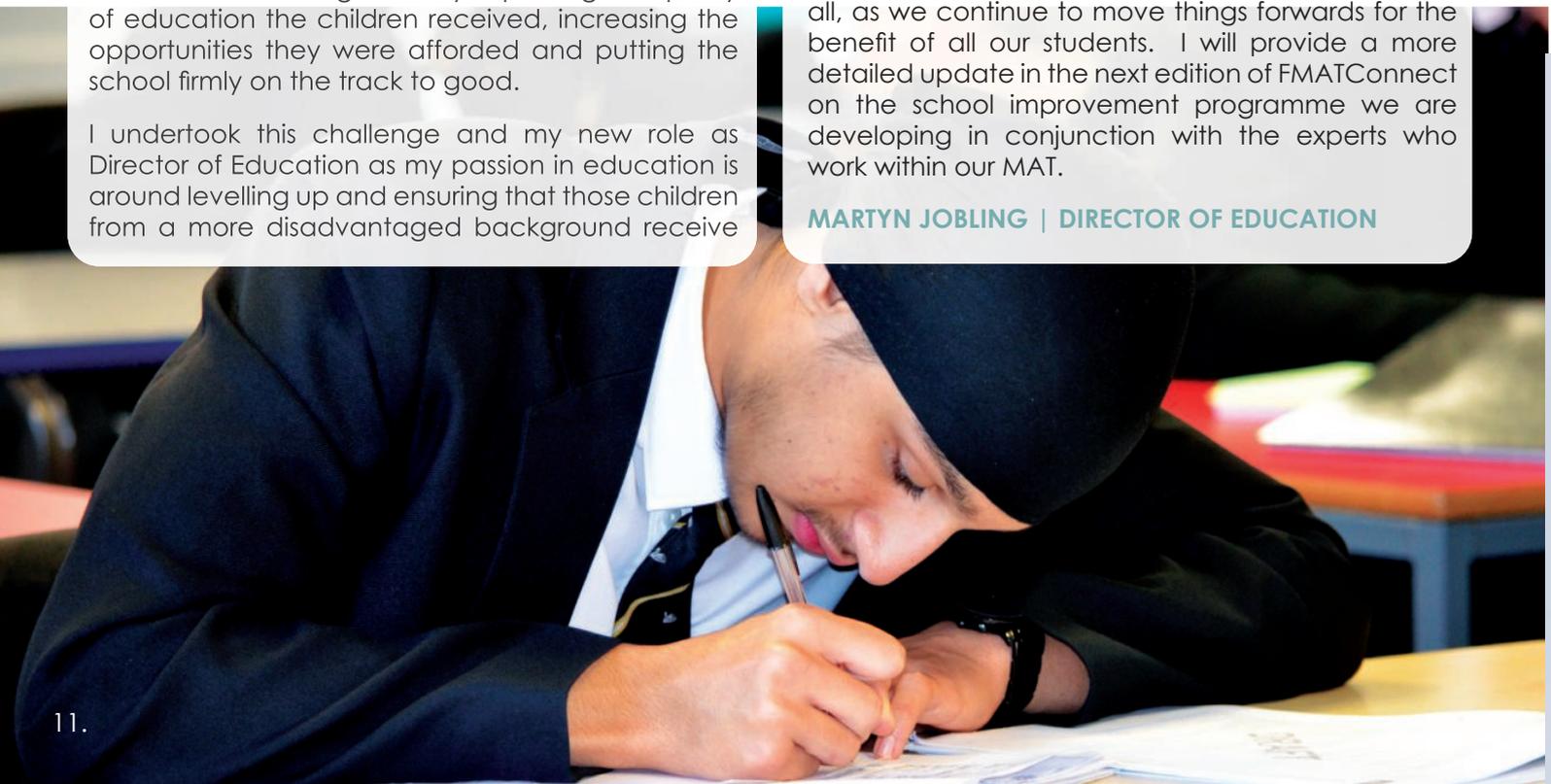
an equal or better level of educational experiences as those from a more affluent background, so that we can close the gap in terms of attainment, achievement, and experiences.

As an experienced school leader and as part of my levelling up agenda I have always focussed on building an inclusive curriculum model which meets the needs of all the children, rather than just focussing on the few. As I believe passionately in an inclusive system in both academies I have led, I have worked hard to significantly reduce the use of exclusions (both FTE and PEx) and the use of expensive external alternative provision. I have always found that colleagues working in the academy, who know the children they work with on a daily basis, are best placed to develop the support packages they need for them to have a successful experience in education. This is a philosophy I know that is shared by leaders across FMAT and an area I know that I can bring my first-hand experience to, in order for us to have an even greater positive impact on the lives of our most difficult and vulnerable children.

This half term our focus has been very much around finalising the assessments for our year 11 and year 13 students, so that we are able to start the 'Teacher Assessed Grade' (TAG) process. The work that has been put into ensuring that the assessments the students complete are fair and rigorous has been truly immense and I would like to formally thank you all for this. In the coming weeks I will be meeting with the Heads of Academy to review all the data and evidence to ensure that the information we submit to the exam boards is rigorous, accurate and fair.

This is an exciting time to be part of the FMAT community and I look forward to working with you all, as we continue to move things forwards for the benefit of all our students. I will provide a more detailed update in the next edition of FMATConnect on the school improvement programme we are developing in conjunction with the experts who work within our MAT.

MARTYN JOBLING | DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



# CONNECTING WITH THE DIRECTOR OF HR

DANIELLE BILLINGTON | DIRECTOR OF HR



Recruitment is still the top priority this term with the aim to recruit high-calibre staff in time for the new academic year or earlier, where necessary. Please visit the TES website for more information on our current vacancies. We recently successfully recruited into the two exciting Trust-wide posts of Trust Lead English & Literacy and Trust Lead Maths & Numeracy and are looking forward to welcoming our new colleagues in September 2021.

As a team, we continue to focus on larger pieces of work, such as standardising SCRs across the Trust and electronic filing of key documents for all staff. This has been completed for Bournville and Smith's Wood, so that all our efforts in this area are now focused on Erdington Academy. Furthermore, we have started a medium-term project of developing the functionality of the HR system and expanding the information held on the system to enable us to use it to its full potential. This important development work will make the HR service more efficient for the benefit of the wider organisation.

As always, if you have any queries or concerns regarding the HR service, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Each member of the HR Department will introduce themselves to you in the FMAT Connect publications for this academic year; this half term, it will be Becky Saunders, HR Assistant.

I wish you all a restful May half term

Stay safe & well

DANIELLE BILLINGTON | DIRECTOR OF HR



BECKY SAUNDERS  
HR ASSISTANT

I joined Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust in April of this year. With the warm welcome and continuous support of my Director and new team members, I have settled very quickly into my new role. It is great to be back in a school environment and to feel the buzz of school life after so many difficult months of working from home.

I have worked in the Education Sector for almost 3 years after leaving a 25-year career in West Midlands Police. Before joining the FMAT family, I was a HR Assistant in another local Multi-Academy Trust, where I initially supported the HR Manager in one school. Following the centralisation of their HR, Finance and Estates departments a year later in September 2019, I supported 7 schools and approximately 740 employees providing a fully comprehensive transactional service.

I am very much looking forward to expanding my HR knowledge at FMAT and utilising my previous experience and skills to support Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust by providing a reliable and professional HR administration service. I hope to meet you all soon and look forward to working with you in the future.

MEET THE TEAM



# CONNECTING WITH THE COO

JOHN FITZGERALD | CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER



Firstly, I would like to introduce you to our two newest members of the Finance Team, we congratulate them on their appointments and wish them all the very best in their new roles with us here at Fairfax Multi Academy Trust.

## MEET THE TEAM



**RAUKIN LAVARESQUE**  
FINANCE OFFICER

I joined the Central Finance Team in September 2020 as a Finance Officer. It was a challenging time to join due to a recent centralisation of the finance team, a year-end audit and the Coronavirus pandemic! However, I felt I was able to take on these challenges with the support of my manager and colleagues.

My role consists of supporting the Trust Accountant with financial reporting and completing month end duties relating to income and expenditure. I have gained greater depth of knowledge in a variety of areas and worked closely with my colleagues to provide a strong financial service to the Trust. I find it rewarding to see how strong financial stewardship has a positive impact on the education of our students across the Trust. I am looking forward to expanding my knowledge and skills, as well as taking on the challenges of the future.

I have previous experience of accounting and of the education sector, having worked in a Multi Academy Trust as a Finance Officer before joining FMAT. This has given me a good understanding of academy finance and I have been able to bring my skills and experience to this role. I am also currently studying to further my development within finance and hope to complete my studies in the next few years.'



**RUBAB AKKILL**  
FINANCE ASSISTANT

I started at Fairfax Multi Academy Trust in October 2020 in the midst of a pandemic. These were challenging times for myself, my new colleagues and our organisation. However, with our hard work and conscientiousness we were able to provide an excellent service to our students and staff and ensure resources were delivered in a timely manner to support teaching and learning across our Trust especially during lockdown.

My role consists of supporting the Finance Business partner and I believe with the support of our Trust colleagues and my Line manager we will succeed in our department and continue to improve and meet the standards of the audit requirements.

I am a recent graduate in Accounting for Management. With this combination of higher education qualifications and relevant work experience I will be able to support the audit requirements and excel within my team.



# CONNECTING WITH THE COO

JOHN FITZGERALD | CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

In collaboration with our Academies, we are building excellent and strong relationships across our MAT and now starting to see the green shoots of our hard work start to come through and pay off from the centralisation of our Finance and Estates Teams.

So far, we have identified areas where we have achieved efficiencies and economies of scale to support Heads of Academy to invest significantly back into our Academies. These investments further impact and enhance the lives of our students and colleagues, which, of course is why we are all here.

Some of the projects to celebrate this term alone are:

- An Audio Visual refresh across our academies to improve the delivery of teaching and learning.
- Science Laboratory refurbishments at Bournville have been completed and Fairfax's refresh is under way. I'm sure you agree from the pictures that the labs look fantastic!
- Investment plans have been completed with each Head of Academy to improve the academy educational environment and the resources available for staff and students. Watch this space for more!
- We have successfully procured and trialled a new 'Electronic Sign In' system at Fairfax, the system will be implemented across our academies this term.



# CONNECTING WITH THE COO

JOHN FITZGERALD | CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

## CYBER SECURITY

Recently in the news you may have seen a number of large trusts being a target of cyber criminals. They installed ransomware to the school systems which prevented access to documents and systems, causing some schools to close, and heavily disrupting teaching and learning, along with business operations.

To support and improve our cyber security across the MAT, we successfully gained three places on the DfE National Cyber Security Council (NCSC) programme to run a project called Cyber Essentials. There were only 500 places nationwide, so to be part of this programme is excellent for our MAT. Rob Fitzgerald (Information and Systems Manager) is leading on this project and is applying for the accreditation for the MAT, he will be working with our academies to develop and improve our cyber security.

As an employee, we ask you to be extra vigilant, and please follow the below steps at all times:

- Do not click links or open attachments you were not expecting, even if it appears to be from someone internal. This is called a Phishing attempt. If you are unsure, just call the person, or contact the IT Helpdesk.
- Be extra careful with passwords and do not use the same passwords for multiple systems.
- Immediately report any suspicious activity on your computer or your Office 365 account to your IT Helpdesk.

## EMAIL DESTRUCTION ROUTINES (EDR)

As part of our commitment to data protection and information holding, the MAT is running a project to delete emails from users' Microsoft Outlook accounts, prior to September 2019, under a project called Email Destruction Routines (EDR).

The EDR covers all emails held in Outlook, which could be in your inbox, your subfolders or an archive. You can keep emails from prior to September 2019, but they must be saved either on the academy network, or in your Microsoft Office OneDrive.

Rob Fitzgerald is the lead on this project and has communicated to all staff on the next steps and actions needed to complete the EDR.

Thank you for your support with this project.

## STUDENT WORKBOOKS

Student workbooks for 2021/22 have been ordered and I would like to thank Keeley Clarke for leading on the project to deliver workbooks on time for 2021/22.



**“The Department for Education (DfE) is set to launch a new tool which allows schools to measure their cyber-security provision after the sector was struck by more than 70 ransomware attacks during the pandemic.”**

[www.schoolsweek.co.uk](http://www.schoolsweek.co.uk)

# CONNECTING WITH STAFF REWARDS

## PERKBOX - THE STAFF REWARDS PROGRAMME

As an employee of Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust, we offer you a staff rewards system called Perkbox.

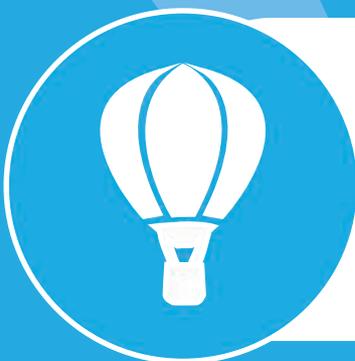
Perkbox features discounts on goods and services, monthly free prize draws, wellbeing services, and either a free cup of coffee from Cafe Nero, or a free sausage roll from Greggs each month!

Perkbox is an on line platform, accessible [here](#), but you can download the app if you have a smart phone. If you do not have an account yet, just click the below.

Perkbox offers instant savings, such as 10% off Apple products, 6% off Argos, 8% off ASOS, and that's just the A's.

You can buy digital vouchers to spend in supermarkets, such as Asda, Tesco, Marks & Spencer, and the digital vouchers are great for big ticket purchases, such as 7.5% off PC World.

Finally, you can link your credit/debit card to get instant savings in some restaurants, which may be useful once they open back up.



### I want to sign up to Perkbox!

Just click [here](#) to complete a form, to request an account



# CONNECTING WITH THE TRUST PASTORAL LEAD

KAREN CORNELL | TRUST PASTORAL LEAD

It seems unbelievable that I have only been in post as Trust Pastoral Lead for four weeks; I already feel like the Fairfax Multi Academy Trust is my home. This is largely due to the warm welcome that has been extended by my fantastic colleagues and the children whom I have had the pleasure to meet. I am thoroughly enjoying the role, as I knew I would, and it has further increased my desire to broaden the scope of my impact and effect positive change for young people within our schools.

Many years ago, I had the privilege of working at Fairfax School (prior to the formation of Fairfax Multi Academy Trust) and, as such, I have a deep appreciation of the values that underpin the success of the organisation and I share the Trust's collective vision for the future. The belief that every child has the right to be recognised as an individual; to have a world of opportunities open to them and to be happy in their own success, regardless of their position in life, reflects my passion as a leader. I have also worked in or lived within many of the communities that combine to create the Fairfax Trust, which brings me a genuine insight into the needs of our families and wider communities, and an understanding of the variety of need this brings.

In visiting our four schools I have seen that all staff are committed to ensuring that no child has been left behind throughout the COVID pandemic and that caring for the whole child through these difficulties has been at the forefront. Now that we are hopefully moving forward to brighter times, we continue to be dedicated to supporting both the academic and emotional development of all children with a real focus on positive mental health and relationships. I am seeing and hearing about many of the fantastic strategies that are being used in our schools and I am excited about the role I will be able to play in this by supporting our leaders to continue to inspire and develop our young people.

KAREN CORNELL | TRUST PASTORAL LEAD



**EXCELLENCE.**  
DEDICATION.  
**AMBITION.**  
INTEGRITY.  
**TRADITION.**