

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CE MAT NEWSLETTER

'All God's Children Learning and Achieving Together'

ISSUE 1: DECEMBER 2023



Schools within our Trust

St Bartholomew's CE Primary School	
St Benedict Biscop CE Primary School	
Woodfield Primary School	
All Saints' CE Primary School	
Gnosall St Lawrence CE Primary Academy	
Haughton St Giles CE Primary Academy	
Woodseaves CE Primary Academy	
Oak Meadow Primary School	
Fairhaven Primary School	

A Message from the CEO



I am delighted to welcome you to the first edition of the St Bartholomew's CE Multi Academy Trust newsletter.

As the CEO, I am committed to ensuring that every child in our Trust receives an outstanding education and is equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in life.

Our Trust is built on a foundation of excellence, innovation, and collaboration. We believe that by working together, we can achieve great things and provide the best possible education for our students.

In this edition, I would like to share with you some of the achievements and performance of our Trust over the last year. This has been a year of growth, capacity and successes, as we have welcomed new staff to our Central Team and two new schools, whilst continuing to support our existing schools to achieve excellent outcomes for our children.

This year we have welcomed several new staff, including Joanne Harrison, Director of Education. Jo is part of the Strategic Executive Leadership Team, who supports myself, alongside the Director of School Improvement, to ensure that we deliver high-quality education and beyond for all our children. We also welcomed Jane Gaskell (Associate Deputy Headteacher), Simon Arnold (Executive Headteacher), Rachel Nevins-Stanford and Hannah Thornberry (Associate Assistant Headteachers), who work closely with our schools to provide bespoke support and challenge, as well as sharing best practice and expertise. In June 2023, we were joined by Rebecca Welton, in a new role of Christian Distinctiveness Adviser (CDA). Rebecca supports our church schools to maintain and develop their distinctive ethos and values, as well as providing guidance on RE, collective worship and SIAMS inspections. Last but not least, we also welcomed the expertise of Dawn Cooper (Governance Professional) and Leslie Smith (Estates, Health and Safety Manager).

We were delighted to welcome Oak Meadow and Fairhaven Primary Schools to our Trust in April and October 2023. They have brought a wealth of experience and innovation to our Trust, as well as benefiting from our range of expertise and school improvement support. In January 2024, St Paul's CE Primary School, Stafford will join us as an associate member of our Trust, following our successful work together this term.

I hope you enjoy reading this first edition of our newsletter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katy Kent'.

Katy Kent, Chief Executive Officer



Love



Trust



Compassion



Forgiveness

Attainment and Progress

Our attainment and progress data shows excellent outcomes for our pupils. Most of our pupils achieve well above national averages in phonics, KS1 and KS2 assessments. Our progress scores are also positive and the majority are significantly above national figures. This reflects our high standards of teaching and learning, our rigorous assessment systems, and our determination that all can achieve. We are very proud of our achievements and we continue to strive for excellence in all aspects of our work. This reflects the impact of school and Trust leadership, as well as the commitment and expertise of our work force and the hard work of our delightful children.

Ofsted Successes

This year, five of our schools have been Ofsted inspected with fantastic results. **All Saints'** ([Report - Ofsted](#)), **Haughton St Giles** ([Report - Ofsted](#)), **Gnosall St Lawrence** ([Report - Ofsted](#)), **St Benedict Biscop** ([Report - Ofsted](#)) and **Woodseaves** ([Report - Ofsted](#)) all received glowing reports, with the inspectorate judging each of the schools to be 'Good'. A great deal of work and ongoing commitment to improvement has been demonstrated by the staff and leaders within our schools and we are delighted the reports have recognised the many exceptional areas of our flourishing schools and Trust. They are a testament to the highly effective leaders, teachers, and our delightful children, who are at the heart of all that we do.



Katy Kent, CEO, Kirsten Sweet, Headteacher and children from Gnosall St Lawrence Primary Academy.



Katy Kent, CEO, Nicola Scott-Worthington, Headteacher and children from St Benedict Biscop CE Primary School.



Katy Kent, CEO, Louise de Graaff, Headteacher and children from All Saints' CE Primary School

An update on the work of Christopher Dryer, Director of Finance and Operations for the Trust

Over the past few years, the central business team have worked hard to design a structure and implement processes that both support our schools in fulfilling their responsibility but also adding value to the experience and expertise that is on hand daily. The strengths within the central business team have enabled our DFO to undertake external work supporting local schools and Trusts, some much larger than our own Trust, in assessing their financial sustainability as well coaching and mentoring school business leaders. On several occasions, our

DFO has also spoken at highly regarded conferences attended by executive leaders from across the sector on topics mainly linked to financial health and sustainability. The DFO is also an accredited School Resource

Management Advisor (SRMA) and on behalf of the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) has supported several other schools and Trusts across the West Midlands, providing guidance on effective school resource management. Furthermore, our DFO was approached at the start of 2023 by the Department for Education's West Midlands Regions Group to establish and chair a learning set on financial health for Trusts across the local region.

The inaugural meeting took place in March 2023 and now consists of executive leaders from just under 20 academy Trusts from across the local region, collaborating and sharing best practice to support the future financial health and sustainability of our schools in the local region. In May 2023, our DFO received a letter of recognition from the ESFA acknowledging the positive work that he has undertaken.

Annual Leadership and Governance Conference

On 28 September 2023, the Trust held its annual Leadership and Governance conference at Hadley Park House Hotel. This superb event was well attended and brought together Trustees, Governors, and Leaders from across our eight schools, providing an opportunity for training, networking, and collaboration. We were fortunate to be joined by Jodie Richards (Safeguarding & Development Lead at Services 4 Schools) who presented information to Governors and Trustees around safeguarding and their responsibilities. A second session delivered by Kerry Rochester (Ofsted Inspector) encouraged delegates to consider how Governors can effectively challenge and support leadership. Both sessions were very well received and we would like to thank all who were able to attend this fantastic event. Special thanks also to our kind sponsors, without whom the event would not have been possible.



Primary School of the Year

We are delighted to announce that **Oak Meadow Primary School** has received the award of 'Primary School of the Year 2023' at the prestigious Education Awards. The award was presented as part of a memorable ceremony at Millennium Point in Birmingham. Schools from across the region gathered following an extensive shortlisting process that had already seen **Oak Meadow** earn a place in the top five nominees.

The award was accepted on behalf of the school by Paul Lane (Interim Head of School) who dedicated the accolade to the **Oak Meadow** Family stating, 'This achievement is an acknowledgement of the hard work and dedication given by everyone who is part the **Oak Meadow** Family and great recognition for our outstanding children.'

Simon Arnold (Executive Headteacher) expressed his admiration and thanks to everyone who had played their part in the school receiving the award stating, 'The hard work of all adults at our school and their willingness to go above and beyond is a true inspiration to be part of every day. This award recognises all governors, site and office staff, kitchen and lunchtime supervisors and our cleaning team as well as our fantastic teachers, members of support staff and senior leadership team who all work with an unwavering desire for every child at **Oak Meadow** to achieve their very best.'

In addition to its innovative approach towards teaching and learning, the independent judging panel also recognised **Oak Meadow's** strength in community relationships and how this is integral in the values and ethos of the school. The school's successful transition to the St Bartholomew's CE MAT was also commended as it has seamlessly strengthened the school's offer and cultivated a network of support and collaboration across a family of schools. Congratulations **Oak Meadow!**



Simon Arnold, Executive Headteacher and children from Oak Meadow.

Sporting Successes

On 24th March, the Wolves Foundation hosted a Premier League Primary Stars football tournament at their Compton training ground, with an overwhelming 31 schools from across the region taking part! Premier League Primary Stars is the Wolves Foundation's programme of education and activities for schools from Wolverhampton and surrounding areas, run in partnership with the Premier League Charitable Fund. We are delighted to announce that **St Bartholomew's CE Primary School's** 8 a side football team won joint first place in this fantastic tournament. This was a mixed team of Year 5 and 6 children. Huge congratulations to them all!

Year 5 & 6 Mixed Team



On 21st June, the **St Benedict Biscop** Year 3 & 4 mixed and Year 5 & 6 girls cricket teams both came second in the Dynamos County cricket finals, hosted at Fordhouses County Cricket Ground. This is a countywide competition that forms a part of the School Games level 3 competition. It was a fantastic opportunity for our children to demonstrate their sporting skills, teamwork, and positivity in a fun yet competitive environment. We are so very proud of their achievements!



Year 5 & 6 Mixed Team



Year 3 Team

On 24th October, Miss Atkinson organised a friendly netball tournament at **St Benedict Biscop Primary School**. This was for participation and to get the children used to competitive matches. **St Benedict Biscop, All Saints', St Bart's** and **Woodfield** all participated. Two games were played simultaneously – to allow all schools to play each other but also to rotate their players several times. Miss Atkinson and Mrs Bayliss umpired each court.

At primary level, children play High5 netball, which enables them to develop as all-round netballers, playing in attack (shooting), centre court and defence. This tournament provided the children with an opportunity to play in each position. The umpires stopped games to show where errors were made and explain the rules.

The sunshine came out and the children really enjoyed this evening of sport. Each child was sporting, determined and courageous. We are really proud of all the children who represented their schools so well!



We are also delighted to announce that **St Benedict Biscop** and **St Bartholomew's Primary Schools** have achieved the Platinum School Games Award, following four consecutive years of having achieved the Gold School Games Award. The School Games Mark is a government-led awards scheme to reward schools for their commitment to the development of competition across their school and in the community. Thank you to everyone who contributed towards achieving this award, in particular Sarah Parkin (PE Lead) and Josie Atkinson (MAT PE Coordinator).



On Wednesday 15th November, children from **Oak Meadow Primary School** took part in a football tournament against schools from across the West Midlands, kindly organised and hosted by Manor MAT.

We are delighted to say that the **Oak Meadow** team won first place. Yet another outstanding achievement from children within our Trust, well done!



Art-for-All

Over the course of the summer term, in partnership with Gavin Hawkins and his team at Squirrel Learning, a collaborative of local schools has joined together to create an online exhibition of children's artwork, entitled 'Art-for-All'. The collaborative includes: Castlecroft Primary; Merridale Primary; **Oak Meadow Primary**; Springdale Primary; **St Bartholomew's CE Primary**; Stowlawn Primary; Uplands Junior; Warstones Primary and **Woodfield Primary**.

All the children in our schools have worked extremely hard to produce extraordinary artwork linked to their most recent curriculum offer. We are in awe of the many skills and talents demonstrated in these fabulous pieces. It is truly inspirational! We hope you enjoy viewing our gallery, which can be accessed via <https://www.art-for-all.co.uk/>. The work shown here is representative of the many wonderful pieces which each school have on display in their own school.

Spelling Bee Competition

In January 2023, a team of Year 3 and 4 pupils, representing several schools from across the Trust joined together to take part in a Spelling Bee Competition, based at Oak Meadow Primary School. The children were all amazing and astounded us with their spelling abilities throughout what was a very exciting day. The event was a huge success, and we are so proud of all of the children who took part. Well done to all!



Fairhaven Activity Day

In the summer term, small groups of Year 3 and 4 children from across the MAT were invited to attend a sports-based activity day, at Fairhaven Primary School in Wordsley, led by a Sports Development Assistant. Children had the opportunity to use the school's purpose built 9-hole Adventure Golf course, and also took part in indoor curling and archery. This was a fantastic opportunity for children to try a number of activities that many had not tried before. A big thank you to all at Fairhaven for inviting us to attend this special day.



Health and Safety Executive Visit

Fairhaven Primary School is one of the 400 schools in the country that the Health and Safety Executive will visit to check how well they handle health and safety issues. All schools within the Trust have been doing a great job in creating a safe environment for everyone, according to the recent inspections and audits, conducted by the Estates, Health and Safety Manager. We are proud of all our schools, and we look forward to showing the Health and Safety Executive how we take care of our health and safety.

Training and Development

Here at St. Bartholomew's Multi Academy Trust, we are proud to develop future teachers through working in partnership with Elston Hall Learning Trust, Birmingham University and the University of Wolverhampton. Our current trainee teachers, who are training with us via the Birmingham University's School Direct Tuition route, have completed a very successful first term at **St. Bartholomew's C E Primary School** and will be moving to their second school placement for spring term at **St. Benedict Biscop C of E Primary School**.

Our student teachers feel that they are very well supported and receive bespoke training tailored to their needs. They feel part of the St. Bart's family as soon as they train with us and work hard to achieve the highest standards, together with the consistent support of our excellent classroom mentors.

Next year, we hope to support some new trainees through the post-graduate apprenticeship route into teaching led by the University of Wolverhampton.

A number of our staff also provide National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) as part of Manor Teaching School Hub, in our role as strategic partner. This has included NPQs in: Leading Literacy; Headship; Senior Leadership; Early Years Leadership; Leading Behaviour and Culture and Leading Teaching. This additional CPD provided by some of our effective leaders enhances staff within our own schools and beyond.

Wishing you all a happy and restful Christmas break. We will look forward to seeing you all again in the New Year.