

# RISING STARS

Bright Futures newsletter  
Autumn edition

## Welcome back!

I am delighted to welcome you all back for the new academic year – I hope you have had an enjoyable summer break and are looking forward to the year ahead.

Seeing our schools back in action provides some relief in what is a somewhat sombre moment for the Trust. As I'm sure many of you will be aware, the end of August saw the passing of our treasured and much-respected chair, Barrie Bernstein. Barrie was a remarkable leader, who played an instrumental role within the Trust, and will be very sadly missed.

I know Barrie was very much looking forward to the beginning of the new academic year and all it brings for our bright-eyed young pupils.

With that in mind, I'd like to dedicate these pages to him as we continue to drive the Trust forward in his memory.

My usual welcome at this time of year is to celebrate and reflect on the results of our students and, while this is a sad time, I'm pleased to say we have many positive stories to share with you. It is wonderful to see so many students reaching their full potential and achieving their goals, and it seems fitting that we are able to celebrate these now.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to welcome Lisa Fathers, the new Head of our Teaching School, The Alliance For Learning. Lisa joins the Trust from Flixton Girls School and takes over from Sarah Boyse, who I must thank

for over 15 years dedicated service to Altrincham Grammar School for Girls and Bright Futures. Also departing with our best wishes is our COO, Amanda Bailey, who has supported the Trust with passion and enthusiasm since its inception.

I hope you enjoy reading about our students' wonderful achievements, and wish you all the best for the coming academic year.

**Dame Dana Ross-Wawrzynski DBE**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Bright Futures Educational Trust



## Twin delight at Altrincham Grammar School for Girls



Talented twins at Altrincham Grammar School for Girls are celebrating their incredible success after both achieved an outstanding five A\* grades in their A Level results. Year 13 students, Katherine and Elizabeth achieved the top A\* grade in the same subjects: Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Further Maths. Both girls are now going on to study at Cambridge University.

The girls were part of an impressive cohort of students at the school where a remarkable 91 per cent of examinations were graded A\*-B and 78 girls achieved A\* or A in all of the subjects they studied.

### **Katherine said:**

*"We're both so happy with these results. We've loved our time here at AGGS and we're so glad our hard work has paid off!"*

AGGS also performed exceptionally in its GCSE results, with a staggering 50 per cent of all examinations graded A\*.



## News flash:

### Primary performance is SATs-ational

Pupils at our primary academies excelled across the board in this year's SATs results – a testament to the high quality teaching, leadership and innovative joint practice work across the Trust.

Notably, Gorton Mount Primary Academy's results are the best in its history, with 81 per cent of students achieving Level 4 or higher combined across Reading, Writing and Maths. New Trust member Marton Primary Academy also achieved 81 per cent Level 4 and above, showing a significant improvement from last year's 67 per cent. Elsewhere, Stanley Grove Primary Academy continued its excellent year on year progress, achieving 70 per cent Level 4 and above.

**Commenting on the results, our Director of Primary Education Gary Handforth said:**

"We are delighted to see the success of our primary schools as members of Bright Futures. They continue to improve and succeed as part of a community of schools, exemplifying our strong belief in our educational philosophy of building a 'community of practice'."

### Students celebrate success at Connell

Students, parents and teachers alike have been toasting the success of Connell Sixth Form College's A level results after the College achieved a 94 per cent pass rate across the board. With more than half of those passes achieved at grades A-C, the majority of the College's cohort leave having secured university places of choice.

### A-stardom for Usman

Cedar Mount student Usman was over the moon on GCSE results day after securing a spectacular 10 A\*s to add to the two GCSEs he has already achieved in the past three years. Usman also has an A\* Maths A level after sitting for the qualification last summer.

Usman's performance was the highlight of Cedar Mount's Maths department, which saw a nine per cent improvement on last year's figures.

**Well done, Usman!**



### Gary Nelson takes charge at Connell

Connell Sixth Form College has welcomed the arrival of Gary Nelson as Interim Principal. Gary, who also acts as Executive Principal at Wigan UTC, was recognised by OFSTED for his influence in the UTC's achievement at its recent first ever inspection, where it was awarded 'Good with Outstanding features'.

He will be supported at Connell by our newly appointed Assistant Principals, who will form the basis of a dedicated and inspirational new senior leadership team.



### Rushbrook Primary Academy update

Things are moving forward with the building work for the new state-of-the-art Rushbrook Primary Academy, which will replace Gorton Mount when it opens in 2016!

The new school is being built at Gorton Educational Village, already home to two BFET schools, Cedar Mount and Melland High School, and has been designed in a modern style with plenty of outdoor space to stimulate learning and play.

A turf cutting ceremony took place earlier in the summer with children from the Trust's three Gorton-based schools coming together to mark the occasion with Dame Dana Ross-Wawrzynski.

### Gorton Mount welcomes new Executive Principal

Phil Mellen has been appointed as the new Executive Principal of Gorton Mount Primary Academy, taking over from long-standing Principal Carol Powell.

Phil is already familiar with Gorton Mount, having cultivated a close partnership with the school in his existing role as Executive Principal of fellow Bright Futures school Stanley Grove Primary Academy.

**Commenting on his appointment, Phil said:**

"I've already seen first hand the committed approach to teaching and learning at Gorton Mount, and am looking forward to getting to know the staff, students and parents over the next few weeks. Together, I believe we will be able to build on the fantastic learning environment that has been developed here."

We'd like to place on record a big thank you to Carol Powell, who played such an instrumental part in making the school the success it is today.

### Wigan UTC engineers set for bright future

Wigan UTC is celebrating unprecedented success for its would-be engineers after Year 13 students performed exceptionally in their Triple Award Level 3 Engineering Diploma. The UTC saw a significant percentage achieving triple distinction star for the diploma as its first cohort completed its time at the College.

There was also individual cause for celebration as Year 12 student Dominic secured a place for a week-long engineering summer school at Cambridge University.

Dominic has had an extremely busy summer, also completing a prestigious work placement with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority at Sellafield Ltd.







## Marton Primary Academy joins Trust

A big welcome to Marton Primary Academy in Blackpool who have officially joined the Trust. We've been working closely with the school over the last 12 months to ensure a seamless transition.



## Newsflash: South Shore Academy on the up

There were plenty of positive news stories for South Shore this GCSE results day as it once again achieved outstanding results in a range of subjects. Eighty one per cent achieved A\* - C in Modern Foreign Languages, while results were also above the national average for ICT and Leisure and Tourism.

Bravissimo!

## Melland students continue to thrive

Melland High School are once again celebrating the fantastic achievement of their students, who continue to develop in exciting and creative ways. Year 11 and Year 14 students in particular have continued to push the boundaries in terms of their outstanding aspirations, effort and achievements.

Year 11 students achieved 94 per cent of their targets in English and 89 per cent in Maths. A marked improvement in achievement in Science also resulted in 94 per cent of Year 11 pupils achieving their EKS 4 targets.

## News from The Lodge

Thank you to the 493 of you who took the time in June to complete the Trust-wide online staff survey! Your feedback is invaluable so keep an ear to the ground with your Principal to hear the results for your school and the next steps.

In the meantime, you told us in the survey that you would like greater visibility of what we do in the central Trust team, so we hope you find this new regular column in Rising Stars a helpful update.

We've been working hard to help improve the Trust's support to you in every aspect of school life. Notably, in March, we welcomed a new member of senior leadership, our Head of IT, Des McIvor, as well as the return of Jude Joughin from maternity leave to the Targeted and Specialist Support Team this month.

Payroll processes have become more streamlined, saving in excess of £10k per year and giving greater consistency across the Trust. We have also rolled out new accounting and budgeting software that will allow schools to work and share their approaches on the same platforms.

Elsewhere, our facilities team have been developing the tender process for the majority of our schools' cleaning, catering and waste management services (watch this space) and they have also been designing a new Trust-wide property management system that will better support our teams in individual schools.

And in staff and leadership news, we've acted on recommendations in the recent STPCD report and updated our Teacher's Pay Policy to account for a one per cent increase to scales. Further details will be available from your school, should you have questions.