

RISING STARS



Bright Futures Newsletter
Winter 2020 Edition



2020 has been a year like no other. When we welcomed in the new decade in January none of us could have imagined what lay ahead. Months of schools being closed to all but those most in need were the kind of things that we knew only from history books. The idea that we would be separated from those closest to us and that we would routinely be covering our faces in public were not part of anybody's horizon for the year. In so many ways, circumstances have conspired to drive us apart at a time when the solutions to the challenges we face require even stronger collaboration, mutual understanding and genuine togetherness.

As we celebrate our festivals of light in the winter months we are reminded powerfully of the part we each can play in bringing comfort, support and

illuminating the way for – and with – others. Our own light may seem insignificant by itself but when we join with others we are able to create something that is simultaneously gentle and vulnerable, powerful and enduring.

Whilst strong, positive relationships have always been at the heart of Bright Futures, there has never been a time when our unifying principles have been so severely tested. What we see in this edition of 'Rising Stars' are so many great examples of people staying open, connected and drawing strength by reaching out to others. We have all been confronted by significant challenges this year; yet even in the face of those unprecedented demands we have maintained and strengthened our vision, values and commitments.



I hope that you enjoy sharing in so many positive stories of success. I wish you and yours all the very best for Christmas and for a happy, healthy New Year!

Dr John Wm Stephens CBE
Chief Executive Officer,

The great outdoors and physical exercise

Being located close to the great outdoors is something all our academies enjoy – this year has shown us all, more than ever, how much it helps our physical and mental health.

Our academies have all enjoyed getting back into group physical activity in their bubbles this term - Rushbrook has been taking part in Walk to School Week and has been chosen to be part of the year-round Walk to School Challenge with Living Streets, while Stanley Grove pupils have been working hard with Dream Big Sport, learning some fantastic routines with their dance coach Becky.

Students and staff at South Shore Academy have been making the most of the good weather, this half term has seen the completion of South Shore's OCR Outdoor Unit. Students have been assessed in two different outdoor activities – they have been to Fairhaven Lake and Fell Foot in the Lake District. A huge thanks to Outdoor Northwest who have helped the school facilitate this.

Great work everyone! We are huge ambassadors of physical exercise across our Trust, so this is wonderful to see.



Anti Bullying Week

November saw all the schools in Bright Futures Educational Trust tackle bullying, as part of the UK's Anti Bullying Week. With a range of special assemblies, workshops and of course odd socks being worn to celebrate our differences, everybody got involved to demonstrate that they are united against bullying.



Amazing odd socks from Stanley Grove!



AGGS is School of the Decade

Altrincham Grammar School for Girls has been named the Northwest State Secondary School of the Decade in The Sunday Times' Parent Power Schools Guide 2021.

This has been achieved through the hard work of exceptional staff with high academic standards, who value their students and encourage them to develop their potential to the full.

Well done everyone – a fantastic and well deserved accolade.

Well done to all our school starters

What a year to start school! With bubbles, isolations and whole different ways of operating, it has not been the usual entry into school life for all the reception and Year 7 learners across our Trust. Luckily our specialist teams of staff have been able to help them settle in.

One example is this lovely display at Stanley Grove Primary Academy, which was created by the reception year group and shares their thoughts on how they have found their feet at their new school. The staff have been using 'The Colour Monster' by Anna Llenas to help the youngsters talk about their feelings and express their emotions.



Fundraising across the Trust

This has not been an easy year, so it is heart-warming to see pupils from across the Trust think of children who are less fortunate. This term has seen a number of fundraising initiatives, with time spent supporting fantastic endeavours such as Marcus Rashford's school meals campaign and monies raised for Children in Need, Children in Poverty and Save the Children.

A special mention must go to Marton Year 5 pupil Bailey, who single handedly raised money for Brian House Children's Hospice just north of Blackpool. Through baking cakes, painting, decorating and approaching local businesses, he donated over £250. A fantastic thing to do - we are all very proud.

Our vision is the best for everyone and the best from everyone - and this extends beyond academic and sporting achievements: it is embodied through our thoughts and our actions within the wider community.

Well done everyone, for helping others.



Well done Bailey from Marton Primary Year 5!

South Shore is an Eco-School

Congratulations to South Shore Academy – the school has been given Eco-School status.

The Eco-Schools Programme is a pupil-led, hands-on learning programme that gets the whole school and the wider community involved in exciting environmental projects.

The students and staff at South Shore have worked very hard to become a registered Eco-School, creating a committee, carrying out reviews, building an action plan with curriculum links that involves everyone, and applying robust measuring, monitoring and evaluation systems. There is a seven-step process to complete in order to be recognised as an Eco-School and South Shore pupils now join millions of others from 68 countries in creating change for the benefit of future generations.

The Eco-Schools Programme empowers pupils, raises environmental awareness, improves the school environment. They will work on the action plans and also creates financial savings for schools. It engages the wider local community, links to the curriculum and can help deliver Ofsted requirements.

A team of South Shore students will be volunteering their time to work on a number of projects to help support the environment. They will work on the action plan of targets as well as review all Eco based topics to gain the Bronze Green Flag award.

A great initiative.



Oak National Academy

The Alliance for Learning is very proud to have been chosen to provide the PSHE (RSHE) curriculum and lessons for the Oak National Academy. This work is in addition to our successful designation as an RSHE Train the Trainer Hub and will involve the development of the overall PSHE curriculum, schemes of work, resources and lesson delivery around this vital area of education.

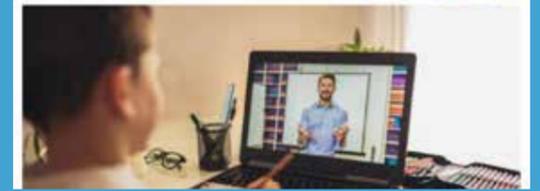
Oak National Academy is an online classroom and resource hub created by teachers, for teachers. It provides nearly 10,000 high quality video lessons and resources, with content for the full academic year across primary, secondary and specialist schools. It was created in April 2020 as a national response to the pandemic, with teachers and education experts creating online lessons. In its first term 4.7 million users accessed 20 million lessons. It is staying open for all of 2020/21 to support contingency planning, remote and in-school teaching.

It's very exciting for The Alliance for Learning to be one of the sector wide organisations contributing to this national initiative that allows students to keep on learning in the face of the ongoing Covid 19 crisis. Self-isolating students need to access the full range of curriculum content including PSHE, and this content is even more important in challenging times for health and wellbeing.

Oak expands offer as demand rises in Covid spike

National online school Oak National Academy to offer subjects including PE and RHSE as demand increases

Claudia Civinini 20th November 2020 at 11:01am



Black History Month

October was Black History Month and while all our academies embrace Black history throughout the year, the month does provide a good opportunity to focus even further on the subject.

For example, at Cedar Mount Academy, Black historian Linford Sweeney delivered workshops to Y10 called 'Introducing Black History', 'Ancient African Cultures and 'Enslavement, Resistance and Revolution'. The students also had a philosophy lesson at the University of Manchester which was followed by a Q&A where they learnt what life was like for Black students at university.

Y11 took part in a Zoom lecture from PhD student Parise Carmichael-Murphy on 'Grime and Black British Identity'. They learnt about social identity, what it means to be British and the meaning of the song 'Black' by Dave. Traditional outfits brought a whole range of wonderful vibrant colours to the school grounds and the library presentation was created from books exploring and celebrating Black history and culture.

Staff displayed their black heroes on classroom and office doors – and prominent figures such as Len Johnson, Kath Locke, Darcus Howe, Candice-Carty Williams and Marcus Rashford have been discussed in lessons.



Melland takes to the stage

A standing ovation for Melland students who joined hundreds of cast members from every corner of the UK at the end of November, to come together in one unique night of theatre. The Coram Shakespeare Schools Festival held One Night of Shakespeare to give students the opportunity to showcase their achievements, develop their literacy skills, reinvent their communication and performance skills and work as a team. With the temporary closure of the UK's theatres, Melland High School pre-recorded their performances (of Hamlet) and uploaded them to the school website, using many drama techniques such as still image, space and levels.



The senior Shakespeare Festival coordinator sent the following feedback after viewing the production:

"It is absolutely incredible; I am blown away! Your students have done a wonderful job. They speak their lines with such clarity and understanding, showing so much maturity as young actors. They clearly know the story and their characters inside out. I can't believe they managed to get to that point in such a short space of time. They should be so proud of themselves, especially after the challenges they have faced this term. Watching this has been a highlight of the last few months for me!"

Well done to everyone involved.



Melland's new tech

Melland has recently invested in some great new tech, as the ICT and Media Team conducted some research into how new technologies can enhance teaching and learning in the classroom and beyond, showing that ICT research and development, digital culture and the development of digital literacy skills is alive and well. Products purchased included an Oculus Rift to provide students with a virtual reality (VR) experience, a high powered PC to run the oculus effectively plus some iPad pros for the students to demonstrate their creativity in image manipulation and editing.

There is also some new equipment to enhance the students' multi-media performances, including equipment for video/image capture and software to enhance their productions.

Young Poets of the Year Award

Two Sixth Form students from AGGS have been selected as Commended Poets in the Foyles Young Poets of the Year Awards 2020.

Run by The Poetry Society and Supported by The Foyle Foundation, this is the 22nd Year of the Awards which are firmly established as the leading competition for young poets aged between 11 and 17 years old.

Anisha and Lucy were selected from thousands of entrants to be in this category, in which there were only 85 young poets.

As Judith Palmer, Director of the Poetry Society says, "Poetry is a source of self-expression and I think at this time, more of us are returning to it to make sense of the world around us, to remember what makes us who we are and to lift our spirits."

Well done!



Happy at the Hideout

Rushbrook has been delighted to be involved with the Hideout, a new youth centre that has opened in Gorton. Year 5 children have been along to sample the facilities and the school is looking forward to forging links with the Hideout in the future as it's a fantastic provider of youth activities. One of Rushbrook's students, Riaz from Year 6, was involved in some Blue Peter filming at the Hideout, as artist Venessa Scott was commissioned by the BBC to create a mural in celebration of Black History Month and this involved some lucky local youngsters. The show aired in October.



A term of memories

With Halloween, Bonfire Night, Harvest Festival, Diwali, Hanukkah, Remembrance Day and Christmas all taking place (to name a few), our students have had a lot of events, festivals and themes throughout this term. We have loved to see all the pictures being shared of the pupils and their families making memories.

Sporting successes

With so many sporting events cancelled or postponed this year, it's great to still be able to report on some sporting successes. Two CMA students have made it through to the next round of trials for the Manchester Schools Football team.

Well done Jaimie and Kakra!



Teaching School scores with Girls' Football Super Hub win

After a robust application and recruitment process, the Alliance for Learning Teaching School has been successful in gaining the prestigious status of "Girls' Football Super Hub".

The teaching school will work closely with the FA and the Youth Sport Trust to pave the way for the next Lionesses to take to the pitch. They will be leading the innovation to create a 21st century modern curriculum for girls, enabling them to access and engage in football through the curriculum and really improving the take up of girls' football, working with PE leads across the North West.



In the media

Marion's SEN expansion featured on Lancs Live. The AFL's funded teacher training programme was covered by Business Manchester – and its partnership with Oak National Academy was reported by TES.

