

Releasing **POTENTIAL**



THE ST. BART'S
ACADEMY
— TRUST —

BTSA

Autumn Term 2022



THE CELEBRATION ISSUE!

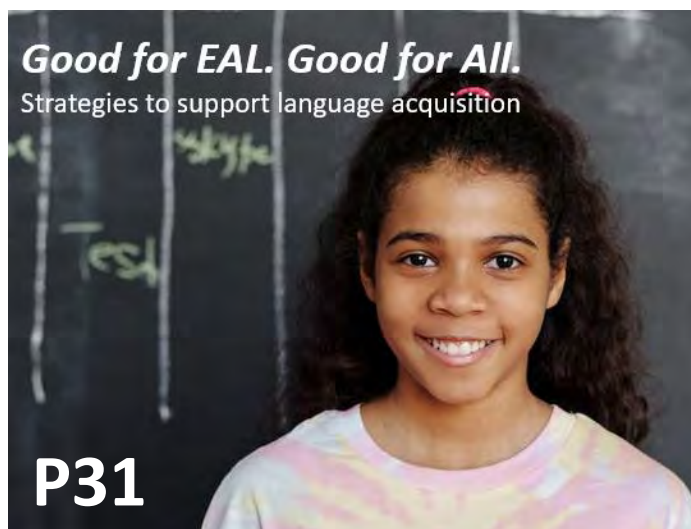
It's A Celebration!



Welcome to this special celebratory themed edition of *Releasing Potential*.

Someone once said that school should be the best party in town. This issue focuses on that idea. All the articles contain our latest success stories and showcase the amazing things that are happening across the St. Bart's Multi-Academy Trust.

We hope you enjoy reading about them!



- Page 3 – **Happy Birthday Belgrave!** Twenty years of excellence
- Page 18 – **Making The Grade** Recent SBMAT Ofsted reports
- Page 26 – **Celebrating Skills** The Skills Builder Partnership Case Study
- Page 31 – **Good For EAL, Good For All** Language acquisition strategies
- Page 38 – **Collaborative Communities** Networking across the Trust
- Page 46 – **HEADlines** Louise Lawrence
- Page 48 – **Book Corner** No Silver Bullets



Happy Birthday Belgrave!

Celebrating twenty years of excellence

Happy Birthday Belgrave!

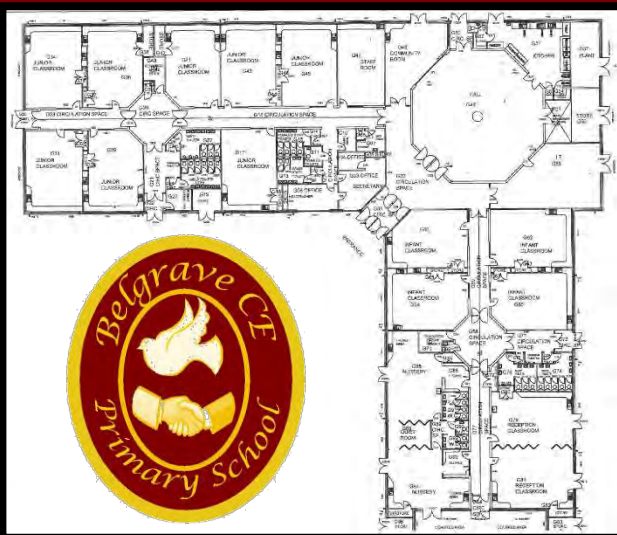
September 2022 marked the twentieth anniversary of the opening of Belgrave St. Bartholomew's Academy. We look back at some of the key events from the last two decades and speak to the new co-principals about their plans for the future.

Laying the foundations

Belgrave was built on the site of the former Florence Colliery which opened in 1874 and closed in 1992. The area stood derelict for almost ten years until Government New Deal funding enabled the local authority to build a replacement for two crumbling Victorian schools with falling rolls. Dresden C.E. Primary and Florence Community sat on opposite sides of Belgrave Road and were brought together through an amalgamation process. They were two very different schools.

Dresden was predominantly white pupils, whilst Florence had around 90% Asian pupils. When the new school was formed, it was a significant change in the area and there were a unique range of complex issues. Belgrave was clearly and deliberately set out along Christian aims and values, illustrated by its mission statement – 'An achieving school and a caring community' and promoted through the school motto, 'Courtesy, Consideration and Respect'.

The brand new £2.4 million replacement was originally built to cater for 485 pupils but was oversubscribed from the beginning. For the first few years, Year 6 pupils were housed in mobile classrooms. Despite this oversight the children benefited from state of the art facilities which included innovative energy-saving features and a dedicated computer suite. Routines, policies and practices were also new. Staff worked collaboratively with headteacher Chris Brislen on the high expectations they wanted to set out for the children. Governors and parents were also key players in shaping the flagship school it would become.



Above (from top to bottom): The Sentinel newspaper covered the opening of Belgrave C.E. Primary School on Monday 9th September 2002. The article focused on the school's 'innovative energy-saving features' which included solar power panels and rainwater measuring unit. The original architect's drawing of the school building and logo.



Above (from top to bottom): Florence Colliery in the 1990s. The cleared site in 2001 with the New Florence pub and Wacky Warehouse clear to see. Belgrave C. E. Primary school

Happy Birthday Belgrave!

Recognised Excellence

A year after it opened the school underwent its first Ofsted inspection which resulted in a 'good' grading overall. Inspectors highlighted the progress the school had already achieved: 'It has made good progress in identifying areas for development and has quickly instilled an ethos, based firmly on its status as a Church school.'

Key strengths included -

- 'The very good leadership of the headteacher and the positive ethos of the school'
- 'The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good and excellent features'

By the time of its second Ofsted inspection in January 2008 the school was graded 'Outstanding' for the first time. The report stated "this highly successful school provides an excellent standard of education and ensures a high quality of care, guidance and support for its pupils. The school's promotion of race equality is outstanding and it has instilled in its pupils an excellent understanding of each other's faiths and cultures and of those beyond the school, bringing about a common understanding of how to live together amicably. The teamwork amongst staff, governors, and pupils is almost tangible. The school has improved hugely since its previous inspection. It knows itself really well and is always looking for new ways to help pupils reach even greater heights. It is summed up really well in one parental comment, which echoes the views of many: 'It's not a school, it's one big family.'"

Chris Brislen's passion and leadership was again noted: 'He has shown that he is clearly focused on what he wants the school to achieve and has very high, but realistic, aspirations for pupils' academic and social development. There is a positive emphasis on improvement, which is pursued relentlessly by the headteacher, and staff alike.'

The school knows itself really well and is always looking for new ways to help pupils reach even greater heights.
Belgrave Ofsted Report 2008



The school's celebration of different faiths was recognised by the National Society and Church of England Schools in a published case study entitled *An Extraordinary Educational Experience*: 'White pupils now understand what it is to be a Muslim, and have greater understanding of other faiths. From the foundation stage onwards, the school makes sure that children share what they bring to the table and what they bring is valued.'

BELGRAVE
COMMUNITY BUILDING



Belgrave In The Beginning



Left (from top to bottom): Belgrave school hall during the building process in 2002. Over the years the hall has been used for school performances, daily assemblies, dinners at lunchtime and now has a rock climbing wall. The first of many annual productions was *Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* in July 2003. Nursery class prior to the school opening in the summer of 2002. The children in Early Years have direct access to their own outdoor area.

Above: The original computing suite was later converted into a performing arts studio which was officially opened by actor John Leeson in September 2008. The use of technology has always been a key driver of the school and pupils currently benefit from the use of one-to-one iPads.

Happy Birthday Belgrave!

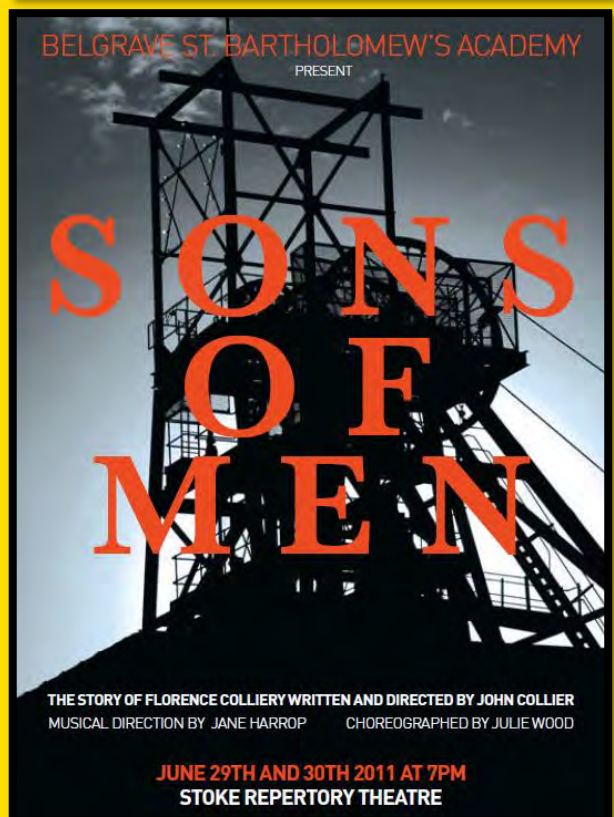
Performing Arts Specialism

With the large percentage of EAL pupils at the school, it was decided early on that there was an urgent need for language development and application. Bilingual staff and literacy-rich environments were two strategies for developing reading and writing. Spoken language opportunities were further enhanced through the focus on drama and music. Over time the school built a specialist team of performing arts experts who worked with every class to develop confidence and performance skills linked to their topic work. Affectionately known as 'The 3J's' the team was made up of John Collier (drama specialist) Jane Harrop (music specialist) and Julie Wood (dance specialist).

As well as internal expertise there were also national projects with organisations such as *Creative Partnerships* and the *Royal Shakespeare Company*. In June 2009 the school hosted a local Primary Shakespeare Festival which involved a day of open-air productions performed in a huge marquee.

Pupils also had the opportunity to perform at professional venues such as the Victoria Hall and Regent Theatre and every child in Key Stage 1 and 2 was given the chance to perform on stage at Stoke Repertory Theatre in their own showcase productions. In 2011 pupils were involved in a stage production telling the story of Florence Colliery which involved months of research and included interviews with former miners that had worked at the 'pit' which formerly stood on the school site.

With performing arts placed firmly at the heart of the curriculum it was perhaps not surprising that the school achieved the coveted Arts Mark Gold Award and Platinum Sing Up Award. The school's outstanding provision was also recognised by Arts Connect who awarded Belgrave 'Hub School Status'. This resulted in the academy being an official advocate for arts and cultural education.



Performing Arts



Happy Birthday Belgrave!

Top Marks

As well as awards for its promotion of the arts, the school has achieved a succession of nationally accredited 'Gold' awards such as Investors in People, ActiveMark, Healthy School and the Children's Fund. One of its proudest moments was winning the national 21st Century Learning Alliance award for leading innovation. It recognised the school's focus on involving pupils in planning their own curriculum and the wide range of opportunities available to foster their skills and confidence. Sir Mike Tomlinson (co-chairman of the 21st Century Learning Alliance) said at the time: "What they have achieved is remarkable and a powerful model for other schools in England".

In April 2011 the former Belgrave C. E. Primary became an Academy. Chris Brislen explains: "I believe we were among the first C of E primary schools in England, due to reluctance of church of England to embrace academies. However, it gave us more freedom to express those Christian values in our own curriculum framework."

In March 2012 Belgrave was one of 100 schools in England to be granted teaching school status. This government initiative marked a shift towards school-centred training and development. The programme gave outstanding schools the freedom and autonomy to lead a group of schools, working with other partners including at least one university, to deliver high quality support for teachers and leaders at all stages in their career. BTSA was created to deliver on the government's 'Big Six' which included partnering with the University of Derby to facilitate the School Direct ITT programme. In 2017 Ofsted noted that as a result of Belgrave being the lead school for BTSA "teachers receive exceptional professional development, which enables them to make swift and sustained improvements to their practice".



Happy Birthday Belgrave!



Above: Belgrave staff photograph from 2014. Some of the original staff are now members of the St. Bart's Central Leadership Team including Lisa Sarikaya (CEO), training and development officers John Collier and Eva Cerioni, Sean Thomson (Chief Operations Officer) and Kelly Deaville (Head of Digital Transformation).

Siblings, Not Clones

The work of the teaching school, in particular the school to school support projects, resulted in greater success for other local schools. Supporting Oakefield Primary in Crewe and Cranberry Primary in Alsager led to Belgrave sponsoring both schools resulting in them becoming the first two academies in the St. Bart's Multi-Academy Trust.

Since 2013 many others have followed and the 'Belgrave family' has now grown to 19 schools, each one unique. The relationship is often described as 'siblings, not clones' with one shared mission – to provide the best education and curriculum in order to enable every child to realise their full potential. That's a significant number of children – the current count is 6362!

The shared mission is underpinned by the St. Bart's PEACE values – Passion, Encouragement, Ambition, Collaboration and Enjoyment.



We have a **Passion** for releasing potential in all our children and staff through the **Encouragement** and development of **Ambition**, aspiration and excellence in all aspects of our work. Our commitment is to place children at the centre of everything we do. Working in **Collaboration**, we strive to provide the highest quality of education experience and outcomes for our young people in an inclusive environment. Through the **Enjoyment** of learning, we live life together in all its fullness through **PEACE**.

Famous Faces

Voice of canine sidekick visits to help school

Pupils hound K-9 for Dr Who story

BY LAURA NAYLOR
laura.naylor@hertfordshire.co.uk

PUPILS were treated to an out-of-this-world experience when a Doctor Who actor visited their school.

Children at Belgrave Church of England School welcomed the voice of K-9, the robotic dog, into their classroom yesterday – in the form of professional actor John Leeson.

Mr Leeson first appeared in Doctor Who in the 1970s and recently revived his role with the most up-to-date Doctor, played by David Tennant, in an episode called School Reunion.

Your six pupils acted as journalists during his three-hour visit, and interviewed him for a school project.

Mr Leeson is one of several Doctor Who actors to have been invited to the primary school in Longton, after advanced skills teacher John Collier constructed a classroom Tardis to help engage children in their learning.

He said: "The children have been really excited about Mr Leeson's visit. They are really into Doctor Who at the moment and we have been doing a lot about the series in literacy lessons."

"We didn't tell them he was coming until last week and so soon as they found out they were full of anticipation."

"On Wednesday they researched K-9 on the internet and prepared their questions, and later they will be writing their own interviews with the star."

Forty-five pupils in year six got the chance to meet the voice of K-9.

Ashleigh Chadwick, aged 10, who lives in Normanscott, is an avid Doctor Who fan. She said: "It was really great to meet Mr Leeson because I really like Doctor Who and it's good to know I have met the person who does K-9's voice."

"I was really looking forward to him coming to our school, and I'm glad that Mr Collier likes Doctor Who so this could happen."

Caleb Goodall, aged 10, who comes from Longton, was one of the lucky pupils who asked a question of the Doctor Who actor.

He said: "I have always wanted to meet Mr Leeson and I love the K-9 character."

"It's good to meet someone famous."

Mr Leeson, who has visited the Pottery in



Look Who's in here, sir

PUPILS invited a special time traveller – an actor who has appeared in BBC 1's Doctor Who – to see their school's Tardis.

Near six children from Belgrave Primary, in Longton, were treated to a drama workshop with Alan Ruscoe, who played a mannequin-like Auton in the last series of the cult BBC TV show.

Alan has also appeared in two of the Star Wars films.

John Collier, an advanced skills teacher at Belgrave Primary, contacted many past and present stars, inviting them to see the school's time machine.

He said: "I wrote to Alan originally about his connection with me. I was surprised it he actually comes."

"He offered to spend a day with us. I couldn't believe it. It came true, for me, the children."

"Tardis – which comes with a Dalek and equipment – is aimed at inspire learning."



SENCE: Pupils and Charlotte in the Tardis
John Smith



BRIGHT TRACK: Triple jumper Laura Samuel with pupils Malika Javed, left, and Nathan Dugg. Below, Laura competing in the Ash, London-based Pro, at Crystal Palace in August.

Pupils jump to it as athlete visits

Clockwise from top left: Over the years Belgrave pupils have benefited from visits from a range of famous faces including Doctor Who actor John Leeson, radio presenter Louise Stokes, Star Wars actor Alan Ruscoe, Dame Floella Benjamin, triple jumper Laura Samuel, CBeebies star Alex Winters and local entertainer Jonathan Wilkes.



STAR TURN: Baroness Benjamin during her visit to Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy.

Play School legend inspires teachers

BY CLAIRE SMYTH

NEW teachers embarking on the first year of their careers received a lesson from a children's television icon at the opening of a new teacher training centre.

Piella Benjamin, better known as a presenter on BBC show Play School in the 1970s, spoke to more than 40 newly qualified teachers at Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy, in Longton, yesterday, where she also celebrated her birthday.

The 46-year-old – who was made a peer in the House of Lords three years ago – reminded the group of primary teachers of the importance of creating an "atmosphere of love" for children at school.

Speaking after being presented with a birthday cake, she said: "I get letters from people now and they say, 'When I was a child, I was in a children's home and nobody loved me but you because of your play school'."

"That's the power of television, that's the power of the classroom and the power of the teacher. Because childhood lasts a lifetime."

"No matter what is going on in a child's life they need to be able to come to school and have that security. You need to create an oasis of love."

Baroness Benjamin's visit to the school marked the launch of a new training centre for primary school teachers, Britannia Teaching School Alliance, made up of more than 20 schools across North Staffordshire and Cheshire, involved in second training for newly-qualified teachers in schools.

The hub offers courses which teachers have to complete before they are fully qualified.

Andrew Warren, director of the



STAR TURN: Baroness Benjamin during her visit to Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy.



STAR TURN: Baroness Benjamin during her visit to Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy.

Play School legend inspires teachers

NEW teachers embarking on the first year of their careers received a lesson from a children's television icon at the opening of a new teacher training centre.

Piella Benjamin, better known as a presenter on BBC show Play School in the 1970s, spoke to more than 40 newly qualified teachers at Belgrave St Bartholomew's Academy, in Longton, yesterday, where she also celebrated her birthday.

The 46-year-old – who was made a peer in the House of Lords three years ago – reminded the group of primary teachers of the importance of creating an "atmosphere of love" for children at school.

Speaking after being presented with a birthday cake, she said: "I get letters from people now and they say, 'When I was a child, I was in a children's home and nobody loved me but you because of your play school'."

"That's the power of television, that's the power of the classroom and the power of the teacher. Because childhood lasts a lifetime."

"No matter what is going on in a child's life they need to be able to come to school and have that security. You need to create an oasis of love."

Baroness Benjamin's visit to the school marked the launch of a new training centre for primary school teachers, Britannia Teaching School Alliance, made up of more than 20 schools across North Staffordshire and Cheshire, involved in second training for newly-qualified teachers in schools.

The hub offers courses which teachers have to complete before they are fully qualified.

Andrew Warren, director of the

Happy Birthday Belgrave!



Building A Legacy

Chris Brislen (above) was the founding headteacher at the Academy. The 63-year-old, originally from Swansea, got the job in 2002 after the school was built to combine Dresden Primary and Florence Primary School. He said: "I set about trying to make the school the best it could be. I wanted it to be creative and innovative. I wanted us to take risks and stay focused on the most important objective - which was what was in the interest of the children."

During his time, Belgrave became the first primary academy in Stoke and was in the top 5% of schools in the country. He was head teacher for eleven years and has many fond memories. "The beating heart of the school is the people in it. More recently we see the parents of the children that we originally taught. The parents who have gone through and send their children back. I like to think the school has continued to improve since the first day. We wanted to create a school people are proud of and I think we've achieved that. If there's legacy from me, it's that the relentless ambition to improve is still here. I'm proud that the school is better now than it was in 2002."



Making Learning Fun

Lisa Sarikaya (above) joined the school when it first opened in 2002 before being Principal between 2013 and 2018. Lisa has recently started her new role as CEO of St Bart's Multi-Academy Trust, which the school is part of. The 49-year-old described the school as 'ahead of the game' when it comes to technology which has contributed to its success.

Lisa, of Meir Park, said: "The big thing that's changed since 2002, is the technology. We had an IT suite, then a TV studio, then we had all these devices, we wanted to be ahead of the game."

"We've now got five year olds who can do voice notes and Year 6 pupils making movies. It amazes me what they can do. We try to make it fun, enjoyable and accessible. The behaviour here is amazing and it's because the children want to be here."

As CEO of the Trust, Lisa is in charge of nineteen schools across Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Cheshire and Shropshire. She said: "I hope the children have fond memories of Belgrave and if we've done that, then we've done our job right."

Happy Birthday Belgrave!



On An Even Keel

Kelly Deaville's time as Principal was probably one of the most turbulent. Between 2018 and 2022 she spent half of her leadership navigating a pandemic.

The 40-year-old from Fenton said: "I did my first year, then Covid hit for two years. I had my last year before I decided to move to another role in the Trust. As a principal, navigating a school through Covid was tough. It was tough for everybody." Despite the difficulties, Kelly said a lot of positives came out of Covid. She said: "We didn't know what they'd been exposed to, what they had seen, if they'd lost family members. We'd got staff who suffered illness themselves and who'd lost family members as well. Everyone was incredible - staff, children and parents all included. Relationships with parents developed as we were phoning parents on a weekly basis. We built really strong relationships which have continued.

"The kids are just amazing. They're so resilient and whatever it is, they're up for it. They get really excited about anything new and we just want to get stuck in and give everything a go. It makes such a difference."



Above left: Former Principal Kelly Deaville.
Above: Current co-principals Jennifer Craig and George Barlow.

Plans For The Future

The leadership of Belgrave is in safe hands with the new co-principals Jen Craig and George Barlow working together to continue its legacy and preserve its reputation. Jen from Werrington joined the school in 2006. It was her first teaching job and she has never left. The 38 year-old said: "The thing I love is that the children don't see differences here in culture, religion, ethnicity, it's like a family. There's been loads of fun memories like residential. I did feel emotional when we were rated outstanding by Ofsted. I remember when the old head came in and told everybody."

George from Penkhull started his career at the school as a sports coach ten years ago. He went on to do his teacher training with BTSA and the University of Derby before he got his first Year 5 class. The 34 year-old said: "I love the feel and the ethos. The behaviour here is brilliant, the children are really polite, and they are really welcoming."

Happy Birthday Belgrave!

Twentieth birthday celebrations with current Headboy Azaan Shah and Head Girl Manha Ali. From left, current co-principals Jennifer Craig and George Barlow and former heads Kelly Deaville, Lisa Sarikaya and Chris Brislen.



Birthday Celebrations

To mark the latest milestone Belgrave held a birthday party. There were a variety of activities throughout the day and everyone took part in the birthday lunch. Former teachers, including heads, also returned to help the academy celebrate its 20th birthday and make the day one that will be remembered for years to come.

The twentieth anniversary celebrations came at the same time that Belgrave heard they had received two further prestigious awards. The Primary Science Quality Mark Outreach Award recognises the impact of the school's Science curriculum. They are also one of 689 schools worldwide to have achieved Apple Distinguished School (ADS) status. This award recognises the way Apple technology is used in an innovative and creative way to support teaching and learning. Proof that the strive for excellence continues. Long may it continue.

The Primary Science Quality Mark Outreach Award

PSQM

for schools which demonstrate how effective science leadership is beginning to have an impact on science teaching and learning across the school.

PSQM Gilt

for schools which demonstrate how established effective science leadership is having a sustained impact on science teaching and learning across the school.

PSQM Outreach

for schools which meet the PSQM Gilt criteria and also demonstrate impact of science leadership, teaching and learning, on other schools.

Schools can work towards one of three Primary Science Quality Marks: PSQM, PSQM Gilt, and PSQM Outreach. PSQM is for 'schools which demonstrate how effective science leadership is *beginning* to have an impact on science teaching and learning across the school', whereas PSQM Gilt requires the demonstration of a '*sustained* impact', and PSQM Outreach is for schools that meet Gilt criteria and also impact science leadership and teaching in other schools.

Belgrave - the journey so far



SEPTEMBER 2002

Belgrave C.E. Primary opens on the site of the former Florence Colliery.



SEPTEMBER 2008

Ofsted grades the school 'Outstanding' for the first time.



JUNE 2008

Belgrave beams a live music concert to Edgeware in South Africa.



SEPTEMBER 2008

Doctor Who Day includes a visit from actors John Leeson and Alan Ruscoe.



SEPTEMBER 2010

Belgrave TV launches with programmes made by the pupils.



MAY 2010

Year 6 travel to France for a week's residential at Chateau Du Broutel.



JUNE 2009

Belgrave team up with the RSC to host a local Shakespeare festival.



MAY 2009

Belgrave staff appear in an 'Amarillo' video for the local Headteacher's conference.



APRIL 2011

Belgrave becomes the first Primary Academy in Stoke-on-Trent.



APRIL 2012

Belgrave becomes a National Teaching School and forms BTSA.



MARCH 2013

ITV news film a special news report about Belgrave for the national NAHT conference.



SEPTEMBER 2022

Belgrave celebrates its twentieth anniversary.



DECEMBER 2019

Belgrave goes viral when rapper Stormzy tweets their 'brilliant' cover version of one of his songs.



APRIL 2018

Westfield Nursery School becomes part of the Belgrave family as a base for young children with special educational needs.



**THE ST. BART'S
ACADEMY
—TRUST—**

NOVEMBER 2013

Belgrave sponsors Cranberry and St. Michael's Community Academies and SBMAT is officially born.



Making The Grade

A round-up of recent inspection reports

Cranberry Academy



Pupils thrive at this happy and welcoming school. Staff expect all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to work hard and achieve well. Pupils do their best each day to live up to these high expectations. They get on well with each other and are extremely polite to staff and visitors. Pupils feel safe in school. They said that there is always someone there to help them if they have any concerns. They learn how to keep themselves safe at home and when playing out with friends. They also learn about managing positive relationships and how to keep safe when online. Pupils said that staff are quick to deal with bullying if it happens. Pupils develop a great enthusiasm for learning. They listen attentively and are keen to contribute to discussions. These positive attitudes are developed right from the start of early years, where children learn routines that help them to develop independence. Leaders have developed a well-thought-out programme to support pupils' wider development. Pupils are encouraged to take on additional responsibilities such as those of sports leaders. They enjoy earning rewards for living up to the school's values. They also enjoy participating in clubs and representing the school in sporting events.

"Leaders work effectively with staff to encourage pupils to become respectful and responsible citizens. Pupils behave well. Learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Staff encourage pupils to value diversity. They work with leaders to provide a broad range of extra-curricular activities and use residential visits and educational trips to bring the curriculum to life. Leaders have developed a curriculum that reflects their high aspirations for all pupils."

Overall effectiveness: Good

The quality of education: Good
Behaviour and attitudes: Good
Personal development: Good
Leadership and management: Good
Early years provision: Good

Inspection date: April 2022



Hazel Slade Academy



Leaders ensure that pupils start to develop their experience and understanding of the world around them as soon as they join the school. The wide range of clubs, and the nurture groups, visitors to school and trips provided are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They say that teachers care about them and want to help them to do well. They know what they are expected to achieve and try hard to do so. They are well supported to develop into resilient learners, who can use mistakes to learn more. Those who need extra help are identified quickly and given the right support.

Reading is at the heart of everything in the school. Pupils enjoy reading to adults and adults reading to them. They are proud of how often they read independently and of how many books they have read. Leaders make sure that every child has the opportunity to learn to read and to love to read. Books are everywhere, not just in classrooms but also in corridors. Many pupils choose to spend breaktime choosing new books.

Leaders ensure that all teachers check pupils' understanding in every lesson. Regular, formal assessment pinpoints where pupils may need more targeted help. Teachers are effectively supported by well-trained teaching assistants to provide extra support to pupils, where it is needed.

“Leaders have undertaken a rigorous review of the school’s curriculum. They have been well supported by the multi-academy trust in doing so. The changes made have given pupils even more opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in all subjects. The sequence of learning is carefully planned to help pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to build their learning over time to achieve ambitious targets. Leaders have scheduled frequent checks to ensure that the planned sequence of learning always works well for pupils.”

Overall effectiveness: Good

Inspection date: September 2022



Kingsland C of E Academy



The Christian ethos permeates the school. Pupils feel safe and cared for. They have warm and trusting relationships with adults in the school. Pupils hold the school chaplain in high regard. Pupils can share their concerns and worries with him. As one pupil said, 'We know there is always someone there for us.' Pupils say that bullying does sometimes happen but that adults deal with it quickly. Pupils behave well during lessons.

Reading is prioritised across the school. Children quickly learn to read because staff deliver the phonics programme well. Pupils develop their reading skills through the well-chosen books that match the letter sounds they are learning. Teachers introduce pupils to books that are challenging and engaging. Pupils enjoy mathematics and their knowledge builds over time because the mathematics curriculum is well sequenced. Pupils remember and apply their mathematical skills because teachers frequently revisit previous learning. Pupils know and understand a wide range of mathematical vocabulary. They use this terminology accurately.

Pupils do well because leaders and staff expect them to attend regularly, work hard and do their best. Most pupils rise to these high expectations. Pupils and their families are at the heart of the school community. Leaders work hard to engage with parents. Parents appreciate the variety of courses run in the school's lighthouse centre. Parents are positive about learning ways to support their children's learning.

"Pupils have active roles in the wider community. They learn about people who inspire them in 'courageous advocacy week', they fundraise for local charities and sing carols in the local area. Pupils take pride in the leadership roles they have, such as sports leaders, worship monitors and junior leaders. Leaders have identified the characteristics they want pupils to develop. Consequently, most pupils are resilient, self-confident and know how to deal with difficult situations they may encounter in and out of school."

Overall effectiveness: Good

The quality of education: Good

Behaviour and attitudes: Good

Personal development: Good

Leadership and management: Good

Early years provision: Good

Inspection date: February 2022



Longford Primary Academy



Senior leaders, relatively new to their posts, have a clear vision for the school. They understand their roles and work well as a team. Governors and trust executives support these leaders well. They have ensured leaders access useful training and that they collaborate with other professionals from within the trust. This work is having a positive influence.

Pupils in the early years of learning to read benefit from daily phonics lessons. These lessons are well-matched to pupils' abilities.

Pupils behave well around the school and during lessons. They are eager to learn and listen carefully to their teachers. Their behaviour creates a calm and purposeful environment that benefits everyone.

Pupils learn about different types of bullying and understand that such behaviour is not accepted at the school. Incidents are very rare. Pupils trust adults to sort things out quickly when necessary.

Pupils are proud of their school. They make their own improvement suggestions through the school council. This arrangement boosts their confidence and helps them to develop a sense of responsibility. Leaders use assemblies to promote pupils' understanding of social issues and current events. Pupils are encouraged to share their opinions by voting about these issues. This helps to prepare for life in modern Britain.

"Longford Primary Academy is a friendly and welcoming school where pupils enjoy being with their friends and engaging in their learning."

The school's ethos 'hand in hand we learn' is reflected through many aspects of school life."

Staff know pupils well and care about them. This helps pupils to feel safe and happy."

Overall effectiveness: Requires improvement

The quality of education:

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes: Good

Personal development: Good

Leadership and management:

Requires improvement

Early years provision: Good

Inspection date: October 2022



St Saviour's C of E Academy



St Saviour's C of E Academy is a happy and welcoming school where pupils thrive. This is reflected in staff's and pupils' dispositions. Their energy and optimism are clear to see. The school's strong Christian values shine through in all aspects of school life. Pupils enjoy school. They look forward to being with their friends, and they value their education. Staff have high expectations. Pupils live up to these expectations and work hard. They are rightly proud of the work that they produce.

Pupils get on well together. They look after each other and include others in their games and conversations. They have the confidence to greet visitors and welcome them to the school. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils trust adults to sort such matters out quickly if they happen. This ensures that pupils feel safe at all times throughout the day.

Lessons help pupils build their knowledge step by step. Adults make regular checks in lessons to find out what pupils know and remember. Staff adapt plans to help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn the full curriculum.

Leaders entrust pupils with responsibilities to promote independence. Some pupils work as 'office juniors', others are school councillors, play leaders or prayer leaders. Pupils see these responsibilities as a great privilege. They work diligently in their duties and grow in confidence as a result.

"Leaders have carefully considered ways to promote pupils' spiritual development. The school has close links with the church, and pupils learn about a broad variety of faiths. This, along with the school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, teaches pupils about the importance of respect and tolerance for others."

The school's values are aspiration, perseverance, respect, forgiveness, honesty and friendship. Adults and children share these values and demonstrate them in their speech and conduct. As a result, the school is a calm and caring place."

Overall effectiveness: Good

Inspection date: January 2022



Weston Infant Academy



Pupils enjoy coming to Weston Infant Academy school because they love learning new things. Pupils are kind and welcoming. They feel happy and safe. If they feel worried or sad, they know that adults will help them. Pupils rarely fall out with each other because they want to follow the school's rules. The principal has a clear and ambitious vision for the school. She has developed passionate and skilled leaders who share this vision.

Leaders have worked hard to develop a curriculum that is exciting for the pupils. The pupils learn about local people such as Emma Bridgewater and the captain of the Titanic, Edward John Smith. Learning is well sequenced and builds on what pupils already know. Mathematics is a strength in the school. Leaders have ensured there is a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics. Resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning. In the early years, teachers are skilled in developing mathematical understanding by asking questions that make children think deeply. Children are skilled at explaining their answers. They are proud of their achievements.

Pupils play well with each other at breaktimes. All pupils are included in the games. Adults ensure pupils have successful playtimes. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified early and effectively. Leaders have worked effectively to improve attendance. Families that need help are carefully identified. Staff then work effectively with the school's educational welfare officer to give targeted support.

"Pupils' positive behaviour allows learning to happen. Pupils are enthusiastic learners. They use the resources in the classrooms to support their learning well."

Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND benefit from appropriate support so that they can access the full curriculum alongside their classmates."

Leaders carefully consider ways to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils attend clubs that support both academic and personal development. For example, pupils attend games, writing and science clubs. Pupils enjoy attending these clubs."

Overall effectiveness: Good

Inspection date: March 2022

Weston Junior Academy



Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy learning and are keen to do well. The curriculum is planned effectively in all subjects, so pupils' learning builds well from year to year. Pupils particularly enjoy reading because of the emphasis that staff place on it. The school's corridors have attractive displays about books that capture pupils' imagination. The school's values run through everything that happens at Weston Junior Academy. Pupils know and understand them. For example, pupils understand why it is so important to have 'empathy and respect' for other people, especially those who are different from themselves.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at other times of the day. They are polite, respectful and courteous. They trust staff to support them if they have any problems. For example, they know that bullying is not tolerated and that any that does happen will be dealt with well. Pupils feel safe and are safe in school.

Staff have carefully chosen the books that pupils read in class. These texts engage and interest pupils. The well-stocked library is popular. Pupils talk about their favourite authors and genres. Leaders have also taken deliberate steps to widen pupils' vocabulary. This has also proved successful. Mathematics is taught well throughout the school. The curriculum is appropriately sequenced, and teachers explain new content skilfully. Pupils develop good basic skills. They also learn to reason and explain their thinking when solving problems.

"The principal and senior leaders provide clear, strategic leadership. They carefully choose improvement actions based on evidence-based research. As a result, the school has improved considerably over recent years. Governors provide effective support and challenge to leaders."

Trustees and trust staff have also played a full part in the school's improvement. Leaders, supported by the trust, have made the development of staff a key priority."

Overall effectiveness: Good

The quality of education: Good

Behaviour and attitudes: Good

Personal development: Good

Leadership and management: Good

Inspection date: April 2022





Celebrating Skills

Knutton St. Mary's collaboration with
Skills Builder Partnership

Celebrating Skills

Knutton St. Mary's have recently been awarded the Skills Builder Gold Award. Skills Builder Partnership provides schools with an Educators Toolkit to support pupils with mastering essential skills as a core part of their learning.

Background

Knutton St. Mary's is a Church of England academy with approximately 200 pupils from Nursery to Year 6, situated in Newcastle-Under-Lyme, Staffordshire.

We are part of St. Bart's Multi-Academy Trust. Our school is committed to enabling every individual to flourish; fulfilling their God-given potential and becoming lifelong learners, so they 'shine like bright stars in the sky'. We believe that our children deserve a school which provides high quality education that broadens horizons, builds resilience and raises future aspirations.

For us, in preparing children for their futures in the 21st Century, the essential skills were the missing part of the jigsaw and we knew that Skills Builder would fully support our vision. Skills Builder supports all children in developing the essential skills at their own pace, building an understanding of their own strengths and next steps. This enables all children to experience empowerment and success.

Implementing the essential skills in Knutton St. Mary's has been hugely beneficial for our school community. It has fully supported our vision and has enriched our recovery following the pandemic, with the whole school working together to develop the essential skills. As we have been rebuilding community links, it has given us a clear purpose and Framework which has underpinned our children's development. For example, in our intergenerational work. The training ensured that staff felt confident to teach the skills explicitly and weave them through the curriculum.

Children who are able to master the essential skills can make the most of their time in school, and thrive in their wider lives. Working with the Skills Builder Partnership can support every child to build those skills as a core part of their learning.



Skills Builder
Gold Award

Celebrating Skills



This is evident across the whole school. The EYFS Lead stated; "It has supported the staff in building strong foundations as the children continue on their learning journey." In Year 6, the teacher commented; "It works well with the curriculum and matches the personal needs of the children."

Keep it simple

Skills Builder is part of our School Development Plan and Pupil Premium Strategy. It is high profile within school life and skills are regularly referenced in staff meetings and with governors. We focus on one skill per month. These are on curriculum plans which are published on our website. The language of essential skills is embedded and used extensively across the school. Our focus skill is rewarded weekly in our celebration assembly when individuals are recognised for developing the skill within the broader curriculum. At the end of each focus, every child earns a certificate. This is shared in our weekly newsletter, on Twitter and on the website. Every class has a Skills Builder working wall which displays the essential skills and scaffolds skill development. In addition, we have a display in the hall which celebrates the application of skills with photographs of the children. We use the essential skill icons across the school environment, including the playground.

Start early, keep going

Knutton St. Mary's has embedded the essential skills across the school with everybody focusing on the same skill at the same time. The use of teacher assessment ensures that the teachers focus on the appropriate steps. All year groups and classes have regular and planned opportunities for the learning and practising of the skills. There is a timetabled weekly session for all KS1 and KS2 classes, whilst EYFS use circle time. Our year group curriculum plans and staff calendar map the focus skill across the year and our website, Twitter and weekly newsletter highlight and celebrate the learning opportunities children have had.

The Essential Eight Skills



There are eight key universal skills that underpin success at every stage of life: they unlock learning while at school, ensure young people are fully prepared for the independence of university and college, and empower people to land their dream job in the future.



Celebrating Skills



Measure it

All teachers use the Skills Builder Hub to baseline children and use this to prioritise and inform their teaching of essential skills. This ensures that children are being taught and given opportunities to apply the appropriate steps. At the end of a monthly skill focus, teachers assess progress from the baseline. In addition, teachers revisit their assessments where continued application of an earlier focus skill across the curriculum and through wider opportunities has secured progress, such as a visit or a themed day. Other staff involved with the class, including the teaching assistant, contribute to this.

Focus tightly

Across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, all teachers ensure that the essential focus skill is explicitly taught in a timetabled session at the start of each week. This is pitched according to assessment. The skill is then built upon throughout the week, across the curriculum and rewarded during our 'Celebrate and Praise' assembly. EYFS teach the skill during circle time and then this feeds into continuous provision. The Accelerator Programme has supported our school to embed our approach and the staff training was invaluable to ensure every teacher felt confident in engaging in focused and explicit teaching of a skill. We also use our website to share the focus skill as well as engaging home activities for parents/carers and their children.

Keep practising

All teachers exploit links across the curriculum areas in order to provide opportunities for children to practise the essential skills. In EYFS, this is a focus of continuous provision. In KS1 and KS2, this encompasses the full range of the curriculum, from English and Maths, to PE and Music. We have developed wider opportunities which focus on the essential skills. This includes the KS2 residential and community events. Each January, we start the

new year with a whole school topic based on a shared text. During our planning for this, subject leaders worked as a team to develop learning opportunities to use and reinforce the essential skills. All of our extra-curricular activities have a specific skill focus. For example, our Goblin Car club focuses on problem solving whilst our Mindfulness club focuses on staying positive.

Bring it to life

Every child has had an opportunity to engage with project-based learning through our whole school text. We have spent the year rebuilding our wider community links after the pandemic which has enriched our essential skill learning. This has included our legacy learning projects, intergenerational projects, Police Cadets, a Lego challenge day with our local college and employer encounters. We have also achieved our Gold Award during our PDSA careers week and used the Trash to Treasure project. All KS2 topics start with a focus on a linked career which includes discussion about the essential skills as well as academic pathways. This means our pupils are exposed to many different careers and the essential skills they need to develop for these jobs. Therefore, they are introduced to amazing possibilities to inspire them and encourage them to live life in all its fullness.

What's next

Knutton St. Mary's is committed to further embedding the essential skills in order to support us in improving the life chances of all of our children. We will continue to build our wider community links and ensure there are many opportunities to welcome parents/carers into school for project days and events. We have rewritten aspects of our curriculum to ensure that opportunities such as enterprise challenges are planned for from September. As all staff and children are now familiar with the essential skills, we will continue to develop and broaden opportunities throughout the curriculum. We will also explore the use of the Expanded Framework and use the Stepping Stones where appropriate.

Good for EAL. Good for All.

Strategies to support language acquisition



Good for EAL. Good for ALL.

John Collier recently delivered a session for all St. Bart's Trust schools on effective strategies for supporting language acquisition for pupils who use English as an Additional Language (EAL). Over the next few pages he summarises the key features of EAL pedagogy and provides practical ideas for the primary classroom.

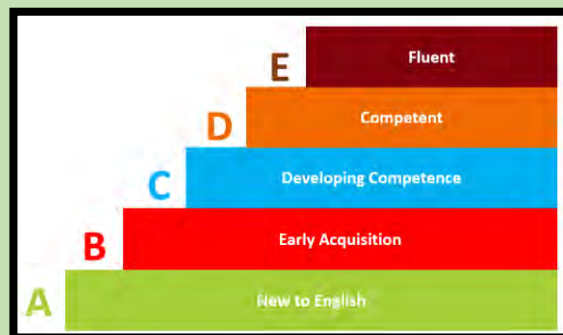
Over the years I have had the pleasure of working with The Bell Foundation in Cambridge. They are a charity whose vision is 'creating opportunity, changing lives and overcoming disadvantage through language education'.

In 2019 there were over 1.5 million pupils with EAL in England's mainstream schools. In their 2020 report, *The benefits of integrating students who use EAL into mainstream lessons*, The Bell Foundation recognise the 'Herculean task' facing learners who speak English as an additional language: "As well as developing their English, they are also studying Science, Maths, History, Art and so on, and the curriculum is not waiting while they catch up with their language learning".

It is clear that EAL pupils have a double job to do – learn English and learn *through* English at the same time. The first step for staff working with EAL pupils is to define where each individual's ability currently lies. To do this I recommend schools use The Bell Foundation's EAL Assessment Framework. It is free to download and can be completed as a hard PDF version or edited in an Excel format. The framework itself is built on Webster's five Levels of Proficiency in English (2011).

These levels are banded as follows –

- **BAND A – New to English**
- **BAND B – Early Acquisition**
- **BAND C – Developing Competence**
- **BAND D - Competent**
- **BAND E – Fluent**



Above: Levels of proficiency in English
(Webster, 2011)

It is important to recognise that a pupils' language stage can be variable depending on the skills being used, the linguistic and cognitive demands of the task and the learner's motivation to complete the activity set.

Generally we can summarise the focus for teaching and support as follows –

Band A

Require considerable support to access the curriculum content.

Band B

Focus on effective communication and 'meaning making' to build fluency and confidence.

Band C

Focus on increasing range and accuracy of language use, including noticing key features of English.

Band D

Focus on applying listening skills, producing more varied and complex speech and demonstrate greater accuracy in writing.

Band E

Focus on accuracy and independence in writing and competence in spoken English – responding to contexts with no hindrance.

Even at the **Competent** and **Fluent** stages learners may still need occasional support to access curriculum material and tasks

Good for EAL. Good for ALL.

Using **The EAL Assessment Framework** helps teachers to better assess the language needs of their EAL learners. It supports them in identifying need and targeting support.

The Primary Framework contains descriptors to support practitioners in assessing progression in four strands of language – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Viewing, and Writing. It can be used to track children from the EYFS to Year 6, although not all descriptors will necessarily be relevant to an EYFS setting. Professional judgement is advised for Early Years staff using the resource.

Alongside the framework, The Bell Foundation also provide strategies for supporting EAL learners in the classroom. These have been designed for practitioners to use in order to develop the levels of English proficiency needed to be successful in accessing the curriculum.

They are based on the three key rationale for EAL pedagogy –

1. **Bilingualism and multilingualism are an asset.** The ability to use more than one language is a valuable skill that learners who use EAL bring with them. Learners actively use the languages they already know to learn English.
2. **Cognitive challenge should be kept appropriately high.** Access to the curriculum is needed but does not involve ‘dumbing down’ the content. E.g. A learner from Greece might be highly skilled at Maths but using English as the language of instruction might prevent them from engaging fully in lessons.
3. **Learners’ proficiency in English is closely linked to academic success.** Research has found that proficiency in English is the strongest predictor of academic achievement. (Strand and Hessel, 2018)

The Bell Foundation’s EAL Assessment Framework for Schools provides a clear focus for school staff to follow.

Use with formative and summative assessment

Initial identification of where the student is



Directly links to relevant support strategies

Feeds into classroom practice



Includes a visual and accessible reporting mechanism

Termly snapshot of progress

Both the PDF and Excel versions of the framework can be downloaded for free from The Bell Foundation website -

<https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/resources/detail/assessment-framework-primary/>

Good for EAL. Good for ALL.

Key features of EAL pedagogy

This pedagogical rationale underpins the key features of EAL pedagogy that supports language development.

- Make the verbal curriculum more visual
- Make the abstract curriculum more concrete
- Develop interactive and collaborative teaching
- Identify the oral and written language demands of the curriculum and provide models
- Use drama and role play to demonstrate how language is used in real life with a focus on communication
- Provide opportunities for exploratory talk
- Ensure home languages are valued and used in school as well as home
- Provide opportunities to talk before writing
- Support through using key phrases and structures rather than just key words

Classroom strategies

Schools can put these key features into practice using classroom strategies from The Bell Foundation's Great Ideas page. There are twenty different strategies that staff can use to support EAL pupils. Of these, eight link directly to the key features identified above. Let's look at them in turn –

1. Visuals

Visuals provide context so that EAL learners can make sense of what is being taught in the curriculum. Examples include photographs or sketches, graphic organisers, diagrams, videos, 3D models and realia (real objects).

2. Graphic organisers

Graphic organisers are ways of presenting information visually. There are many different types of graphic organisers including tables, charts, grids, matrixes, fishbone and Venn diagrams, bar and pie charts, pictograms, concept maps and timelines.

For each band within the EAL Assessment Framework there are classroom support strategies organised under five headings.

Classroom Organisation

Small but significant adjustments to daily classroom management. No special preparation or materials needed.

On-going Differentiation

Making adjustments to:

- How we communicate with learners
- How we present information
- Learning content, materials and resources

Practising English in different situations.

Language Focus

Exposure to different varieties in English through hearing and seeing. Developing English through explicit, targeted work.

Marking and Feedback

Providing EAL learners with feedback to develop proficiency in English. Include strengths and areas for further development.

Communication with Home

Strategies to develop home language skills and aid English acquisition.

Good for EAL. Good for ALL.

3. Collaborative activities

Collaborative activities are any activities where learners are working co-operatively in pairs or groups. This can be through pair or group discussions, completing shared tasks in a pair or group, activities or games with a competitive element, drama and role play, and information exchange activities. The Education Endowment Foundation recently found that “activities which promote talk and interaction between learners tend to result in the best gains”. (*Collaborative Learning Approaches* – EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit).

4. Modelling

Modelling focused on language development provides learners with a written or oral model of the language that the teacher would like the learner to produce. EAL learners need to notice language in order to be able to practise using it effectively. They need to be aware of explicit key features of language, be able to cope with the language demands of each task and be supported in practising target language.

5. Drama and role play

Drama and role play can be fun and used successfully in any area of the curriculum. Some of the simplest and most flexible ways to use it are: hot seating, freeze frame, improvising in pairs, working in groups to devise a scene in a familiar genre, setting a scene involving the whole class and using people to represent something.

6. Using learner's first language

Translanguaging is the term used to describe practices that allow and encourage EAL learners to use their full linguistic repertoire in order to empower them and help them to realise their full potential. This means encouraging EAL learners to speak, write and/or translate to and from their first language and English.

20 different strategies that any teacher could use in their classrooms to support EAL learners*

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Barrier Games | Bilingual Dictionaries |
| Building Vocabulary | Collaborative Activities |
| DARTs | Dictogloss |
| Drama and Role Play | Flashcards |
| Graphic Organisers | Information Gap Activities |
| Jigsaw Activities | Language Drills |
| Modelling | Reading for Meaning |
| Scaffolding | Speaking and Writing Frames |
| Substitution Tables | Translanguaging |
| Using ICT | Visuals |

- Including the key features
- of EAL pedagogy

Good for EAL. Good for ALL.

7. Language drills

Language drills are a way of memorising a chunk of language by repeating it. They can be a very effective approach for learning new vocabulary or language structures. They are also a way of ensuring new vocabulary is introduced in a curriculum context. There are various types of drills, for example: chain and ball drills, 'Hunt the object', 'I went to market' and a variety of songs and chants.

8. Scaffolding

Scaffolding focused on language development means providing temporary support in order to help learners complete a task or acquire a skill. Scaffolding language includes such strategies as: modelling, encouraging learners to use their first language skills, activating prior knowledge about a new topic, incorporating collaborative group or pair work into lessons, Using visuals providing language prompts and frames for speaking and writing.

It is important to stress that applying these strategies in you classroom is 'good for all pupils, not just those with EAL'.

Online resources

There are several websites that provide a wide range of free resources for teaching staff to support EAL pupils. These are listed on the right.

St. Bart's Central Hub resources

Staff from across the St. Bart's Trust can access the 'Strategies to Support EAL Pupils' training module by clicking on the BTSA logo below. The folder contains a 75 minute recording, session slides, The EAL Assessment Framework and supporting classroom resources.



Five websites with free resources to support the teaching of EAL pupils.
Click on the logos to view online.

The Bell Foundation

As well as the Great Ideas page there are also resources suitable for primary school pupils to use across the curriculum.

BBC BITESIZE

The BBC Bitesize EAL page has thirteen learner guides. Each one contains videos, key words and activities.

Collaborative Learning Project

Project Director: Stuart Scott, 17 Barford Street, Islington, LONDON N1 0JN
Telephone +44 (0) 20 7226 8885
We are a teacher network. We develop and disseminate accessible talk-for-learning activities in all subject areas and for all ages.

Talk-for-learning activities in all subject areas and for all ages.

TeachingEnglish

Contains lesson plans, activities, stories, poems and songs for teachers to use in class. Plus a range of 'teacher tools'.

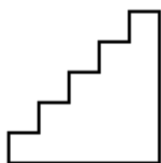
LearnEnglish Kids

An interactive website for EAL learners to access. It also includes pages for parents.

Good for EAL. Good for ALL.

Key takeaways from this article

1



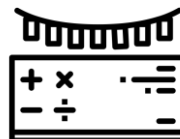
Consider the children you are working with and use The Bell Foundation's EAL Assessment Framework to better assess the language needs of your EAL learners.

2



Explore the range of classroom strategies that are available to support EAL learners, including online resources.

3



Enhance your learning environment with displays, dual language signs, bilingual books and other classroom resources.

4



Celebrate the linguistic skills of all learners by promoting a love of language and providing opportunities to speak, listen, read and write. Empower EAL learners to use their first language alongside English.

5



Create opportunities for your class to work together and collaborate with others. Vary groupings and encourage co-operation. Plan fun activities including drama and role play.

6



Share your successes with colleagues across your setting and communicate with parents on all the great things you are doing to promote the learning *of* English and learning *through* English.



Collaborative Communities

Networking across the Trust

Collaborative Communities

Opportunities for staff to collaborate are a key part of the St. Bart's Multi-Academy Trust People Strategy. Over the last decade we have put in place a range of network opportunities that provide professionals from across the Trust with the time and space to mix and meet.

Back in November 2013, BTSA worked in partnership with Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority to deliver four subject development days to support local primary subject leaders in their delivery of the new National Curriculum.

The success of these one-off events led to the creation of our termly Core Four (now Core Five) networks. Nine years on we have replicated this model of networking to provide further opportunities for St. Bart's staff to come together.

Our 'collaborative communities' work in a variety of ways, but with the same core purpose – 'improving outcomes for our pupils'.

Structured and sustained collaboration enables participants to draw on evidence and expertise in order to refine and adapt practice.

In order for our networks to be successful we foster relationships which are built upon:

- A shared sense of purpose.
- Mutual trust.
- Open and respectful communication.

Through these opportunities we aim to release potential. As Michael Fullan says, "The power of collective capacity is that it enables **ordinary** people to accomplish **extraordinary** things".



Collaborative Communities

PHASE-SPECIFIC

St. Bart's teaching staff have the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues working in parallel phases.



Early Years Network

Similar to our offer for core subject leaders, our Early Years network is facilitated by a team of EYFS experts. The majority of these are Specialist Leaders in Education for Early Years. They provide an opportunity to share best practice, ideas and resources specific to the Foundation Stage curriculum, ensuring a consistent approach across our Multi-Academy Trust.



Year Group Learning Networks

Every teacher in every Trust school has the opportunity to meet with colleagues who work in the same year group.

Eight networks covering Nursery up to Year 6 are facilitated by our Training and Development Officers. They provide a space for practitioners to reflect and plan. The content of each meeting is responsive to themes previously identified.

Typically the sessions cover three key questions –

- *Where are we?*
- *Is it where we want to be?*
- *Where to next?*

Notes from each network are taken and shared more widely with the Trust Central Leadership Team and Academy Principals, promoting clear and transparent communication and ensuring any wider concerns are addressed.

The St. Bart's Multi-Academy Trust Networks



Phase specific

Early Years network
Year group learning networks

Subject-Specific

Core Five subject networks
Foundation subjects network

Whole School

SENCO network
Safeguarding network

Leadership

Deputy Heads network
Executive Management Board

Collaborative Communities

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC

Demonstrating good subject and curriculum knowledge is the third Teachers' Standard (DfE, updated 2013) and there is a national expectation that teachers should 'have a secure knowledge of the relevant subjects and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interests in the subject, and address misunderstandings'. Our subject-specific networks aim to upskill subject leaders who can then disseminate ideas to other staff in their setting.



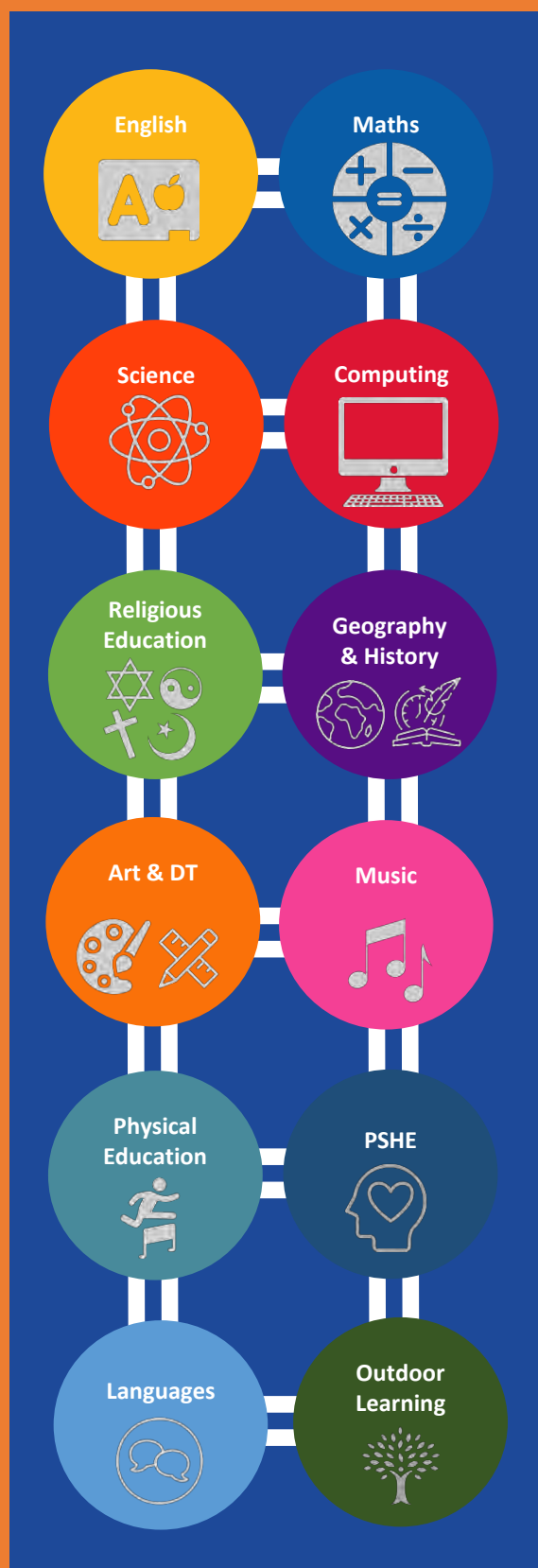
Core Five

Termly networks for Primary subject leaders of English, Maths, Science, Computing and Religious Education. These meetings are led and delivered by Specialist Leaders of Education who are experts in their designated areas. Each session provides attendees with the latest updates, helping them to critically understand subject developments with opportunities to discuss implications with colleagues in a similar role.



Foundation Subject Networks

For a time, we were aware that leaders of other primary subject areas did not have a similar offer to colleagues leading core subjects. In Summer 2022 we addressed this with the introduction of our Foundation Subject networks. Currently they are a forum for discussion rather than subject-specific professional development, offering wider subject leaders the opportunity to celebrate success, share concerns and consider solutions. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and we plan to link these groups with the work we are currently doing with Andy Phillips on curriculum. This will include the creation of a Trust Assessment Tool which will include moderated examples of work from across the Trust.



Collaborative Communities

WHOLE SCHOOL

Alongside our phase and subject-specific networks we also have a number of opportunities for leaders with whole school responsibilities.



SENCO Network

Termly meetings for St. Bart's staff to update SEND co-ordinators on the latest best practice and a chance to discuss systems and ways of working to support pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Upcoming dates are as follows –

Spring Term – Wednesday 1st February 2023

Summer Term – Wednesday 14th June 2023

Meetings last from 1.00 – 3.00pm.

Venue to be confirmed.



Safeguarding Network

Termly meetings providing Safeguarding Leads with essential updates and the opportunity to consider specific areas related to this key role.

LEADERSHIP



Deputy Heads Network

In 2023 we will be facilitating a brand new network for deputy heads and assistant principals from across St. Bart's to reflect on their roles and consider areas of focus to develop their leadership skills.

Dates are as follows –

Spring Term – Wednesday 1st February 2023

Summer Term – Wednesday 7th June 2023

Futher information will be emailed nearer the time.

COLLABORATION

“The most valuable resource that all teachers have is each other.

Without collaboration our growth is limited to our own perspectives.”

ROBERT JOHN MEEHAN





NETWORK MEETING DATES SPRING AND SUMMER 2023

Core Five

| | English | Maths | Science | Computing | R.E. |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Spring 2023 | Tuesday 31 st January 2023 | Tuesday 14 th February 2023 | Tuesday 28 th February 2023 | Tuesday 21 st March 2023 | Tuesday 7 th March 2023 |
| Summer 2023 | Tuesday 16 th May 2023 | Tuesday 23 rd May 2023 | Tuesday 13 th June 2023 | Tuesday 27 th June 2023 | Tuesday 20 th June 2023 |

All sessions run from 1.30 – 4.00pm and will take place in the BTSA Hub apart from R.E. which will be at the Lighthouse Centre, Kingsland C.E. Academy, Eaves Lane, Bucknall, Stoke-on-Trent ST2 9AS

Year Group Learning Networks

| Spring 2023 – all sessions will take place online from 1.30 – 3.30pm | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| Year 6 | Thursday 12 th January | Year 2 | Tuesday 28 th February |
| Year 5 | Thursday 19 th January | Year 1 | Thursday 9 th March |
| Year 4 | Thursday 2 nd February | Reception | Thursday 16 th March |
| Year 3 | Thursday 16 th February | Nursery | Wednesday 22 nd March |

Foundation Subject Meetings

| Summer 2023 – all sessions will take place online from 1.30 – 3.30pm | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Geography & History | Art & DT | Music | Physical Education | PSHE | Languages | Outdoor Learning |
| Friday 5 th May | Friday 12 th May | Friday 19 th May | Thursday 25 th May | Friday 9 th June | Friday 16 th June | Friday 30 th June |



FINANCE MEETINGS FOR ST. BART'S STAFF

St. Bart's Finance Meetings are held between five and six times a year in order to bring together the central and wider finance teams from across the Trust. Meetings are held both face to face and remotely where appropriate.

The focus of the meetings is to relay and discuss any points that may be prevalent at the time and give colleagues the opportunity to meet up and share ideas, discuss any issues that they are encountering and look for potential solutions. Colleagues are encouraged to make suggestions for agenda items, contribute to the discussions during and to offer feedback after the meetings.

Dates for 2023

- **Wednesday 8th February 2023**
- **Wednesday 19th April 2023**
- **Wednesday 28th June 2023**

All meetings start at 10.00am. Location to be confirmed via email.

For further information please contact Chief Finance Officer Anthony Roche at aroche@sbmat.org



HEALTH & SAFETY MEETINGS FOR ST. BART'S STAFF

St. Bart's Health and Safety representatives are invited to our termly Health and Safety meetings led by members of the SBMAT Central Team. Agenda includes legislation changes, training needs, accident reports, staff complaints, key performance indicators, health and safety plan and updates from attendees.

Dates for 2023

- **Spring term – Tuesday 24th January 2023**
- **Summer term – Tuesday 25th April 2023**

All meetings take place on Zoom and start at 10.00am

For further information please contact Trust Compliance and Risk Manager Chris Leach at cleach@sbmat.org

CONGRATULATIONS

This term's round up of good news from across the St. Bart's Trust.

Leadership Appointments

Katie Challinor will be taking on the Principal role at Hazel Slade Primary from January 2013.



Helen Hewitt will be taking on the Principal role at Offley Primary Academy from January 2013.

Sarah Camacho will be taking on the Principal role at Whitchurch CE Infant and Nursery School from January 2013.



Carly Wright will be taking on the role of Principal at Woodcroft Academy from January 2013.

Sarah Cope will be taking on the role of Compliance and Due Diligence Officer for the St. Bart's Academy Trust from January 2013.



School Achievements

Cranberry Academy has been recognised as a **United Against Bullying Silver School** after demonstrating their commitment to stopping bullying and improving the wellbeing of its pupils.



Knutton St. Mary's have been awarded the **Skills Builder Gold Award** for supporting their pupils with mastering essential skills. Read more about it in the article in this issue!

Belgrave St. Bartholomew's Academy have received **The Primary Science Quality Mark Outreach Award** recognising the impact of the school's Science curriculum. They also achieved **Apple Distinguished School (ADS) status** recognising the way Apple technology is used in an innovative and creative way to support teaching and learning.



HEADlines

Welcome to our regular feature profiling a different Principal/Headteacher from one of the St. Bart's Academy Trust schools.

Name:

Louise Lawrence

Job Title/School:

Principal of Longford Primary Academy

Why did you choose education as a career?

Teaching was actually not my first choice of career. I completed a BSc at the University of Leicester in Psychology and Biological Sciences with the intention of becoming an Educational Psychologist. In order to complete the MSc for Ed Psych you were required to do a minimum of two years of teaching. After having my first class for a year (who weren't the easiest) I fell in love with teaching because I could see how much every child had grown in that year. That's what gave me my passion, if I went into Educational Psychology I would get to work with a handful of children each year, but in teaching I could make a bigger difference.

Where did you first start teaching and in which year group?

My NQT year began in September 2003. (I think I was the first of the NQT generation with NQT time!) My first post was in Year 3 at a single form entry village school in Armitage called The Croft.

Describe your journey into leadership.

Having a passion for sport, I was appointed subject lead for PE in my second year of teaching. I was also at a new school so there was a lot to get my head around, particularly as the school was much larger. At that time there was a lot of funding in place to support the leadership of PE and, therefore, activity levels and the quality of PE in schools. From here I took on Science and was then given a TLR to lead a curriculum development group.



After being given many other responsibilities my Headteacher at the time called me to his office and told me it was about time I left and pushed a Deputy Head advert under my nose! From there I moved to Longford as Deputy in 2009. I have worked with a number of Heads at Longford and in 2020 – and in the middle of a worldwide pandemic - I thought it would be a good idea to take the plunge and step up! I've not looked back since.

What has been the stand out moment of your career so far?

While navigating our way through the pandemic was a tough time, it was a time that my team showed their grit, resilience and determination to make sure our children got the best possible deal we could offer them. Every single member of the team stepped up, from lunchtime supervisor to senior leadership. I was so proud to be Principal at Longford at that time, and I still am.

HEADlines

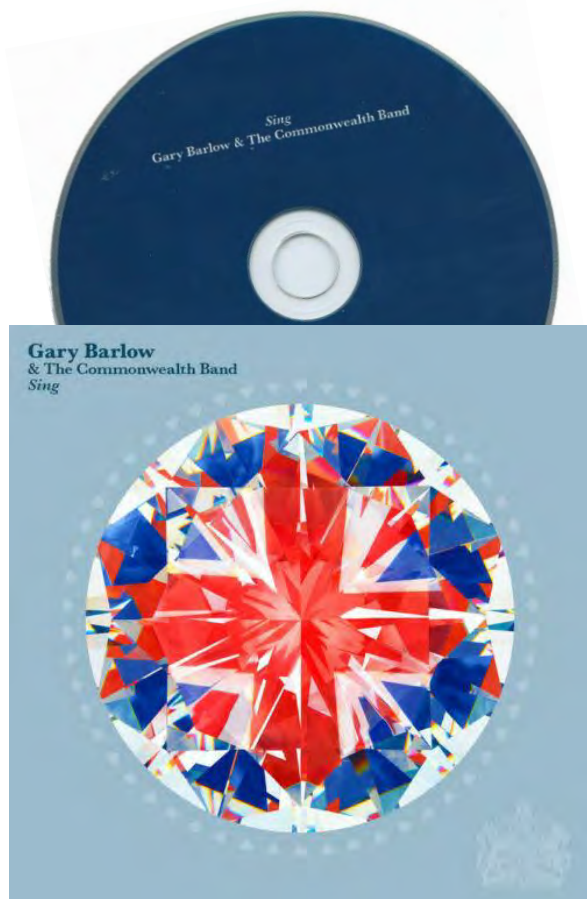
How do you think colleagues would describe your leadership style?

Driven, determined and relentless but real...I wouldn't ask anyone to do anything that I'm not prepared to do myself.

Describe your schools using a title of a song.

This isn't quite an answer to the question – but when we were in lockdown, one of the things I really missed was hearing the children sing so we began learning how to sign songs.

Ironically, the first one we learned was 'Sing' by Gary Barlow & The Commonwealth Band. Now we can sing again, this song gives me goose bumps when I hear the children sing the lyrics, they perform it so beautifully with such energy and passion – I love it!



Share a dream that you are yet to realise.

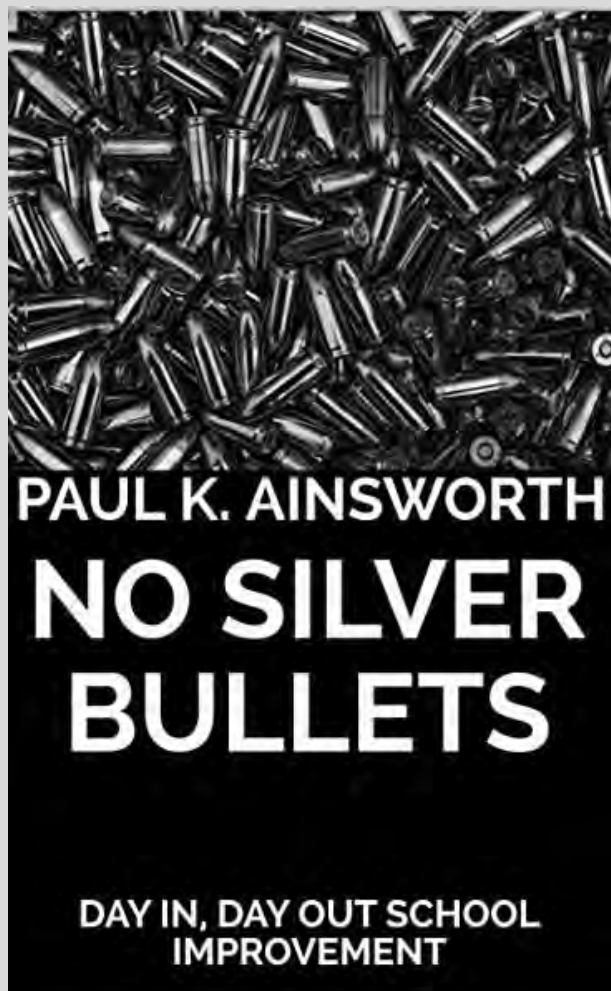
Win the lottery and travel the world with my munchkin (Sienna). Oh and go to an F1 weekend!

What interests do you pursue when you are not at work?

I've always been into sport and fitness. Although I don't do it anymore I am proud of achieving my black belt in Kick Boxing. Now I tend to try and squeeze in a decent work out when I'm not running around after my little lady.

What is your favourite staff room drink/biscuit combination?

Always a cup of tea, milk no sugar with a decent biscuit, like a chocolate Hob Nob!



So, for this edition of the *Releasing Potential* Magazine Book Corner you have Lisa Sarikaya to blame. Appalled by my insistence on buying her educational books for her birthday she responded in kind and purchased this for my birthday (22nd August – in case you were wondering). I digress but, my friend Jyoti and I were discussing the advantage of having a birthday in the summer holidays during those turbulent secondary times of the late 70s, early 80s. If the ~~thugs friends~~ fellow pupils found out it was your birthday they would make you run the gauntlet of the “wall.” This entailed the unfortunate ~~individual~~ victim running along the length of the playground against the fence with people booting you. No, it wasn’t Eton Sean, before you ask.

Anyway, *No Silver Bullets* is a very practical and easy to use guide leading to day in, day out school improvement. The beauty of this book is that it is simple, straight forward and easy to dip in and out of. Paul draws on his years of experience in school development to outline practical steps which can be adopted leading to sustained school improvement.

The book is split into the different areas of the inspection framework and offers suggestions on measures which could be adopted to assist strategic priorities.

At the beginning of each chapter there is a checklist of actions which have had proven impact on standards but then takes it a step further. Following on from this each priority area has some very practical suggestions on measures which can be adopted and modified to bring about discernible improvement.

What you will find is that much of what is suggested you are probably already doing and there is comfort in this. However, there may be some ideas which you hadn’t thought of which could transform practice and lead to sustained improvement.

You can dip in and out of each chapter. I found the sections on raising external outcomes and ensuring high attendance particularly useful.

I have been sharing some of the ideas during my school improvement visits this term. Much to my chagrin Paul Berridge at Knutton St. Mary’s had already purchased the book and he has the updated version from mine.

So please, if you do order the book make sure you get the 1.1 version that Paul got – I feel completely cheated. However, I draw comfort that due to the fortunate date of my birthday (22nd August – in case you were wondering) I can still walk without a limp.



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING BITESIZE SESSIONS

We are delighted to be able to offer all St. Bart's Multi-Academy Trust employees the opportunity to join Helen Dos Santos for three exclusive twilight sessions covering various aspects of Mental Health & Wellbeing.



Less stress, more success

Thursday 26th January 2023

3.30 – 4.30pm



How to achieve a calmer life

Monday 6th February 2023

3.30 – 4.30pm



Spring clean your thinking

Thursday 30th March 2023

3.30 – 4.30pm

Through these sessions, delegates will understand the impact change has on them, how negative feelings such as stress, worry and fear can affect their health and how to use these emotions to motivate themselves. Delegates will understand how to embrace change in a positive way, to achieve positive and calmer approaches to gain a happier outcome in all areas of their lives.



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING BITESIZE SESSIONS

Less stress, more success – Thursday 26th January 2023

Do you find there are not enough hours in the day, frustrated that we never get to the bottom of our To Do list? With 80% of employees feeling stressed at work, explore and recognise the causes of stress. Gain take away tools to improve your time management skills, plan your day with ease and learn how and when to say No!

How to achieve a calmer life – Monday 6th February 2023

Explore what hinders us from feeling calm and why, and gain an insight into the 4C's of mental wealth – Chaos, Control, Choice & Calm. Gain a true understanding of the benefits of remaining calm. Learn self-help techniques and top tips to achieve a sense of calm in your life and address challenges in a positive manner.

Spring clean your thinking – Thursday 30th March 2023

Explore how our negative thinking impacts on us in this fun session. Discover ways of demolishing and re-setting some of our old thinking patterns which may no longer serve us any purpose. Achieve more confidence and empowerment by making some simple changes to our thought process.

All sessions run online from 3.30 – 4.30pm
and will be recorded for catch-up afterwards.

To book a place please email Maxine Spooner at
office@btsa.org



THE ST. BART'S
ACADEMY
TRUST



<https://sbmat.org/>
www.btsa.org



@StBartsTrust
@TheBTSAHub



THE ST. BART'S
ACADEMY
— TRUST —



BTSA