

Releasing POTENTIAL



Infectious Positivity

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE



Championing
The Curriculum



Our Trust Prayer



The Power of Playtime

**Andy Cope
and the
Art of
Being
Brilliant**



Brilliant St. Bart's



In this issue of *Releasing Potential* we present a review of our recent Trust-wide INSET day, focused on 'infectious positivity'.

There's also a report on a day spent with Andy Phillips, aimed at supporting principals, senior leaders and subject champions in their understanding of the wider curriculum.

Plus, how St. Bart's pupils came together to write our Trust prayer.

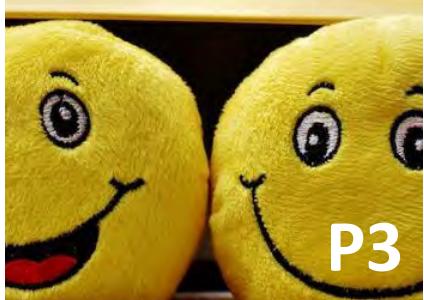
We hope you enjoy the content.

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**THE ST. BART'S
ACADEMY
TRUST**

Infectious Positivity!

A summary of our recent Trust INSET



Infectious Positivity!

On Friday 17th February 2023 staff from across the St. Bart's Trust came together for our third annual INSET event. The theme this year was choosing positivity and being brilliant.

CEO Lisa Sarikaya opened the day with a reminder of St. Bart's mission to "provide the best education and curriculum in all our schools, enabling every child to realise their full potential".

She outlined four approaches she believes will ensure our pupils remain at the heart of everything we do –

1. Harness our collective expertise to drive school improvement and realise the best for all children and adults working and learning in our schools;
2. Celebrate and communicate the successes in our schools to encourage aspiration and innovation;
3. Provide support and challenge for each school;
4. Recognise and celebrate each school's uniqueness, and the Christian distinctiveness of our church schools, valuing all members of our Trust family.

She thanked all the staff across the Trust for their continued hard work and encouraged them 'to be a rainbow to someone's cloud'.

This was the perfect segueway into Andy Cope's presentation. Anyone who has had the pleasure of hearing the self-proclaimed "Doctor of Happiness" speak will know how engaging (and downright funny) he is.

Andy began by reaffirming Jonny Anderson's (Chair of the St. Bart's Trust) statement that staff wellbeing is the top priority of the MAT. Andy promised to give those present the tools to find "happiness in an imperfect world" and all through the medium of a Pop Quiz!

"As a family of schools, we work closely together and share expertise, which creates great opportunities for children and staff."

Lisa Sarikaya, CEO



How much you
worry about what
other people think
of you

How often
they do!

art of brilliance



Infectious Positivity!

After a chaotic few minutes disrupting thinking and rearranging seating plans, the 'recovering academic' shared his Top Ten tunes, challenging attendees to correctly guess the song, artist and year. The rest of the morning was spent going through the answers, and most importantly, explaining the science behind each piece of music.

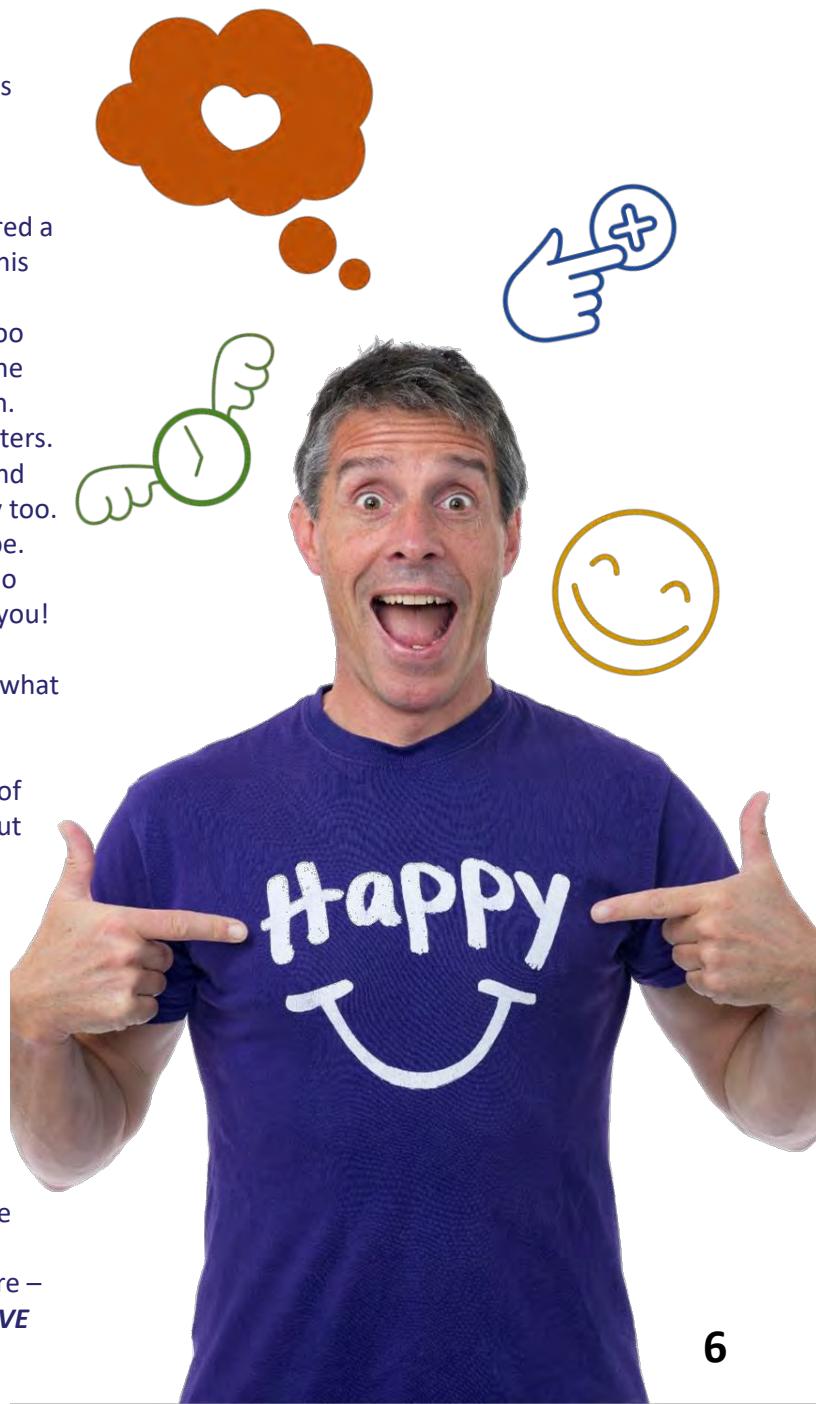
It was a whirlwind adventure through everything that Andy has learned up to this point. He explained a key message that underpins his many recommendations, "Flourishing is when your wellbeing and happiness are bigger than you!" Andy shared a range of practical approaches to achieve this state of mind –

- Steer clear of the Curse of Mediocre. Too many people spend too much time in the grey zone. Change your default position.
- Surround yourself with the Two Percenters. These people have 40% more energy and are guaranteed to make you feel happy too.
- Focus on the kind of you, you want to be. Our cells regenerate every six months so make the most of this completely new you!
- Consider the items on your 'to be' list. Spend five minutes every day planning what the future might look like.
- See happiness as a starting point, not a destination. What if the emotional pot of gold is not at the end of the rainbow, but somewhere in the moment. Appreciate "Now O' Clock".
- Fall in love with Magnificent Mondays. See them as another opportunity for good things to happen. TGI Monday!
- Be grateful for the small things. Gratitude is the fertiliser of happiness.
- Spread love as thick as Nutella and hug for at least 7 seconds.

Andy challenged us to think about what we all bring to the Emotional Soup. The most popular words that staff came up with were – **HAPPY, POSITIVE, ENERGETIC, PRODUCTIVE and CONFIDENT!**

"Flourishing is when your wellbeing and happiness are bigger than you!"

Andy Cope



WORST TOP TIP EVER:

Plan to be spontaneous,
tomorrow

art of brilliance



Infectious Positivity!

Andy had one final, extra track to end the session with. He encouraged everyone to singalong to Neil Diamond's 'Sweet Caroline' and it is fair to say that St. Bart's staff gave a rousing, heartfelt rendition of the song before Andy left us all in a real 'mike drop' moment. He left behind hundreds of happy individuals who had plenty to consider after his BRILLIANT presentation.

To finish the day we heard from wellbeing and resilience life coach Helen Dos Santos, who supports organisations in ensuring a flourishing and resilient workforce. St. Bart's staff have previously had the opportunity to attend a number of online webinars with Helen covering mental and emotional help topics.

Her presentation for the INSET focused on 'the impact of words' and she shared six takeaways -

1. Words Matter – they have the colossal power to manifest change, whether that's bad or good.
2. Rather than say 'don't' or 'can't', use the power of 'yet' to promote a growth mindset.
3. Remember words can mean different things in different situations and therefore, cause different reactions.
4. Problem Versus Challenge – rather than seeing a threat, make unforeseen moments about possibility and opportunity.
5. Accept that we have no control over what other people say – delete comments from your memory rather than absorb them.
6. YOU are the most important person in the world that you will ever speak to. Change your words in order to change your world.

We would like to say a huge thank you to Andy and Helen for providing us with some excellent ideas to consider and take on board. We would also be keen to hear about any ways you have adopted the strategies shared.



Andy's 'Being Brilliant' Playlist

- *Happy* Pharrell Williams
- *The One and Only* Chesney Hawkes
- *Manic Monday* The Bangles
- *I'll Be There For You* The Rembrandts
- *(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction* The Rolling Stones
- *All You Need Is Love* The Beatles
- *Let It Go* Idina Menzel
- *Feeling Good* Nina Simone
- *We Are The Champions* Queen
- *Imagine* John Lennon
- *Sweet Caroline* Neil Diamond





Dear God,
Help us to
be a stronger
community

Prayer Writing Workshop

St. Bart's pupils collaborate
on a common composition

Prayer Writing Workshop



Principal Sara Goddard reports on the range of activities available to pupils at our recent prayer writing workshop.

On 16th February two children from each of the Church of England Academies were invited to Kingsland C of E Academy to work together to write a St. Bart's Multi Academy Trust prayer.

Our first workshop explored prayer, looking at who might pray and why might people pray. The second workshop began with the sharing of a story which summarised how prayer is shared in the Bible. Children learned that you can pray any time, any place and with any prayer.

Everyone then had the opportunity to actively engage in six different prayer activities including writing a letter from God to them, making doves of peace to pray for peace in the world and making people that represented the SBMAT communities that they are each part of and placing them on a map of the SBMAT schools.

They could also write down their worries, sit in a tent of lights to focus on what it means to be holy and make flowers to create a garden of peace.

We enjoyed a buffet lunch together and then the children worked as two teams to note ideas for a SBMAT prayer focusing on the Trust values of peace and everyone flourishing together.

Each team then drafted a prayer which was then shared as a group and the ideas from everyone were discussed and a final prayer was written.

The children were all fabulous and worked so well, collaborating and sharing, to represent their individual academies.

We hope that you like our new SBMAT prayer for the children to pray in each academy.

“The children were all fabulous and worked so well, collaborating and sharing.”

Sara Goddard



Dear God,
We pray that we live in
unity with peace and harmony
Teach us to be stronger together
in the SBMAT community.
Help us to live life to the full

OUR TRUST PRAYER

Dear God,

We pray that we live in a world which is
united with peace and harmony.

Help us to live life to the fullest so that we
can flourish each and everyday.

Teach us to be stronger together and bless
everyone in the St. Bart's Multi-Academy
Trust community.

Amen.



Championing The Curriculum

A Day With Andy Phillips



Championing The Curriculum

In February 2023, principals and subject leaders from across the St. Bart's Trust came together in the BTSA Hub to work with curriculum expert Andy Phillips. The purpose of this 'launch day' was to offer schools an in-depth review of where their curriculum is at currently and what they might do next to develop it further.

The morning began with Ian Hunt (St. Bart's Director of School Effectiveness and Standards) summarising the present situation. "Our communities are distinctly different and our schools are unique. What we really want for all our schools is an effective curriculum which is an exciting one that results in our children not being able to wait to get through the door." He emphasised that the process starts with Trust leaders. "You are the experts in your schools and you know what your children need."

With this ambition shared, attendees were introduced to Andy Phillips. Many of those present have had the opportunity to work with Andy through several peer-to-peer reviews he has conducted across St. Bart's. Trust subject leaders have also benefited from specific training led by Andy, and have used his suite of Subject Leader Resource Files and Work Books to effectively carry out their roles. Colleagues were reminded of the content of these and the many ways they can be used to support the development of specific subjects. In Andy's words, "They are there to help you meet the challenge of giving every primary subject the same weight."

He was clear about what the launch day was intended to achieve – "greater rigour in the foundation subjects" – making reference to Ofsted's research into the quality of curriculum in schools. This includes examples of how schools have achieved strong intent and implementation of their curriculum.

Andy's Key Questions for School Leaders

Do leaders understand the component strands of all the National Curriculum subjects?

In lessons, can we see the expected content of the National Curriculum?

Can we see progression in children's understanding from the Early Years through to Year 6?

How do we ensure that Topic B follows on from Topic A?

Do we have clear methods to check what pupils know, can do and understand so that the right work is taught and assessment informs planning?

One commonality these schools have is school principals and leaders who understand all of the component strands of the National Curriculum. For example, they check that the component parts of the technology curriculum actually happen in classrooms, with pupils given the opportunity to plan, design, make and evaluate.

Andy made the important point that unless senior leaders and subject leaders are rehearsed in the content how will teachers know? He emphasised that all staff need to be upskilled in order that children are taught effectively and learn well. Once this is in place there needs to be clear methods to check what pupils know, can do and understand. Andy's challenge for St. Bart's is for us to develop a set of progression materials for each of the foundation subjects.



“Our communities are distinctly different and our schools are unique. We want all our schools to have an exciting curriculum which results in our children not being able to wait to get through the door.” Ian Hunt



Championing The Curriculum



The afternoon session was an opportunity for St. Bart's 'Subject Champions' to explore the curriculum progression statements in more depth.

This involved Andy facilitating a series of CPD activities. One challenged the experts to give specific examples of effective pupil tasks that would achieve the aims of specific statements in specific subjects.

Attendees also spent some time exploring the 'command words' that feature across the National Curriculum foundation subjects and identifying how they might be demonstrated.

Andy emphasised that he believed the outcomes of the afternoon session would help subject leaders in supporting class teachers back in their various settings and this was evident in the feedback from those present.

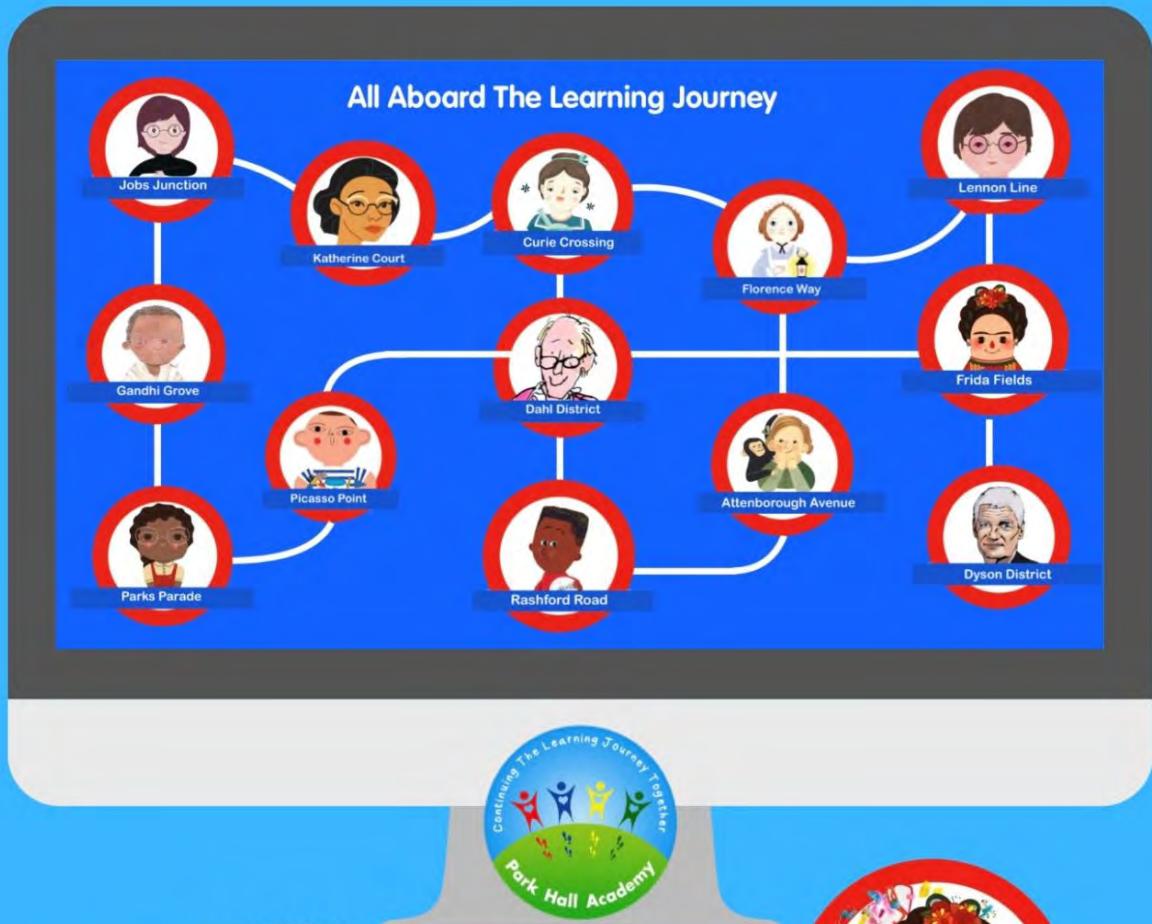
Andy's vision is for St. Bart's staff to collaborate further (through the recently developed Foundation Subject Networks) in order to compile the progression materials and to create a bank of pupil work that showcases attainment in each primary subject.

Above: The morning session involved St. Bart's principals and senior leaders. Below: The afternoon session included 'Subject Champions' from across the Trust.



Curriculum Case Study

Park Hall Academy



Curriculum Case Study

In addition to working with Andy Phillips, attendees were also treated to an inspiring presentation from Georgina Frost, Principal of Park Hall Academy in Stoke-on-Trent, who explained their vision for an ambitious curriculum.

“At Park Hall Academy, we have the highest aspirations for all children. We have an ambitious vision for our curriculum which is centred around inspiring a love of learning and enabling our learners to be successful, independent, confident, and resilient learners who see their futures as full of possibilities.

All Aboard The Learning Journey

“Our mission statement is ‘Continuing the Learning Journey Together’ and we recognise that all members of the Park Hall family are life-long learners. As such, curriculum development is an ongoing journey. We are committed to ensuring that our children make connections between their learning, so that knowledge and skills become embedded, enabling learners to **know more, do more and remember more.**

“To represent our learning journey, we have developed a visual representation of our curriculum based around a London Tube Map. This is designed with 'Dahl District' at the centre, representing the English curriculum which is at the heart of our journey, as reading is the key to all learning.

“This overlaps all other curriculum lines representing the connections across and between all other subjects. Each subject line also intersects others as when connections between learning are made explicit, learners are able to secure and retain their knowledge, apply skills and build on prior learning. Our foundations begin in the Early Years, with the tube map linking to our Early Years curriculum, as this is where our learners’ journey begins.



All Aboard The Learning Journey From Novice to Expert

Our foundations begin in the Early Years as we embark on our journey from **novice to expert**



Curriculum Case Study

1. How significant was the Blitz?

- Know the significance of the Blitz and events leading up to it (look at images /sources of a specific event associated with the Blitz, listen to a speech by Winston Churchill, card sort sequencing events leading up to the Blitz, National Archives (n.d.) What was the Blitz? Why did it happen? National archive link Churchill, W.(1940) Their Finest Hour BBC School Radio. Available at: [link here](#))
- Historians explore the similarities and differences between locations affected by the Blitz in their locality and comparable events experiences by Britain's enemies (examine a timeline of key events from the start of the war and discuss how the Blitz relates to this, look at and discuss images of bombing in Britain the Blitz, with Dresden, Stalingrad and Hiroshima, Coventry 1940) - [Siege of Stalingrad link](#) [resource link](#) [between resource link](#) [Collections link](#))
- Historians research how the Blitz impacted Liverpool presenting their findings to their peers.

[Lesson link](#)

2. World War II: Whose War?

- Know the allies and axis countries involved in WW2.
- Know who British & German the leaders were during WW2.
- Know the major events of WW2.
- Historians have an understanding of links between Britain and the world (card sort related to global context of the war, poster showing the role of soldiers from the empire. (Thought shower questions. Watch West Indies Calling. Thought shower ways and raise questions from the film. Investigate the role of people from the empire using a range of websites, West Indies Calling. [Collections link](#))
- Historians have the ability to select information from a range of historical sources (create timelines to show key events of WW2.)

[Lesson link](#)

3. People's War

4. Evacuee experiences in Britain: this all we know about children in World War II?

- Know the impact of WW2 on children in Britain; moving/ evacuated to rural locations, family separation, anxieties.
- Historians have an understanding of the different experiences of children in Britain, Germany and other continents affected by the war (series of extracts to different groups of children's experiences in Britain, Germany and elsewhere, Robins, P (2004) War Children, The Second World War in their own words, London: Scholastic, Smith, L. (2007) Young Voices, British Children Remember the Second World War, London: Penguin. A photograph the statue of the Kindertransport children at Liverpool Street Station London Remembers (2006) Statue. Kinder transport, [www.londonremembers.com/](#) memorials/kindertransport- meister)
- Historians know how to refine their understanding of childhood experiences through reflecting on what they learn (complete a comparison venn diagram).

[Lesson link](#)

5. New opportunities? How significant was the impact of World War II on women?

- Historians have an understanding of the changes within a period (Government film related to women during World War 2. Ministry of Information/Transport (1942). [They Keep the Wheels Turning. Collections link](#))
- Know how World War 2 changed women's lives and how this relates to its broader chronological context, how this compared with an earlier period in the past; Tudor women/Viking women card sort.
- Know how this relates to broader changes over time (Timeline of key changes affecting the role of women in Britain). [Lesson link](#)

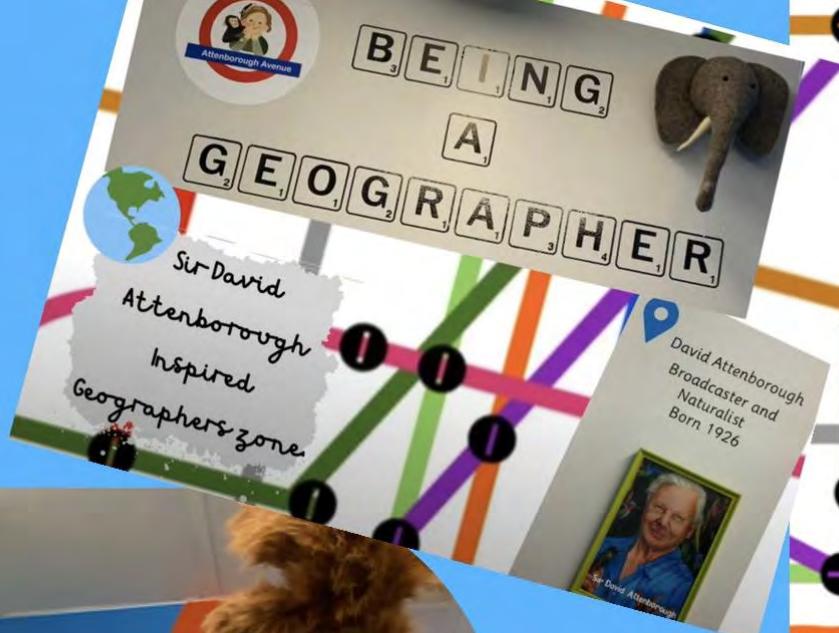
6. What did men do in the War? Did all men have to fight?

- Historians have an understanding of the similarity and of experience within a period in the past (poster of a soldier -thought shower responses-Oliphant,O (n.d.) Parachute Regiment National archive link Investigate the experience of one serviceman and discuss how far this compared with the image presented by the poster WM (n.d.) Gordon Ford's Story. What was it like to be an airman in World War 2. [Gordon Ford story link](#))
- Historians will explore the following the Home Guard, air raid wardens, different jobs in the army, different jobs in the air force, different jobs in the navy, Bevin boys). [Lesson link](#)

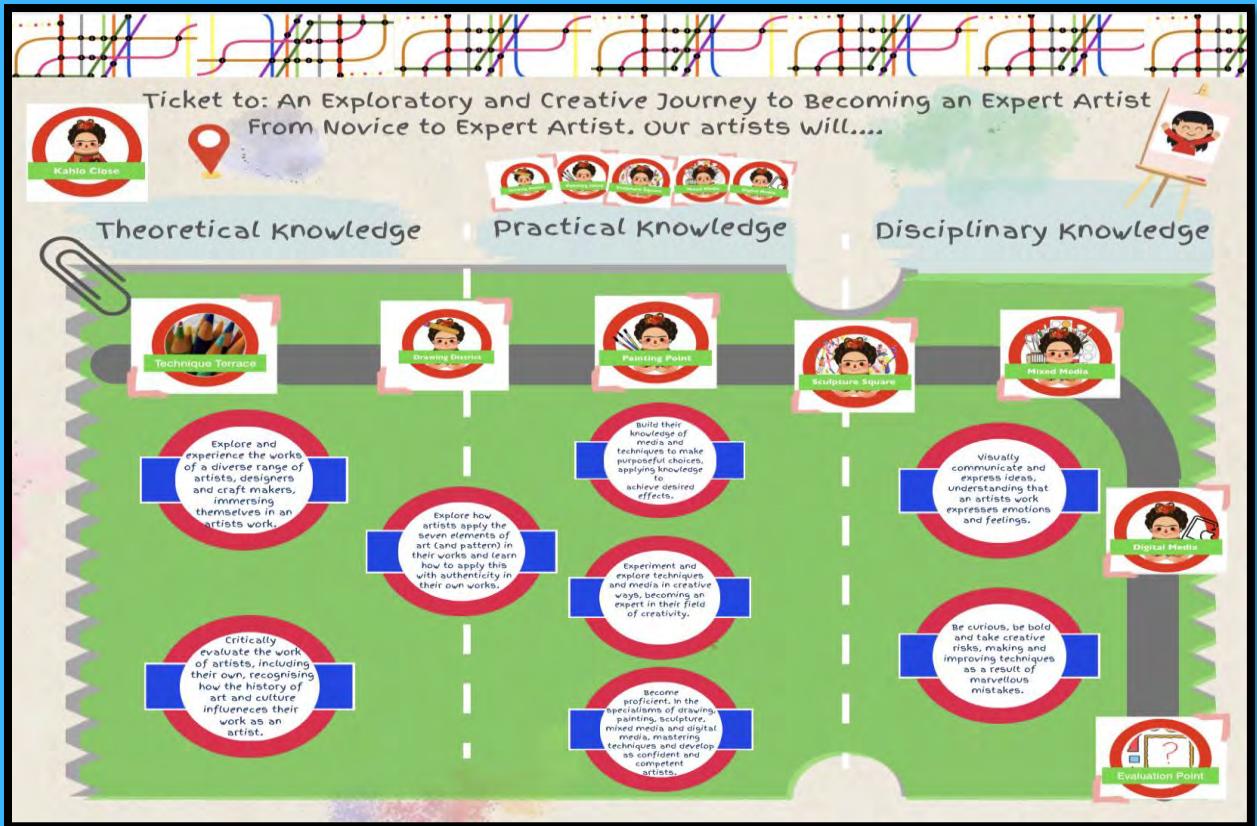
"Each curriculum line is named after an inspirational figure, from a diverse range of backgrounds. This enables our children to imagine their future aspirations as each influential figure began life as a child with a dream.

"In all of our curriculum areas, we aim to develop the knowledge and disciplines to enable our learners to '*think like...*', '*be like...*' and '*communicate like ...*' in order to become artists, linguists, geographers, scientists, the list is endless! This prepares our children for their future careers where they may engage in job roles that do not yet exist.





Curriculum Case Study



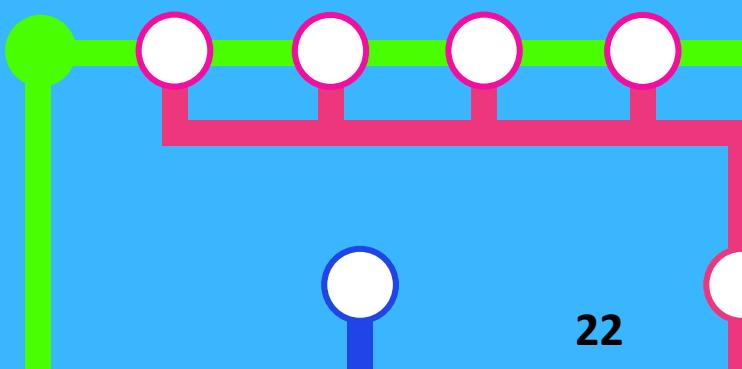
"Every learner is provided with a ticket for each curriculum area, inviting them to 'jump on board the learning journey'. Our children are excited to travel the 'Florence Way' as they journey back in time, developing from a novice to an expert historian along the way.

"Each ticket clearly identifies the exploratory and creative journey that our children will experience on their way to travelling from novice to expert. These have been devised to ensure that we, as leaders and teachers, have a shared understanding of what becoming an expert entails in each subject discipline.

"Leaders have thought clearly about what it means to be a historian and the ticket ensures a shared understanding of the knowledge and disciplines we aim to develop for all. For our learners, the ticket represents their curriculum entitlement.

"This embeds not only key concepts but also subject specific vocabulary, which teachers model and learners apply.

"Our learning environment brings our curriculum to life and ensures that our key concepts are highly visible to all. Any visitor to our academy would be able to see our curriculum as it "leaps off the walls". This ensures that children are continually immersed within the curriculum as their learning journey progresses.



Welcome to the Armstrong Suite

That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.



Neptune

Neptune is a stormy planet.
It has 8 moons.
Triton, its largest is one
of the coldest places ever
-236C.

Uranus

Uranus was discovered
by accident by
William Herschel
1781 using his
homemade telescope.



1930

Armstrong was born on
5th August in Ohio, America.



1937

Armstrong takes his
plane ride aged 6 years.

1946

He earns his pilot license
at the age of 16.

1947

He goes to university
in Indiana.

1949

Armstrong joins the
US Navy and goes to war.



1952

He returns from the war
and begins working for
the organisation we
now know as NASA.



1955

Armstrong graduates.



1962

Armstrong joins the
astronaut programme.

1966

Armstrong takes his first
flight to space on board
Gemini 8



1969

Armstrong becomes the
first person ever to
walk on the surface of
the moon.

Curriculum Case Study

Our Journey As Curriculum Leaders

“It was important to us as leaders, that all subjects were seen as important. Careful consideration was given to identifying the knowledge and skills that we believe meets the needs of our learners. As we are not experts in all curriculum areas, senior leaders felt that it was imperative that we had a sound understanding of the key concepts and disciplines within each subject area. This was underpinned by research in order to ensure that high quality learning and teaching embedded substantive and disciplinary knowledge. We wanted to develop our learners disciplinary knowledge so that they would travel from novice to expert as historians, geographers, artists and so on. This would enable learners to know more, do more and remember more.

“Our journey began by examining research, including Ofsted subject reviews, and information on national subject associations such as the History Association. We embarked on this journey with our subject leaders, carefully selecting the knowledge and skills that would be taught in each unit of learning, taking care to ensure clear progression along the journey. We selected our key concepts, specific to subject areas and mapped these out to ensure that learners were able to revisit key concepts in order to enable them to make connections between their learning, and embed ‘sticky knowledge’.



“As senior leaders, we provided challenge and support, coaching our subject leaders as part of our curriculum development. We questioned; Why are we teaching this? How is this developing our children as artists? How are we going to teach this concept? How are we ensuring progression?

“Our next step was for our subject leaders to work with year group teachers to provide the same level of support and challenge. In doing so, subject leaders have developed a very clear understanding of the aims, content and knowledge taught across the academy. Subject leaders produced curriculum unit plans which clearly identified substantive and disciplinary knowledge. Leaders carefully considered the accessibility of high quality resources to

support the acquisition of knowledge and skills. For example, in history links are made to sources and evidence which progressively develop learners historical enquiry skills.

“An important consideration for leaders was the acquisition of subject specific vocabulary. We created our 'Historian's vault of vocabulary' and 'Artist's palette of vocabulary' etc. Each contain the key terminology our learners will use and apply to communicate their learning across subjects. This has ensured that there is a clear progression of vocabulary across subjects. This will become a central element in all subject areas.

Curriculum Case Study



Our curriculum 'Big Ideas'

"To enhance our subject knowledge we initially looked at a variety of published schemes of work to ensure expert subject knowledge. However, we felt that this began to create a disjointed curriculum with limited opportunities to build on prior knowledge. As a result, leaders took time to reflect on our curriculum 'Big Ideas', identifying essential elements of curriculum design that should underpin all curriculum areas and reflect the needs of our learners.

"We identified four curriculum big ideas – 'Every child a reader' (no exception), 'A love of learning' (big ideas for curious minds), 'Expert learners' and 'Be inspired; be aspirational'. We then revisited curriculum development, writing our own art & design curriculum bespoke to our learners.

"Where we have used published schemes, we have personalised and adapted the content to ensure that links between curriculum areas were embraced at every opportunity and that our curriculum continued to excite, motivate and inspire our learners.

Our exploratory journey to become...

We aim to immerse our learners at the centre of curriculum development. We empower our little people to have the biggest dreams, imagining a future full of infinite possibilities.

"Our learners become designers, artists, curators, scientists and more. Our children have embarked on a curriculum journey alongside our curriculum leaders.

"As part of our transition project, in the summer term, our learners were introduced to our inspirational curriculum figures who were chosen not only as a result of their accomplishments, but also to reflect diversity.

"This raised children's aspirations, enabling them to recognise that anyone is able to be anything they aspire to be; often in the face of challenge. It was also important to us that our children were able to relate to some of these figures, hence the incorporation of Rashford Road (Marcus Rashford).

Curriculum Case Study

Following a brief introduction to each figure, children worked with their new class teacher (subject leaders) to produce their own non-fiction text and curriculum film. The standard of the texts and films produced by the children and subject leaders were exceptional and have been subsequently used in our assemblies so that all children have now been inspired by a whole range of future careers and opportunities. Following the 'Dyson District' assembly, it was wonderful to hear so many children aspiring to be the next great inventor.

Know more, do more, remember more

"Leaders have invented creative ways to ensure that children's 'sticky knowledge' is embedded and that prior learning is built upon. Our 'Subject Suitcases' are a way for our learners to 'carry key facts with them'. These travel with the children, enabling teachers to revisit prior learning throughout our learners journey. This activates children's prior knowledge so that they can know more, do more and remember more. Subject suitcases will contain postcards referencing prior learning, so that children make connections to help them on their journeys to becoming experts in subject fields.

Continuing the Learning Journey Together

"We are exceptionally proud of the progress in our curriculum journey to date. We recognise that our journey will grow and develop and will lead in different directions as we are continuing to learn together. More recently we have introduced a 'Curriculum Chronicle' to capture the key learning points and subject specific information to share with our team.

CURRICULUM CHRONICLE

ARTIST JOURNALS

- Individual, each should be personal and they should be different to others.
- Limit writing to purposeful annotations or research only.

BEING AN ARTIST

- Use of space.
- We do not use more than a double page spread in a single session as we are producing our very best work.
- We add to work as we go, so go back and use free space.
- Start a new double spread if you are beginning a new unit.
- We are aiming for the look in the examples shared.
- Include digital work in your books.

ASSESSMENT

Use the musical gallery walks, pop up exhibitions with your parallel class as well as parents, artists get togethers etc. Remember assessment is ongoing, not just at the end of a lesson/final piece.

"As senior leaders, we recognise our responsibilities for establishing our vision for curriculum development. We further recognise the impact that working with our subject leaders (providing both challenge and support) has had in developing sustainable leadership. The dedicated subject time for leaders to collaborate with teaching staff across each year group, has been intrinsic to the success of our current developments. We are proud of our team approach and the way in which we continue to learn from, and alongside, each other – engaging in professional dialogue to ensure that we are always better tomorrow than we are today."

To follow Park Hall's learning journey on Instagram search for 'teamparkhall'.



The Power of Playtime

Outdoor Play and Learning project

The Power of Playtime

OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) is an award-winning, mentor supported school improvement programme that addresses all the areas that schools must plan for if they want to strategically and sustainably improve the quality of their play opportunities. OPAL is the only programme of its kind that has been independently proven to sustainably improve the quality of play in British primary schools.

Georgina Maddox is OPAL Lead at Whitchurch Junior C of E Academy. She has been striving to improve playtimes for all the children at the school for a while. "It began almost a year ago when we were encouraged by Ben Tawil (OPAL mentor) to consider our play memories and how they are different to the play opportunities that were on offer for children at our school. Together, we completed a baseline assessment and identified the school's areas of strengths and weaknesses. It became apparent that we were fortunate to have lots of green space, but we were prohibiting the children from using it and therefore limiting their play opportunities.

"Our first change was to enable the children access to the field all year round which meant wellie sheds were going to be a crucial investment. The team began to source loose parts for the children to play with, and I introduced children to the new opportunities in the first Play Worship. The children were bursting with excitement for the lunchtime ahead knowing that they had a music speaker and tyres to play with. A local tyre company donated tractor tyres which we turned into sandpits - a great addition to encourage sensory play.

"We have designed a playground that encourages a variety of play types, different social spaces and created many different ways to journey between the places. We aim to create a track for the RABO carts and scooters, have a huge sandpit with beach huts for shade, expand our woodlands area and open an outdoor classroom."



Georgina Maddox spent her childhood playing outside on her Grandad's farm and has many fond memories of getting muddy and creating dens with her cousins. She understands that the world children live in nowadays is very different, but that children are still the same.



Kirsty Walsh (OPAL Play Co-ordinator) is working alongside Georgina to create a hive of activities to ensure that every child is engaged during their play times. As a mother of two, Kirsty is always excited for her children to explore the outdoors and believes the muddier, the better!



“Children spend 20% of their school attendance in play.”



The Power of Playtime

With any outdoor learning opportunity there is an element of risk that has to be considered. The school have put plans in place to manage this.

Risk Management

To ensure our children can experience the challenge, progression, excitement, creativity and fun essential to quality play we have developed a play and risk management policy, incorporating a risk benefit approach as promoted by the Health and Safety Executive.

Risk-Benefit Assessment

We use risk benefit assessments to weigh up the benefits of play opportunities with any associated risks, ensuring opportunities are safe enough, protecting children from unnecessary and unreasonable levels of risk, whilst enabling them to access the adventures and excitement that are a part of a healthy childhood.

Dynamic Risk Management

Children are in control of their play, deciding what they do and how. This means that play is always changing as are any associated risks. Dynamic risk management helps our play team make judgements about any risks they perceive children to be undertaking. The play team may choose to intervene and help children find a safer way to carry on with their play, they may choose to monitor the play supporting children to consider and manage the risks, or on reflection decide children are managing risks and focus their attention elsewhere.

Georgina is clear about what the school has achieved so far and where they want to go next. “The children understand that we value play and their enjoyment at playtimes. Every week, one child is awarded our OPAL certificate for one of our school’s Christian values (e.g. perseverance, creativity etc). We are excited to host more Stay and Play dates with parents in the summer term, whereby staff, parents and children embrace play together.”

Play Types



A group of children are playing on a grassy field. In the foreground, a girl in a blue t-shirt and dark shorts is pushing a large blue cube with a circular hole. Behind her, another girl in a blue t-shirt and dark shorts is pushing a large blue block. To the right, a boy in a blue t-shirt and dark shorts is pushing a large black tire. In the background, there are trees and a brick building.

*“The children
understand that
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The Power of Playtime



Benefits

Although the school recognise they are at the start of the OPAL journey it is already apparent how much joy OPAL has brought to play times. The children are having more opportunities to develop their creativity, imagination, co-operation, resilience, stamina and confidence.

OPAL's inclusive approach aligns with the school values as staff strive to make play better for all children whilst also improving their physical and emotional health and well-being. Children and teachers are more excited to come to school as children are settling into class better due to teachers having to spend less time resolving playtime issues.



Principal Julie Rowlandson says, "OPAL has brought fun and high levels of engagement in play to our playtimes and an increase in physical activity for our children. Feedback from staff, parents and children about increased play opportunities are very positive. It's wonderful to see the children develop their creativity, resilience, physicality and communication skills in a safe environment."

Ben Tawil (OPAL mentor) feels that the school is already making a difference. "One of the greatest tools at children's disposal for their well-being and well-becoming is play, all adults have to do to realise its potential is to make the conditions right for it to flourish. The team at Whitchurch Junior are well on the way to making that happen."

You can find out more about OPAL by visiting the official website –

<https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/>

You can also download two free publications using the following links –

The Case For Play in Schools

<https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/The-Case-For-Play-In-Schools-web-1-1.pdf>

The Power of Playtime for Parents

<https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/NonOpalSchool-A5-Parents-Guide-web.pdf>





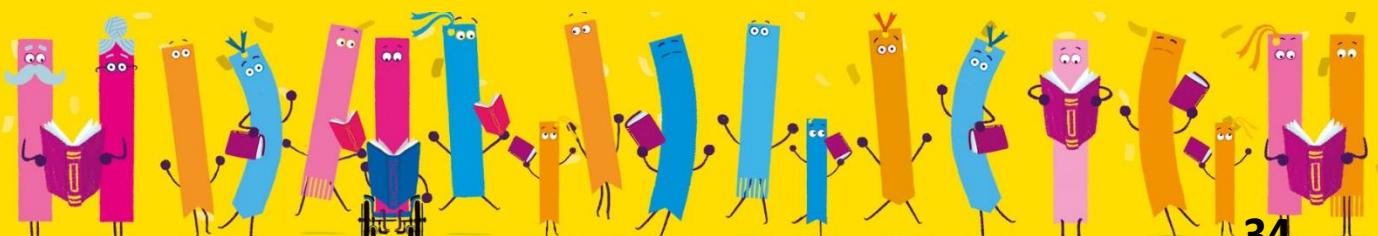
World Book Day 2023

St Bart's pupils turn up in style

WORLD BOOK DAY®

Changing lives through a love of books and reading.

St. Bart's celebrated World Book Day 2023 on Thursday 2nd March. Over the next few pages we showcase some of the wonderful costumes from the day.



WORLD BOOK DAY

2 MARCH 2023





We are
celebrating
**WORLD
BOOK
DAY**



WORLD
BOOK
DAY

2 MARCH 2023



Nantwich Primary Academy had a whole-school geography focus. Year 2's topic was Africa which meant there was an abundance of explorers on World Book Day!





WORLD BOOK DAY

2 MARCH 2023



HEADlines

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

Name:

Paul Berridge

Job Title/School:

Principal, Knutton St. Mary's Academy

Why did you choose education as a career?

Teaching was actually my second choice, for a short period of time (about 32 years) I wanted to be a wrestler in the WWE, once Vince McMahon had rejected my 102 expressions of interest I decided it probably wasn't to be and, although I know it sounds a little twee, I have wanted to be a teacher since I was about nine or ten, I vividly remember insisting on playing "schools" at my 10th birthday party. I gave all of my guests a notepad and pencil and we practised cursive hand writing and I gave them all spelling and mental maths tests to complete. Anyone who complained was not allowed any cake. It was brilliant fun and I remember thinking that I would love to do this when I'm older. Weirdly no one came to my eleventh birthday party.

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

My first job was teaching a Year 5/6 mixed class at a large school in Congleton in Cheshire called Daven. It was a challenging environment to start my teaching career, but if anything, the support and leadership I received from the Headteacher and Deputy in those early years lit the fire of aspiration in me and gave me the drive to become a senior leader myself.

Describe your journey into leadership.

My leadership journey started at Daven. In my second year of teaching I was given the task of



leading PE, I imagine the motivation behind that was "put him somewhere he can't do much damage." How little did they know! I quickly changed everything the school did in PE and, I like to think, made a big change to the reputation of the school, and certainly their sporting successes. After that, the senior leaders steered me towards leadership CPD and when the Assistant Head went on maternity leave I offered to step up.

From there I moved to another school in Congleton where I was employed as an Assistant Headteacher. Eventually I was given the opportunity to join Weston Juniors which was just about to join the St. Bart's Trust. I was originally employed as a TLR but before I had even started, the Headteacher had moved on to pastures new, so I became the Deputy Head on a temporary basis. This was a period of much change in the school and in the six years I was there I held four different roles under four different Principals, eventually becoming Head of School. I loved this role and the opportunities it gave me to make a difference but when an opportunity came up to work at Knutton St Mary's I had to apply and I was delighted to be appointed.

HEADlines

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

It is very difficult to pick a stand out moment as, like most people, things that were priorities for me when I was a young teacher are very different to the priorities I have now. I think, in terms of my career, I will remember the feelings of excitement I had when I was appointed as Principal at Knutton St Mary's. I remember the interview almost second by second and the nervousness of waiting to hear what the panel's decision was. The unbridled joy of getting the job, and then the reality of knowing that I had to tell my colleagues who had become very close friends that I was leaving Weston. These are all things that will stick with me for a long time.

How do you think colleagues would describe your leadership style?

I hope people would realise that relationships are at the heart of my leadership style. I try to build strong bonds with colleagues and use these to judge how to deal with each situation. I hope people would realise that I am not a "one-size fits all" leader. I try to treat everyone as individuals and recognise the differences in colleagues' strengths. It is always my goal to give colleagues space to develop and lead. I am honest and I freely admit that I don't have all the answers.

Describe your school using the title of a song.

"All Together Now" by the Farm. One of the strongest parts of Knutton St Mary's is the strength of its community.

The community is very committed and fiercely proud of itself, the people of Knutton stick together and some of our pupils are the fourth or fifth generation of their family to attend the school. This can also present challenges but in the words of an African proverb: "It takes a village to raise a child."

Share a dream that you are yet to realise.

Sadly, it would appear that my dream of headlining the Main Event at *Wrestlemania* will remain unrealised. Likewise, unless Hollywood decides to remake *Grease* and Danny Zuko is recast a middle-aged, balding Yorkshireman with dodgy knees, my dreams of singing "Grease Lightning" balanced on the bonnet of a 1948 Ford Deluxe will also sadly remain unfulfilled.



On the bright side, as a child I always dreamed of being cool enough to wear sunglasses on my head and this was a dream I realised in the summer of 2004. Realistically, I have reached an age where my dreams sit in the passenger seat and my aspirations are generally linked to comfy chairs and snacks that I can eat with my hands. However, I recently discovered a passenger for hill-walking and I have long held a hope of visiting Everest base camp.

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

Those of you who know me will be not surprised to learn I am a classically trained dancer and I have a passion for "bustin' a groove", particularly to the seminal album "Steptacular" by the criminally underrated Steps.



HEADlines



In the last few years I have also discovered a passion for walking up hill. I particularly enjoy the feeling of standing at the top of a mountain and looking down on the view below. There is a real sense of achievement as I breathlessly pose for a selfie next to a variety of trig points.

My real passion is Rugby Union. I have played regularly since I was about 9 years old and since then I have captained, coached and managed various child and adult teams throughout my life. Despite my physical limitations I still manage to put my boots on once or twice a season and play for my local Veteran's (over 35) team. I love the smell of Ralgex in the changing room, the sense of camaraderie and the five weeks my body takes to get over it.

What is your favourite staff room drink/biscuit combination?

This is an interesting question and raises many problematic issues.

My favourite staff room drink is a good, strong mug of Yorkshire Tea, but I'm fussy and if Yorkshire Tea is not on the menu then I would rather drink coffee.

Similarly, the biscuit depends on your definition of a biscuit and its purpose. My favourite "biscuit" is a Jaffa Cake but this creates a great deal of uncertainty in my opinion as firstly; no sane human can dunk a Jaffa Cake and secondly; a Jaffa Cake is very clearly not a biscuit, it is a cake.

With the Jaffa Cake excluded from the equation then a cow biscuit would be my second choice, but this is only if Twix's are classified as chocolate bars. In my opinion the Twix is clearly not a chocolate bar, it is a biscuit and therefore I would definitely have Twix above cow biscuits.

That said I recently discovered that you can now get chocolate-covered cow biscuits which frankly is an absolute game changer.
(What a time to be alive!)





Making The Grade

A round-up of recent inspection reports

Saint Nathaniel's Academy



Children's attitudes to learning are positive in the early years and continue throughout the rest of their time at school.

Pupils benefit from rich and varied experiences that promote their wider development. Extra-curricular activities include opportunities to exercise leadership, build teamwork, be involved in charitable activity and take part in the arts and sport. Staff work hard to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This reflects the school's Christian values. Staff actively celebrate pupils' diverse backgrounds.

Pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop wider interests or talents. They take part in lots of out-of-lesson clubs and trips. They enjoy singing at public events. Older pupils take pride in their roles as school leaders and ambassadors. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning. They love reading. They enjoy using computer tablets in classrooms

Senior leaders are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They support staff and take steps to manage their workload. Leaders know the school's strengths and its areas for development. Trust executives provide useful guidance to leaders and staff, including on well-being and safeguarding. Trustees and the local governing committee hold school leaders to account effectively.

"Saint Nathaniel's provides a warm welcome for everyone. Pupils enjoy coming to this friendly and safe school. Parents and carers are very positive about the care given to pupils by staff. Pupils say that the school is like a family.

At Saint Nathaniel's, pupils learn, grow and achieve together. The motto, 'With God all things are possible', reflects the school's ambition to fulfil all pupils' potential. Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils work hard in lessons and behave well in and around school."

Overall effectiveness: Good

Inspection date: November 2022



Hungerford Primary Academy



Pupils feel safe and happy at this warm and nurturing school. Leaders place a high priority on pupils' mental health and well-being. Staff forge strong relationships with pupils and know their families well. Leaders expect pupils to behave well. The youngest children listen attentively to their teachers and respond well to instructions. Pupils' conduct across the rest of the school embodies the school's values.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on teaching pupils to read. They have put in place a well-thought-out early reading programme. Children in the early years get off to a good start with the school's phonics programme. Teachers grasp every opportunity to develop children's language and love of books. Staff have created cosy and inviting reading areas to foster pupils' love of reading.

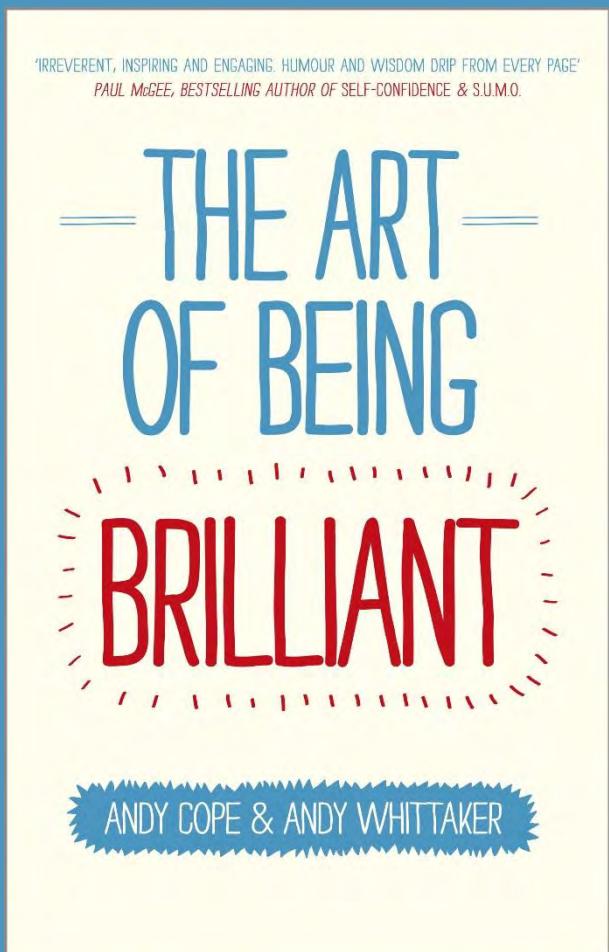
Leaders make sure that pupils have many opportunities to enrich their learning beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils proudly spoke to inspectors about the different clubs that they can attend. Pupils show respect for other faiths and cultures. They enjoy trips to the local area; these include visiting the library and theatre.

Parents and carers who shared their views with inspectors appreciate the improvements that leaders have made to the school. They value the support that leaders and staff provide.

"Leaders have the highest ambition for what they want pupils to achieve academically. Trust and senior leaders have empowered subject leaders to make significant changes to the design of their curriculums. These changes have ignited pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Leaders have identified the knowledge that pupils will learn from the early years to the end of Year 6. Leaders make sure that teachers introduce new content in a logical order. Leaders rigorously check how well teachers deliver the curriculum. Leaders and teachers quickly make adaptations to bring about improvements.

**Overall effectiveness:
Requires improvement**

Inspection date: January 2023



Following on from the fantastic INSET day we had with Andy Cope I decided to check out his audio book – *The Art of Being Brilliant*.

One of the things I do find quite tricky is to keep on top of my professional reading. I spend a lot of time in the car driving to and from work and around the 19 schools (soon to be 22) in our Trust. This is where audio books really come into their own. I find it a useful way to 'fit-in' this professional 'reading' (can you professionally listen?).

The audio book is narrated by Andy Cope and many of the concepts that he talked about in his INSET day presentation were part of the book. He reads with humour and passion and it was a helpful consolidation of the points that he made.

My wife did initially wonder what the seven second hug was all about. I can't say with all honesty whether she likes it or not – but she has got used to it and tolerates it (or is that she tolerates me? I am not sure whether I want to know the answer to that one!). Since listening to the book and attending the INSET day I have been working hard on being more positive.

I linked it to another of our INSET contributors, Floyd "ex-SAS, I could kill you with a spoon and that would only be a distraction" Woodrow! When Floyd was asked by a friend of mine (James, CEO of Pickwick Academy) how he was feeling in the morning, Floyd responded that he was feeling, "utterly brilliant," and he utterly meant it. So, if you do bump into me around the place and you make the mistake of asking me how I am, brace yourself for the response, which may include, incredible, amazing etc. I do, however, promise not to assault you with a spoon



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