



RISING STARS



Bright Futures newsletter

Winter 2013

A MESSAGE FROM DAME DANA ROSS-WARWZYNSKI DBE

It has been an exciting first term for the Trust and our partner schools this academic year. There have been many examples of outstanding collaboration between staff across our schools, most notably at our first Bright Futures training day. Read more about how our staff came together on 4th November to talk about what Bright Futures means for our schools, our staff and our students in this newsletter.

As part of the Trust's commitment to the highest quality education for all its students, two of our teachers are now fully trained and licensed to teach mindfulness to primary school children. Read more about how this programme is helping students across the Trust on page three.

Finally, I'd like to warmly welcome South Shore Academy to Bright Futures Educational Trust. South Shore Academy is the first school to join the Trust from Blackpool, and enjoyed their best ever GCSE results this summer. We are looking

forward to working closely with the school to boost aspirations in students and continue to improve achievement.

Our Chair, Directors and I wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.



Bright Futures Educational Trust: Better Together

On 4th November staff from across our partner schools joined together for a day of discovery, sharing outstanding practice as part of a Trust-wide collaboration to improve outcomes for all of our children and young people.

Bright Futures Educational Trust has a great deal of expertise in a wide range of areas through its talented staff, and this is what makes our Trust truly unique. Through engaging workshop tasks and motivating presentations staff explored the variety of approaches and methods employed by our partner schools, each bringing something different to add to our collective strength.

Our thanks go to the fantastic Bright Futures CPD team from across all of our Trust schools who worked tirelessly to make the event so successful.

It has been a great privilege to work with such talented, creative and inspiring CPD leaders from across the six schools. They thought carefully about the strengths of their individual schools and then worked with staff in their own schools to devise superb sessions.

Sarah Boyse, Head of Teaching School

We have had some wonderful feedback from many of the attendees, and are looking forward to the same enthusiasm, engaged contributions and inspiring outcomes at the next Bright Futures conference in May.

Dame Dana Ross Warzynski DBE





Bright Futures 'Better Together': a teacher's perspective



From the first moment joint CPD training across BFET was suggested I volunteered my support in its development. I was excited at the prospect of having chance to collaborate, network and share innovative practice with talented colleagues from all our amazing academies.

One of the best things to come out of this for me was the opportunity to work with a fantastic group of CPD leads who were motivated, dedicated and committed to delivering the best training day possible.

Together with James Hughes, SLT at Cedar Mount Academy, we agreed to add a focus on our joint creative expertise in media at Gorton Education Village. I had an overwhelming sense of pride as the programme was finally rolled out and the day progressed. There was a buzz as staff across academies worked collaboratively in groups. Without doubt, there was an evolving sense of 'better together' emerging.

The buzz and enthusiasm carried on at the school over the following days as staff swapped and compared their experiences across the five school based venues. Feedback included praise for presenters' passion and enthusiasm, the well-organised and prepared sessions, and the excellent, creative ideas shared on the day. Indeed, this was seen as high quality training at its best. I extend a big personal thank you to all the talented staff who shared their huge wealth of expertise across our diverse settings.



**JULIE BARNETT, VICE PRINCIPAL,
MELLAND HIGH SCHOOL**

In the press

- ★ Our CEO Dame Dana Ross-Wawrzynski DBE was interviewed in her latest appearance on BBC Radio Manchester and was also mentioned by Michael Gove in a piece in the Daily Mail as an inspiration to young women
- ★ Chief Operating Officer Amanda Bailey blogged and participated in a webchat for the Guardian, giving insights into the benefits of Mindfulness for staff and students
- ★ Michael Gove highlighted Bright Futures Educational Trust's outstanding work in October's Academy Magazine
- ★ Cedar Mount's Assistant Vice Principal Jackie Bowen has been highly commended for the Pearson Award for pupil impact at a Teaching Leaders 2011 cohort graduation ceremony



AGGS welcomes back old girls to BFET schools

The Trust is already starting to see former pupils from its lead school Altrincham Grammar School for Girls returning as teaching staff across the Bright Futures network.

Aisha Adams has joined our new Connell Sixth Form College as Head of Art, and is already supporting

students in showcasing their artistic talents to the wider Beswick community. For example, this month students will be competing to have their artwork appear on advertising hoardings on the site of the new college building.

From January Laura Morris will be joining Cedar Mount Academy as Head of Religious Studies. Since completing her A levels at AGGS

in 2003, Laura has completed a degree in theology at the University of Leeds and is returning to her hometown of Manchester next term.

We are delighted to see former students bringing their expertise to our schools, and wish them every success in building their careers with us.





BFET schools SHINE with the Hallé

Cedar Mount Academy, Gorton Mount Primary Academy and Stanley Grove Primary Academy have been selected to participate in this year's Hallé 'SHINE on Manchester' project, a Hallé Orchestra academic initiative for primary pupils across Greater Manchester. The Hallé Orchestra programme is designed to boost the achievement levels of primary school children from backgrounds where they might not ordinarily have those sorts of opportunities.

Cedar Mount is the 'host school', with primary students from Bright Futures Educational Trust taking part in musical activities run by the Hallé orchestra to specifically improve attainment in literacy and numeracy.

Every Saturday, 60 children will be brought together at Cedar Mount to work together on motivational activities such as solving a murder mystery, and writing presentations to help develop reading and mathematical skills.

Bright Futures Educational Trust was selected to host the project due to the work that is being done to share best practice across both secondary and primary levels. It is unique for Hallé SHINE to have a secondary school as the lead school, and the music facilities at Cedar Mount will provide an ideal location for the project.

Gary Handforth, Executive Headteacher of Stanley Grove Primary Academy and Gorton Mount Primary Academy said:

“ This is a fantastic opportunity for the Trust and our schools. The Hallé SHINE project will enable young people from a variety of backgrounds to have the opportunity to achieve and learn new and exciting things through creative activities. Our pupils are really excited to get involved. ”

Melland High looks East with China school visit

As part of the One Education China link programme, with funding from the British Council Connecting Classrooms project, two teachers from Hadian SEN School in Beijing visited Melland High School in September.

Project leaders Zoe Edgar and Sheila Durdey arranged for the teachers to spend two days in Melland High School to learn how Special Educational programmes are run in England.

The two teachers toured the school facilities, spent time with Melland's speech and language therapists and met with the Principal and Executive Principal. The Hadian teachers also had an opportunity to visit Chatsworth House and Chester as part of the cultural exchange.

Sheila Durdey added: "Taking part in the Connecting Classrooms project has enabled us to establish a fantastic link with Hadian SEN School and we will continue to work with them over the next academic year through the development of our 'e-learning' portal, where we will be able to share good practices through the use of new technologies".



Mindfulness training in Wales

Bright Futures Educational Trust is proud to be leading the way in new research and practical methodologies that promote student and staff wellbeing. As part of this commitment, two of our staff members participated in a residential training course in Wales to learn more about the benefits mindfulness can bring to the education setting.

Stanley Grove Primary Academy staff members Amy Footman and Holly Consadine travelled to Llandudno to meet with teachers, mindfulness practitioners and researchers from Bangor University. Holly and Amy received training that makes them among the first teachers in the

country to be licensed to teach the new Paws.B Primary mindfulness curriculum. Year 4 students at Stanley Grove Primary Academy are already benefiting from this training, and the long term plan is to extend the programme across all primaries in the Trust.

The Trust's educational psychology team will also be using the students participating in the programme as the basis for a piece of bespoke research examining and evaluating the positive effects of mindfulness on student behaviour. The research is being led by George Thomas.

Amy, Assistant Vice Principal at Stanley Grove Primary Academy, said of her experience: "It was brilliant to see how the mindfulness practices we use as adults can be adapted and used with KS2 pupils. Holly is already using the curriculum in her year 4 class and I am trialling it in a year 5 class. After January I will be acting as George's research assistant to help him to measure progress data, attention focusing time and quality of work."

This pioneering research is important in finding new ways to help children to focus on the present and to be aware when their mind is wandering, thus helping to increase their attention, leading to improved progress in their learning.

Find out more about mindfulness training by contacting the Alliance for Learning Teaching School.

