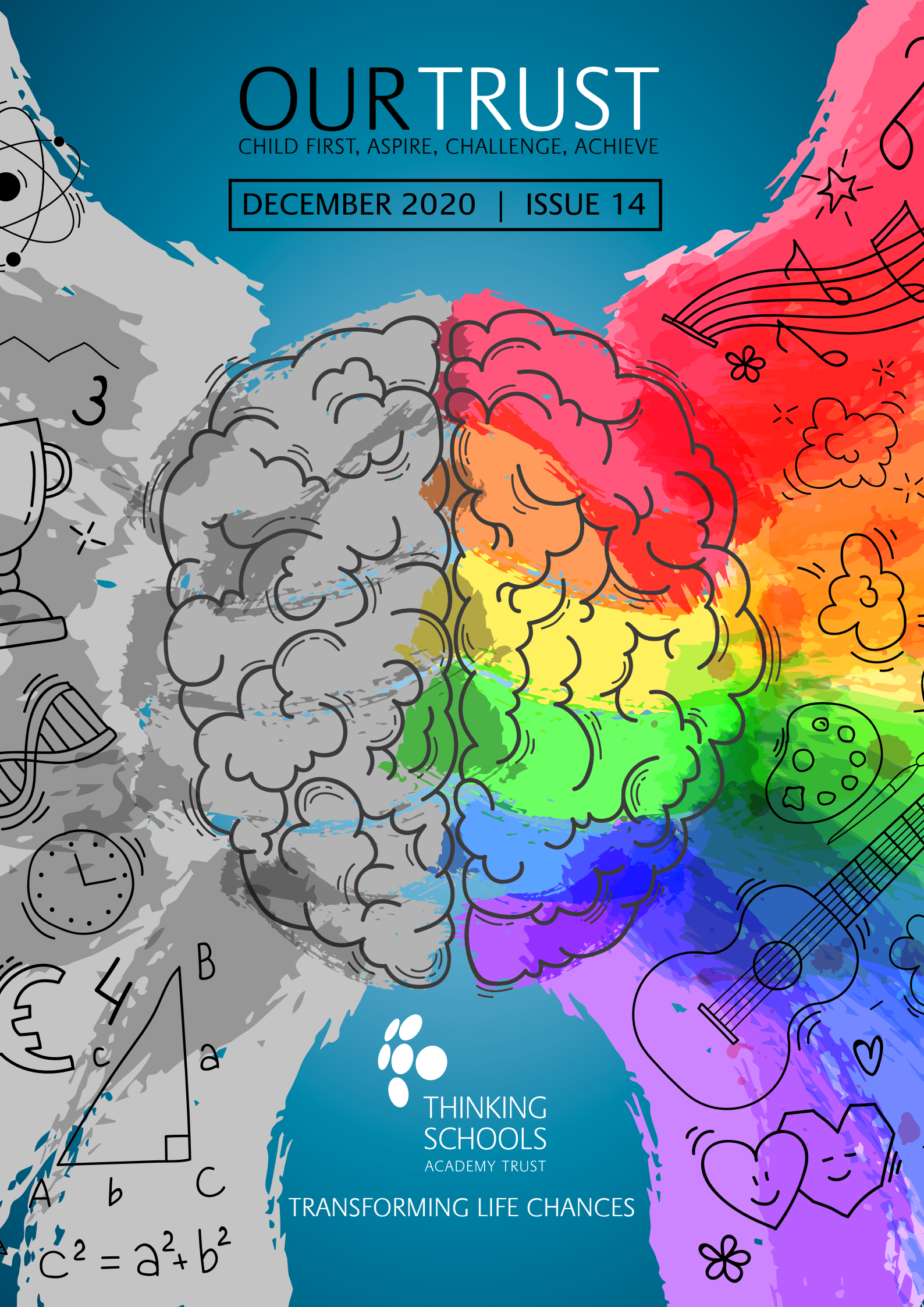


OUR TRUST

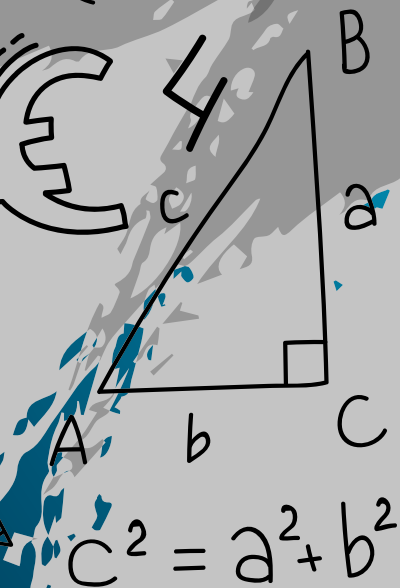
CHILD FIRST, ASPIRE, CHALLENGE, ACHIEVE

DECEMBER 2020 | ISSUE 14



THINKING
SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST

TRANSFORMING LIFE CHANCES



12 MONTHS IN THE MAKING

WE STROVE,

WE CHALLENGED,

WE MASTERED,

WE LEARNED.

WE BECAME STRONGER

AND WISER.

WE LEAVE THIS YEAR,

REFLECTING, GROWING AND

DETERMINED.

**2021 WILL BE THE FRUITS
OF OUR LABOUR, AS WE
CONTINUE TO TRANSFORM
LIFE CHANCES.**

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Welcome to Our Trust, the last edition for 2020.

What is truly inspiring about these pages is that they are full of our young people and our staff doing fantastic

things, without any hint of the disruption or challenges of delivering education during a global pandemic.

So, first off, I want to thank everyone for what we can't see in this edition of Our Trust, but I know has made a huge difference to the young people we serve. To our site teams I would like to thank you for our one-way systems, our deep cleans and keeping us fully stocked with hand sanitiser! To our ICT and finance teams, thank you for our Teams passwords, our headsets and laptops. To our support staff who have answered many an anxious query, conducted in-school track and trace and ensured our children are safe; thank you.

To our HR and marketing teams who have interpreted daily government guidance, provided essential updates and written many, many, template letters for our schools to use; thank you. And of course, our teachers, TA's and school leaders who, throughout this term, have been on the front line. Sometimes they have needed to simultaneously teach students at home and in the classroom, at other times they have been beaming into classrooms from home due to self-isolation and, of course, keeping our schools open while the rest of the country was forced into a total lockdown – thank you and well done!

From a Thinking / metacognition perspective 2020 has been fascinating. It has reinforced my belief that the work we do in developing the Thinking Skills and Habits of Mind in our

students is absolutely the right approach to take in order to equip them for life – whatever the future may hold. I believe we have all seen the structures and approaches we use come into their own, not only in student-centred activities but in our own lives as well.

Personally, I know that I have never worked so hard at “finding humour” and managing my “Red Hat”. However, by consciously having these tools in my “life toolbox”, I also know that I have been able to be a better person, father, husband and leader than I ever could have been without them. It is this realisation and understanding that inspires me to look ahead into 2021, confident that we are doing the right things with our students to ensure we transform their life chances.

As you take a well-earned break and reflect on the year that was, I would encourage you to focus on the positives, maybe, like me, you have discovered some beautiful walks close to home or the joys of having a cast iron excuse not to have to visit “the shops” for 10 months. Whatever it is, no matter how big or how small, celebrate what 2020 did bring us.

If you are struggling to find the positive then hopefully the following pages full of amazing achievements, activities and awards will give you inspiration to find the silver lining.

Have a great break and I look forward to working with you all in 2021.

Stay safe,

Stuart Gardner

Stuart Gardner, MSc, NPQH, NLE
Chief Executive Officer

Want to hear more great news?

Join our growing social media groups on LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter



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By Royal Appointment

Exciting news for our very own Deputy CEO Lee Miller!

The entire TSAT family are delighted by the news that Lee Miller, Deputy Chief Executive, is to be appointed an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours for Services to Education.

Lee, who was born and bred in Medway, attended Featherby Infant and Junior School and then The Howard School. He started working in education in 2009 as a school Business Manager at a large secondary school (now The Portsmouth Academy). He joined Thinking Schools in 2013 when the school did likewise as the Trust's third school.

Since then, he and Thinking Schools' Chief Executive, Stuart Gardner, have overseen a period of success and growth ensuring that thousands of children and young people who attend the Trust's 15 academies receive a world-class education, and that its staff are rewarded and recognised for their excellence.

Lee has also been placed by the Department for Education into a number of academy trusts which have fallen into financial difficulty. Each time, with the support of other education leaders including Angela Barry and Nikki King, he has ensured that the schools have returned to good financial health.

Lee, who is accredited as a Specialist Leader in Education, said: "I am incredibly fortunate to work in an organisation that contains so many brilliant, committed people who are driven by a desire to lead improvements to the schools system that will improve outcomes for children and transform their life chances.

"I would like to make special recognition of my team who have been an integral part of the success of this Trust and ultimately allow me the capacity to be in a position to support schools/Trusts that have fallen into difficult times.

"This is very much an honour for every single person who works at Thinking Schools – in particular our Chair of Trustees, Peter Martin, and our Chief Executive, Stuart Gardner, who have established a positive culture that allows excellence to flourish and where we put transforming the life chances at the heart of everything we do."

Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said: "I am delighted for Lee – this honour is richly deserved. His work over the last seven years has been instrumental in the Trust's progress and, more importantly, he has played a central role in helping us provide a fantastic education to tens of thousands of children and young people so that they can go on to live successful lives."



Successes led by Lee Miller

- Devising a new pay framework for teachers at the Trust that was supported by teaching unions, resulting in higher pay for staff (including a nationally recognised significant uplift to newly qualified teachers, to help attract graduates into the sector) at no additional cost to the taxpayer.
- Developing a high-performing central hub of services that not only enables Thinking Schools to save money but also helps smaller trusts save money by accessing professional back-office services including HR, IT, marketing, facilities maintenance and finance and procurement.
- Working with school leaders to embed innovative financial planning at Thinking Schools' academies, leading to significant savings so that funds go back into improving the quality of education.

REMEMBRANCE DAY



Remembrance is a time of thought, a time to remember those who have put their lives on the line so that we may live.

Despite Remembrance Day being very different this year, it was just as important.

Our schools held assemblies and lessons to reflect on the history and sacrifices of WWI and WWII. They also took part in workshops creating poppies and window displays, as well as showing respect with the two minutes silence. It's important to reflect, to understand and to learn from our history.

Students of Goodwin Academy, Deal made it onto the Kent Online roundup, with a show of their spectacular wall art. Each handmade poppy had a heartfelt message of thanks to fallen soldiers.

Head Girl and Deputy Head Girls from The Portsmouth Academy prepared a Remembrance wreath which was laid on their behalf at the Portsmouth Guildhall memorial.

In addition, Medway schools contributed to a beautiful window display in the Strood Community Hub.

Students at Holcombe Grammar School were able to wear their Cadet and Scout uniforms as a mark of respect for Remembrance Day on 11th November. It was a great source of pride to see so many students in their uniforms for the occasion.

Meanwhile, our Year 7 and 8 pupils worked incredibly hard to contribute artistic reflections for a Remembrance Day display. Students were asked to create an image, collage or artefact to signify the Poppy Appeal. Over fifty students participated in Year 7. The winners: Jack, Adam and Dylan were announced as the winners for Year 7.



AWARDS SEASON

It was a hat-trick this term with Kirsty Gaythwaite, Cate Hayes-Watkins and Carley Dawkins, bringing home National Pearson Teaching Awards.

Kirsty Gaythwaite, Assistant Head of Maths at Goodwin Academy, was honoured with a Silver Award in the category for Outstanding New Teacher of the Year, for her outstanding commitment to changing the lives of the children.

Initially joining the school as a Learning Support Assistant to help vulnerable pupils, Kirsty was quickly identified as having a talent for teaching mathematics. She continued to work at the school while studying in evenings and weekends for her Diploma in Education, and since qualifying as a teacher has continued to put in immense amounts of work to ensure her students succeed.



Kirsty Gaythwaite on BBC Breakfast News

After receiving the nomination earlier this year, Kirsty couldn't hide her surprise when a meeting with Goodwin Academy's Principal, Simon Smith, ended with her receiving the Silver Award at a socially distanced ceremony that was streamed live to her colleagues and students from the school theatre.

The Goodwin Academy team worked hard to pull together the surprise Awards Ceremony, followed by a secret tea party, to celebrate the award-winning teacher. Kirsty's parents, Sonya, Maurice and daughter Grace were also there, as an additional surprise.

Kirsty's mum, Sonya recalled; "I remember Kirsty wanting to be a midwife when she grew up, but maths teacher was never mentioned." Kirsty added; "I've always loved maths though, I got my GCSE in Yr10 rather than Yr11. But I never expected this."

Talking about her Award, Kirsty said: "I am just so shocked, so happy and... I'm proud. I don't often say that about myself but I am. It's been a tough journey. I love teaching though, it really is my passion. I sleep, eat and dream teaching."

Simon Smith, Principal at the school, said; "I am absolutely delighted for Kirsty, this is an amazing achievement, one that is thoroughly deserved. Kirsty is such an



Simon Smith (Principal) with Kirsty Gaythwaite



From left: Cate Hayes-Watkins, Simon Smith (Principal), Kirsty Gaythwaite

inspiring teacher who works so hard to make a difference and to transform the life chances of every student she teaches."

And it didn't end there, with Kirsty announced as a Pearson National Teaching Awards 'Gold Winner' on BBC1's The One Show. She was also interviewed, appearing on BBC Breakfast to talk about her awards.

In addition, Cate Hayes-Watkins won Kent Secondary School Teacher of the Year 2020, and remembers the moment she found out; "We were in Lockdown when I heard [I had won] it was an amazing boost at such a challenging time.

"I felt totally amazed and proud. Teaching

has been such a journey for me and when I heard what had been said about me I was blown away!"

The Head of Performing Arts teacher encourages anyone thinking of nominating to just do it. "It is such an amazing feeling to be recognised, and now I'm thinking about who I could nominate as it celebrates us as a school too.

"Anyone who is nominated will know just how much they mean to their school community."

Goodwin wasn't the only TSAT school nominated. Carley Dawkins, Head of Visual Arts at The Victory Academy, was also awarded Teacher of the Year at a Secondary School.



From left: Stuart Gardner (Trust CEO), Carley Dawkins (Head of Visual Arts), Mandy Gage (Director of Education - Chatham)



NEW HORIZONS PRIMARY SCHOOL

THE MERGE OF TWO LONG-STANDING TSAT SCHOOLS PROVED A SUCCESS.

The all-new New Horizons Primary School is here! Over the summer the fantastic teams at Meredith Infants and Isambard Junior Schools, along with the Thinking Facilities, worked hard to see the merge of the two schools come to fruition.

Merging Portsmouth's Meredith Infant together with Isambard Brunel Junior created New Horizons Primary School. Our main aim with this merge was to make life a little easier for the parents of Portsmouth and now, as NHP is a single school spanning ages 4 to 11, parents only need apply to one school; New Horizons Primary under the excellent leadership of Lucy Carroll.

Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive Officer at the Trust, said; "I am delighted to be here as our New Horizons Primary School is unveiled! Our 'one school one staff' approach, under the leadership of Headteacher Lucy Carroll, will remove the need to change school at the pivotal and transitional point of Key stages 1 and 2.

"Ensuring children will be in one environment from the age of 4 through to 11 years old; one school one staff."

Preparation ahead of launch day was fizzing with activity and nerves, but as Friday 4th September rolled around, anticipation and

excitement were in the air. The bubble machine was on, the music was playing and the children were bouncing about in high spirits as they queue, socially distanced, to enter.

Our Thinking Creative team designed fun branded selfie frames for the children to enjoy, parents to share on Facebook and to mark the first day back at a brand new school, and the school mascot Starfish and a Minion were on hand for photo shoots too.

Local press, The News, covered the event where Lucy Carroll shared how 'overwhelming' the task of merging the schools in the middle of pandemic was at first – but eventually proved to be a 'powerful' bonding experience for staff meeting for the first time.

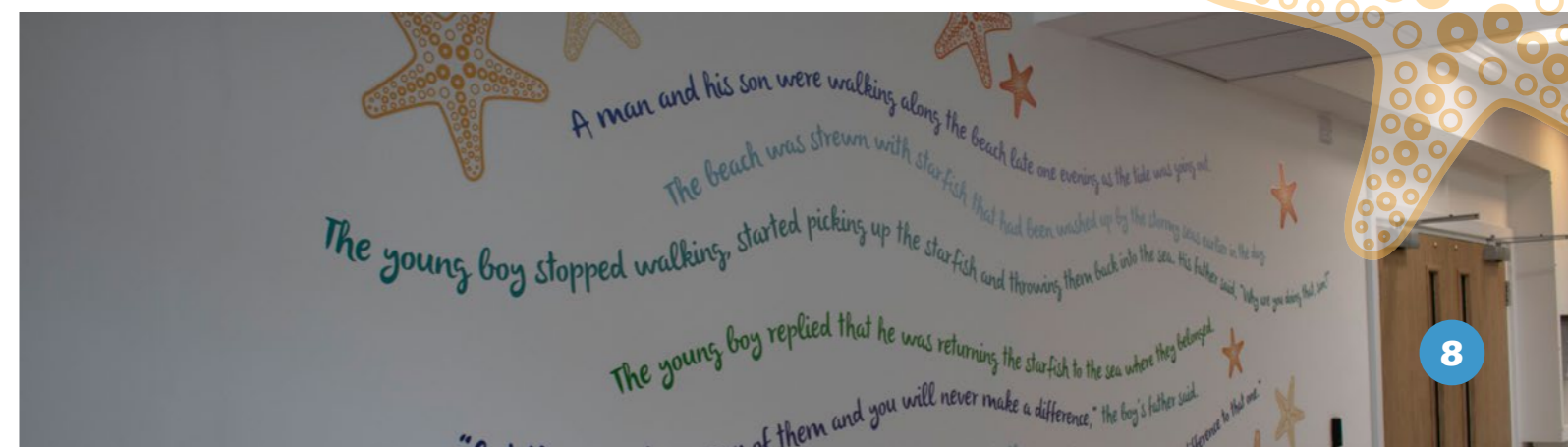
Lucy went on to say: "...The biggest support has been from the trust. They have been incredible, digesting the government's guidance. The Department of Education has sent out a daily update – you couldn't expect someone to get through all the information."



The launch of the school left the headteacher smiling: "It's been amazing... We have lovely families and an amazing team."

The News reported that the new Covid-19 safety measures such as staggered timetables, floor stickers, hand sanitisers, and own stationery and water bottles left on school grounds left anxious parents feeling reassured.

Local dad, Matt Legge, who was with his wife Jennifer to drop off their five-year-old twins, Carter and Cleo, said: "The school has been fantastic at keeping us updated with how they will keep the kids safe. It feels good to be going back to normal – we're very happy and very relieved."



Heroes by Day

September 16th and October 5th are special dates in the education world. Our community relies on all that teaching assistants and support staff do to help teachers do what they do, and it's these dates that are a welcome reminder to say thank you. Teachers empower young people and mould minds, and we appreciate you and all that you do.

At Goodwin Academy, teaching assistants and support staff were each gifted a hero mask for the day and they shared their 'super power' with the world (an unspoken no-no in Super Hero circles).



Welcome New Starters

Hello to all of our new starters, across Portsmouth, Medway and Hampshire, and well done on becoming part of our team, we are very much looking forward to seeing how your career unfolds while at TSAT. You'll see some of our starters below.



Central Team New Starters

Thinking Technology: Stefanos Beligiannis, Sam Tasker and Paul Wooster
Thinking Facilities: Jonathan Gay, Richard Irvine, Les Latham and Anthony Tyrell

Thinking Finance: Dviya Bbau and Ashauna Edie
Thinking Creative: Stephanie Lowe

YOUR WAY TO WELLBEING

Now more than ever the wellbeing of our school community is so important, since the start of the academic year we continue to focus on our Wellbeing Wheel.



The Six Ways to Wellbeing are a simple but effective set of actions. Explore ways to **Give** and **Care** for friends, family, colleagues, people we don't know and the planet; become more **Active** by finding new ways to exercise; **Take Notice** and focus on mindfulness; **Keep Learning** to better ourselves and **Connect** with our community and to build long-lasting relationships.

Though, the longest relationship is with yourself, make self-care a priority with the six ways of our Wellbeing Wheel.

Body: Be Active - You don't have to run a marathon to be active, try a Zoom Yoga class, or go for a long walk. Find the best form of physical activity that works for you and your lifestyle.

Mind: Keep Learning - Rediscover an old hobby or sign up for a free course. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook something new. Learn a new language or set a challenge you will enjoy.

People: Connect - Find the time to nurture your friendships and family bonds. Call, or text to connect with the people around you. Whether it's family, friends, colleagues or neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community.

Place: Take Notice - Life moves fast – so hit pause and take a second to appreciate what's going on, inside and outside. Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Savour the moment. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling.

Planet: Care - Make small changes to your life that will reduce your energy use, recycle more, leave the car at home, use low energy light bulbs, small steps to a greener life makes a difference.

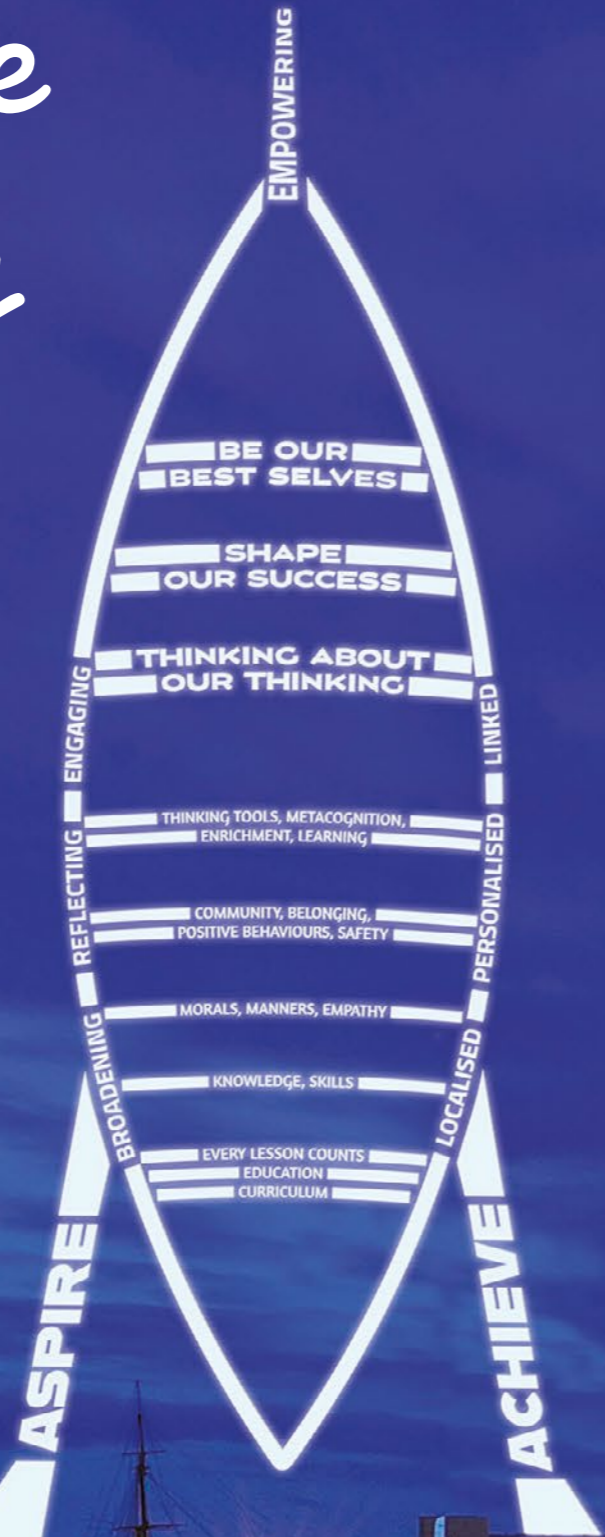
Spirit: Give - Big or small, actions to improve the lives of others, improves our own. Take time to do something kind for a friend or stranger. Smile, volunteer your time. See yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community; it's rewarding.

The Aspire Building

Our £5.3 million-pound project wows staff, students and community. Covid-19 aside, term one proved terrific success at The Portsmouth Academy.

Term one was extra exciting for The Portsmouth Academy (TPA) team as they launched their £5.3 million-pound project; The Aspire Building, which opened on time to welcome back students.

The hugely anticipated facility had everyone bubbling with excitement. TPA's newest building includes a recording studio, food tech, art and music classrooms and performance space. The project also saw updates to the sports facilities and an inclusive provision – The Student Engagement Department.



Although Covid-19 prevented the grand opening event that was initially planned, many of our TSAT family have had the opportunity to visit the amazing learning space.

The three-storey building was named after one of the school values – reminding TPA students each day, to aspire to be their best.

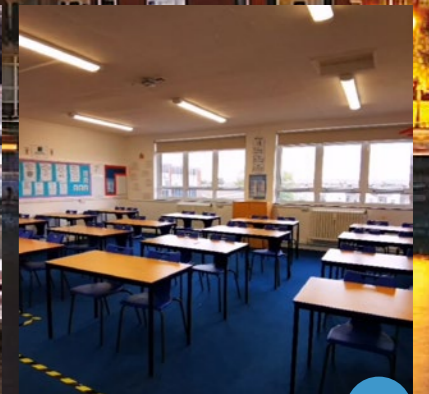
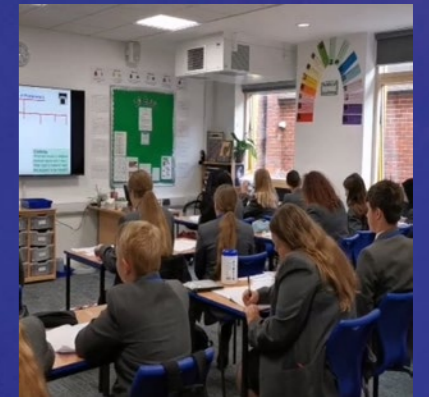
One of the main features of the building is a state-of-the-art performance space where TPA students will be able to rehearse, as well as deliver live performances to parents and the community.

Rachel Grey, TPA Principal said, “This is an exciting time for our school as we rapidly needed the extra learning space, and it demonstrates our commitment to offer the very best learning environment for our pupils.”

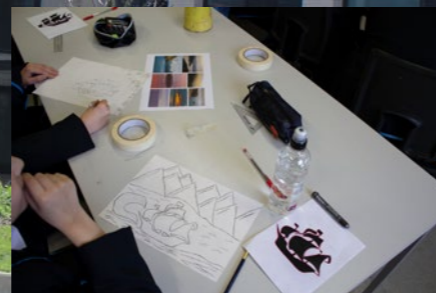
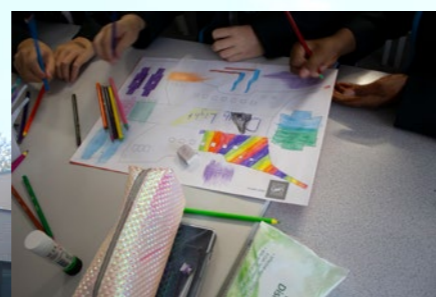
After five years in the making, this project was a huge success and down to the hard work from many different teams – living up to the ‘we are one’ ethos of our Trust.

Alongside the commitment and passion shown by the staff of TPA; Thinking Technology, Facilities and Creative all rose to the challenge putting in many hours of hard work to ensure that the building was functional, looked amazing and was opened on time.

A huge-shout out especially to Alanya Russell, Assistant Principal: Cultural Capital and Creative Curriculum, who steered the creative vision for the look and feel of the interior design.



Victory Day



Every September, since The Victory Academy officially opened, the school has celebrated its Victory Day. This year was no exception, although not quite in the same way as previous years due to meeting safety requirements.

The school celebrated their fifth birthday as pupils took part in various activities, including designing flags to display across the school grounds. Pupils designed and built their own boats, taking inspiration from the HMS Victory.

The Victory Academy are looking forward to next year when they can hopefully bring out the cannons and have large group events taking place, like the balloon launch and naval-themed activities such as rope making, tug of war, the climbing wall and their after-school party.

Student's amazing work on show at The Royal Academy of Art.

We are proud to announce that Magda, a Year 9 student Rochester Grammar School, was selected out of 17,000 submissions to have her work exhibited at the Royal Academy of Art's second Young Artists' Summer Show 2020.

The exhibition is live and Magda's work, "My Town" can be viewed. Magda said: "I took a series of photos while on a walk showing my town's usually busy high street as abandoned and empty, and I decided to draw them."

Congratulations Magda, we look forward to seeing you grow and develop as an artist!



Year 13 student wins national writing competition

An RGS student won a national writing competition for her blog on the future of television.

For the Small Screen: Big Debate Competition, sponsored by the FT and Ofcom, Janelle Oje answered the question: "What must traditional broadcasters and streaming services do to make sure they appeal to the audiences of tomorrow?"

In her blog, she explores how broadcasters should understand a young audience and questioned the lack of anime and variety of historical dramas.

Her entry was assessed by three judges representing Ofcom, the Financial Times and Career Ready, a national charity aimed at connecting young people with the world of work.

Janelle won £100 for her fantastic effort. Well done, Janelle, we are all very proud of you!



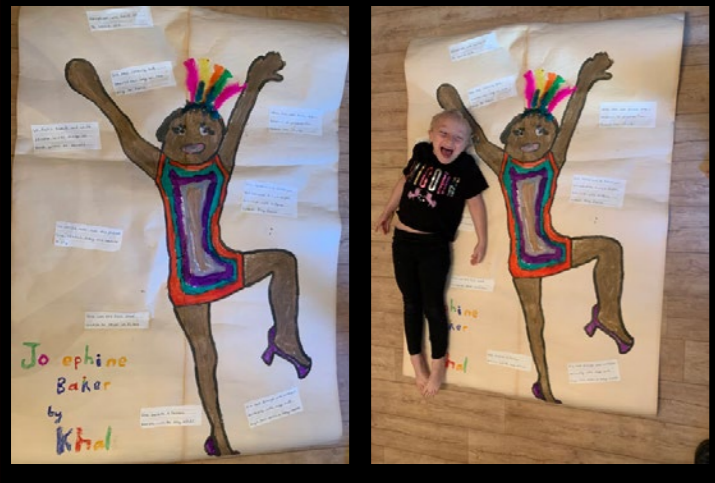
KENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

First Place: Black History Month Blowout (Video), Ama Amo-Agyei | Rochester Grammar School, Year 9



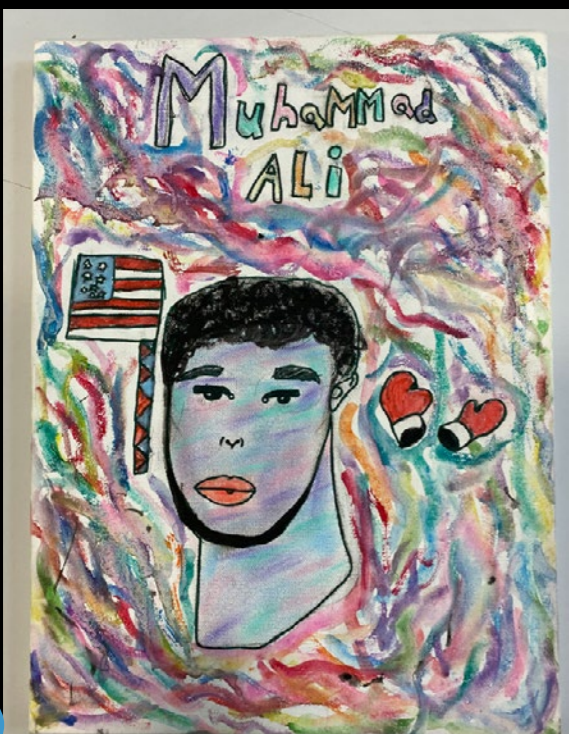
KENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

First Place: "Josephine Baker", Khali Shelley, Gordon Children's Academy, Year 2



PORTSMOUTH SCHOOLS

First Place: "A True Inspiration", Millie Harbert, Meon Junior School



B:IM 2020

ART COMPETITION

To celebrate inspirational black people and their achievements we launched our Trust's first ever Black History Month Art Competition.

Talented students from across our Trust jumped at the chance to flex their creative muscles and submissions quickly rolled in. We were overwhelmed with so many fantastic and imaginative entries.

After time to ponder, some difficult decisions were made, our judging panel chose three overall winners, one from each of the hubs at Kent Secondary Schools, Kent Primary Schools and Portsmouth Schools. Congratulations to everyone as our judges didn't have it easy with so many fantastic pieces submitted. All of them were celebratory, imaginative, educational, diverse and interesting.

You can take a look at all entries and the top three for each hub by visiting the [Black History Month Art Competition](#) in the news section on our Trust's website.



TOP MARKS!

Medway primary school makes waves in national ranking.



As a Trust we are overjoyed at the amazing news that New Horizons Children's Academy has earned an excellent ranking in [The Sunday Times School Guide 2021](#).

The annual list ranks the top state and independent primary schools in the country based on SATs results. This year, the 28th edition featured 20,000+ schools and identified NHCA as the 110th best primary school in England! An incredible achievement placing them in the top 0.5% of schools!

TSAT CEO, Stuart Gardner said: "This recognises their sustained excellence and that Jody Murphy, former headteacher, did an amazing job during her time at the school, and it's great to see her commitment and that of her team being rewarded."

Sharing the news on the school's Facebook page, parents were quick to make positive comments, with one stating; "amazing!", while another added, "well impressed!".



We're supporting BBC Children in Need

Our primary school children dressed as key workers to raise over £3,000 for Children in Need.

Every year our schools look forward to the annual Children In Need fundraising events. This year we themed our day, challenging our students to dress up as key workers, to pay homage to the people who have worked throughout the pandemic.

Students from our schools rose to the challenge and came to school in some incredible outfits. The theme was extra

special for some students who proudly wore outfits inspired by the jobs of their parents.

We had doctors, firefighters, a waste collector and even Boris Johnson!

In our secondary schools, students and staff raised money by purchasing tasty iced ring doughnuts throughout the day. A huge thank you to Chartwells for their support, helping our schools 'raise some dough'!



#HelloYellow

ON FRIDAY 9TH OCTOBER, OUR SCHOOLS TOOK PART IN #HELLOYELLOW FOR WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY. THE MOVEMENT WAS STARTED BY YOUNGMINDS, THE UK'S LEADING CHARITY FIGHTING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH.

STAFF AND CHILDREN THROUGHOUT THE TRUST WORE THEIR BRIGHTEST YELLOW CLOTHES TO SHOW EVERYONE THAT THEY ARE NOT ALONE.

YOUNGMINDS

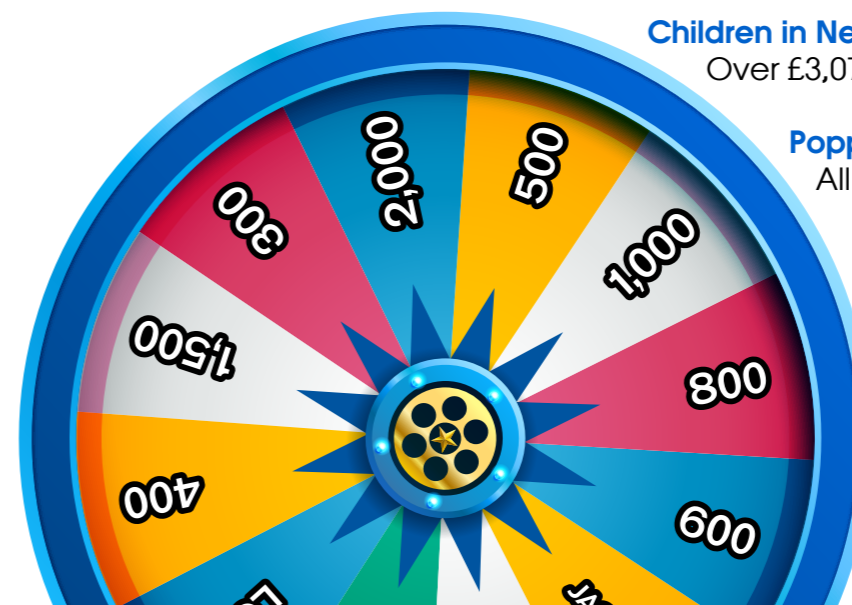


Children in Need
Over £3,077 raised throughout our schools

Poppy Appeal
All Faiths Children's Academy raise £100

Young Minds - Wear Yellow
Over £1,568 raised between schools

Parkinsons UK
The Rochester Grammar School raised over £4,297



Mary Cartwright Hall

New Horizons Children's Academy are proud to be renaming their school hall from the Smyth Hall to the Mary Cartwright Hall in January 2021. The honour of re-opening the hall was given to Mrs Murphy, previous Headteacher who has left to continue in her position as Headteacher at The Gordon Children's Academy while leading the Strood Hub in her position as Director of Education.

Mary Cartwright was the first woman to win the Sylvester Award in 1964 and also the first woman to serve on the Council of the Royal Society. In her lifetime she met goals which she may have thought were not possible and broke the conventions of women during her lifetime. Current and future pupils at New Horizons will hopefully find determination in Mary Cartwright's achievements as a proud woman, who made such an impact in the field of mathematics and also British society.

Maths is an important subject to everyone in New Horizon Children's Academy. The school hopes that by renaming their hall after such an inspirational woman, it will inspire children to believe that anything they set their minds to is possible. The hall was renamed in time for what would have been Mary's 120th birthday.



Credit: Anitha Maria S, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Introducing Ardent House

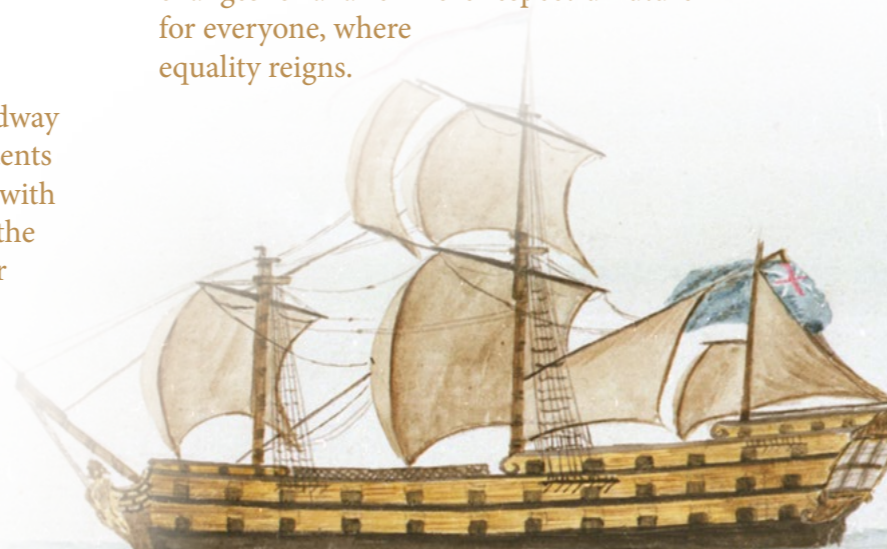
School Captains at Holcombe Grammar School tasked with renaming one of its houses.

Lee Preston, Principal at Holcombe Grammar School, said: "At Holcombe we name all our houses after ships built in Medway. But it came light that Hawkins House is named after a boat and it's owner, Sir John Hawkins, who had profited from the Atlantic slave-trade."

The School Captains Team were tasked with researching other ships that were built in Medway that would be a far better alternative. All students within Hawkins form groups were presented with a list of alternative ship names shortlisted by the School Captains. Students then voted on their favourite, with the winning ship declared as the Ardent.

HMS Ardent was built in Medway and launched in 1841. The Ship carried out active service in the Crimean War and was awarded The Victoria Cross Award for rescuing survivors of HMS Mutine. Most notably, the ship was used in anti-slavery operations, travelling to the West Coast of Africa to become involved in the long campaign to end the slave-trade.

At every opportunity we must strive to make changes for a fairer more respectful future for everyone, where equality reigns.



TSAT Movers & Shakers

2020 saw a lot of changes, least of all for our Headteachers.

We are so grateful to have so many wonderful members of staff within The Thinking Schools Academy Trust.

This Term has seen some changes of Headteachers and Principals within our schools. It's always fantastic when a member of the Senior Leadership Team is recognised and given the opportunity to rise into the position of leading their school.



Cormac Murphy joins New Horizons Children's Academy as Headteacher.

Cormac Murphy was Acting Head Teacher at All

Faiths for one year before moving up to Headteacher, where he maintained this position for just over four years. It was during this time he led the primary school to great success, helping All Faiths go from an OFSTED 'Requires Improvement' to a 'Good School'.

We're proud to have him on our team, and glad his move saw him stay in the TSAT family.



Jody Murphy becomes Headteacher at The Gordon Children's Academy.

Jody Murphy is a highly respected Headteacher and

Director of Education within our Trust who is passionate about our values of putting children first, and this is evident in everything she does.

After four years leading New Horizons Children's Academy, Jody has now taken up position as Headteacher at The Gordon Children's Academy while continuing to be the Director of Education for Strood.

Jody will also be leading the new Maritime Academy as Principal in September 2022.



Marion Browning is appointed Headteacher at All Faiths Children's Academy.

Marion Browning has been appointed after succeeding in

her role as Deputy Head and Year 6 teacher at All Faiths' for 18 years. Joining the school originally as an Advanced Skills teacher where she worked for a year, before applying Deputy Head. Ms. Browning is greatly respected by the Governors, parents, staff and pupils alike. There is no better lead to take All Faiths on to the next part of its exciting journey.

Flexibility and being able to move across schools is just one of the many benefits of being part of a large Trust. Our leaders are passionate and inspiring and are able to transition into other Trust schools seamlessly.



The Maritime Academy

The Thinking Schools Academy Trust's latest project is set to open its doors in 2022. The Maritime Academy will stand proud in Strood, Medway.

Our Trust is forward-thinking, innovative and always evolving, as is evident by the exciting news that we will be opening a modern and eco-focussed new-build secondary school; The Maritime Academy.

This investment is another huge vote of confidence in our Trust, proving we are recognised as having the ability to consistently deliver a top standard education for our local community.

The school will boast a range of specialist facilities including a gym, multi-use games area, three outdoor pitches, high-spec classrooms and the latest science and technology rooms. The sports facilities, gym and hall spaces will also be available for community use.

Working alongside our architects and Medway Council, the Academy has been designed with the Sustainable School Buildings Strategy in mind and



will offer long-term benefits for the future generations of students and staff, within the context of climate change and the government's Net Zero 2050 and biodiversity gain targets.

With an intake of 180 students per year and a 250 student sixth form, the school is designed to a set of principles that will create an environmentally sustainable place to learn, with a calm and sophisticated environment.

The Maritime Academy is an excellent opportunity for our children in Strood, as it gives them a through education experience; moving seamlessly from our Trust primary schools, stepping into secondary school life with children and staff that they already know.

Throughout 2021 we will be working closely with children and staff across our Strood schools offering interactive displays, assemblies, workshops and consultations, to take our children along this exciting journey to the Maritime's grand opening!

We are excited to be sharing with our TSAT children how the school develops from an



architects drawing, through to the first shovel in the ground, from its innovative strategy on environmental sustainability, a sneak peek at the new uniform right through to the grand opening and when our TSAT primary children start their very first day.

You can see to the left, the official Maritime Academy's brand new logo. The three 'spikes' refer to the Navy Trident which embodies the ethos of strength – whilst they also point forward towards the horizon that encircles it.

Watch this space for further updates and the continued project progress! We look forward to welcoming the Maritime Academy to the TSAT family.

The Academy will provide the following facilities:

- A three-storey main school building
- A two-storey sports hall with changing facilities, lockers and a classroom
- Hard-surfaced courts
- Three outdoor sports pitches
- External social areas and amenity space
- Community use facilities
- Safe access, car parking and drop off areas



A BIG Welcome to the newcomers of our TSAT family!

Plymouth High School for Girls will be joining the TSAT fold in February 2021.

The TSAT team have been working hard on an exciting project; adding another school to our growing family. Plymouth High School for Girls will be welcomed with open arms as we transition them into our academy.

Who are Plymouth High School for Girls?

Plymouth High School for Girls was founded as a consequence of the growing pressure in the late 19th century to improve women's rights and encourage girls to be ambitious. They are a long-established and highly popular city selective school with ambitious and enthusiastic staff and students. PHSG are proud to be driven by their commitment to create a positive environment where everyone feels valued for who they are.

It is these values that give us the confidence that they will be a perfect fit for the Thinking Schools family.



The school is led by Headteacher Simon Underdown. He joined Plymouth High School for Girls in September 2019 from Torbay's Churston Ferrers Grammar School, and has been a senior leader since 2008 and a teacher for over 25 years having served in six different schools.

Simon is determined to ensure that his students have an enjoyable and fulfilling experience at school, he is supported by five staff; who all make up his Senior Leadership Team.



**Simon Underdown
(Headteacher)**

We are excited to start working fully with PHSG from February, some of the immediate projects we will be embarking on with the school including a large investment in their IT Infrastructure, developing and promoting their catering offering and helping the school to become the first accredited Thinking School in Plymouth.

It is an extremely exciting time for the Trust as we branch out in to the West of the Country. We hope you will all join us in welcoming Plymouth High School for Girls.

Farewell 2020

On the inside front cover we wrote about the changes we have seen throughout 2020, but more importantly how our staff have risen to the occasion and continue to provide an education second to none.

Yes, there have been obstacles in the way and yes, there has been rapidly changing rules and regulations. But, through continued team effort we have found ways to reduce the negative impact of the Coronavirus for our pupils and our staff.

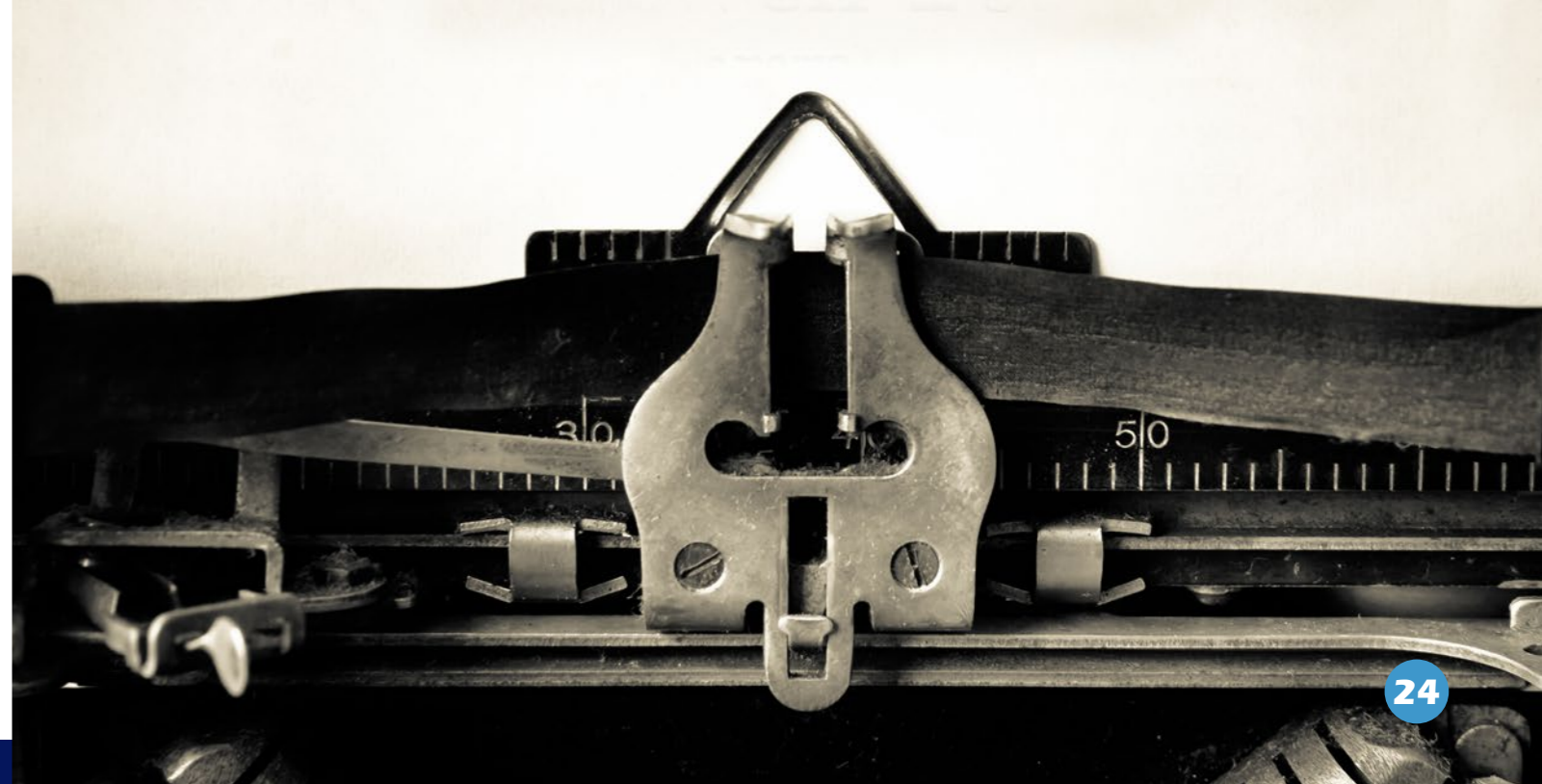
Deadlines have had to be met that in previous years would have been laughed at. You can hear the voices saying "that's not possible, there's not enough time.", but our amazing staff pulled together and delivered.

This time of year we may joke about who will be on the naughty list when Santa visits, but it's safe to say that we should all be proud of what we have done and we're sure that we will be on the nice list.

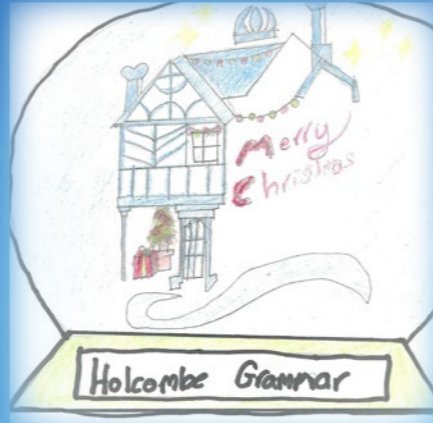
Let's not forget that it's not only staff that have changed their ways of working, our pupils also have grasped new technology to continue their education. We also salute parents, who took on remote learning, creating makeshift classrooms, to help their children learn. We know that parents and carers alike have had to reteach themselves to help their children, and we commend them for their efforts.

So, as we bring this year to an end and hope that 2021 will be less erratic, we would like to wish you all a very relaxing Christmas where you can spend time in your safe family bubbles and fingers crossed that 2021 will be amazing in every way for you, your family and friends!

Take care and warm wishes.



Christmas Fun for Everyone



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