

OUR TRUST

CHILD FIRST, ASPIRE, CHALLENGE, ACHIEVE



THINKING
SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST

SUMMER 2019 | ISSUE 10



CEDAR "GOOD" OFSTED

NEW HORIZONS RECEIVE SEND INCLUSION AWARD

THE DFE PRAISES OUR TRUST'S STAFF AND PUPILS

NCHANT REACH SONGS OF PRAISE FINALS

TRANSFORMING LIFE CHANCES

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Cedar Celebrate Their All-Round Ofsted “Good” Rating
- 2 Rochester Grammar School’s NCHANT Choir Reach the Finals
- 2 Cedar Raise £7,000
- 3 The Department for Education Praise Our Trust for Our Pupils’ Excellent Progress
- 3 United Nations World Environment Day
- 4 Rochester Grammar School Students Celebrate Excellent IB Results
- 5 Adventure On the High Seas
- 6 Goodwin’s “Best” Approach
- 7 Medway Secondary School Teacher of the Year
- 7 Mini Tennis Champions
- 8 Shaping Their Success
- 9 D-Day 75th Anniversary
- 10 Plastic Free Day
- 11 Meon Infants’ Garden Party
- 11 Portsmouth Academy Alumni Wins an Amazing £10,000 For College
- 12 Kingswood Adventure Centre
- 12 Gordon’s House Captain Elections
- 13 Mini Youth Games & Sporting Events
- 13 Shakespeare Rocks
- 14 Breakfast Time at Isambard Brunel Junior School
- 15 Students from Holcombe Grammar Take On Hadrian’s Wall
- 15 Medway Victory Sea Cadets Selected for Sandhurst
- 16 Buckingham Palace Awards Ceremony
- 16 Longdown Dairy Farm
- 16 Send Inclusion Award
- 17 Multi-Cultural Day
- 18 Rockstars at New Horizons
- 18 Marian Thorne & Bryant Awards
- 18 Race for Life
- 19 The Portsmouth Academy On Track for Sporting Success
- 19 STEM “Highly Commended” Award
- 20 World Malaria Day
- 20 Gold at The British Trampoline Championships
- 20 Holcombe Boys Represent Medway at The Kent School Games
- 21 Revolutionaries Successfully Defended Their National Junior Signing Choir Title
- 22 Rochester Grammar School Raises Over £5000 For Air Ambulance
- 23 ABCD Awards - Staff That Go Above and Beyond the Call of Duty
- 24 Holcombe Alumni Inspiration
- 24 Cedar Support the Brain Tumour Charity
- 25 Little Princess Trust
- 25 Native American Stories
- 26 Fair Play Award Goes to...
- 27 Pirates at Chatham Dockyard
- 27 Children Experience What a Real Earthquake Feels Like
- 28 University Life Inspires Young Pupils
- 28 Meon Junior School - Best Sporting Year!
- 29 Deaf Awareness Week
- 29 Alumni Students Shortlisted for The RCA Helen Hamlyn Fixperts Award
- 30 Our Trust’s Governance

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Dear Reader,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Summer 2019 edition of Our Trust. You only have to flick through to see the amazingly diverse range of activities and opportunities our students have in our schools. I would like to thank all our staff for their efforts in providing these opportunities to allow our students to flourish not only in the classroom but in life.

As we draw to the end of the academic year it is amazing for me to reflect on the fact that I have now led our Trust for 3 years, and what an amazing 3 years it has been. We have seen a significant growth in our Trust from about 6,000 students to 8,000+ students and 11 to 17 schools. We have had 10 Ofsted inspections and amazingly gone from only 36% of our schools having an Ofsted judgement of Good or better to 82% today.

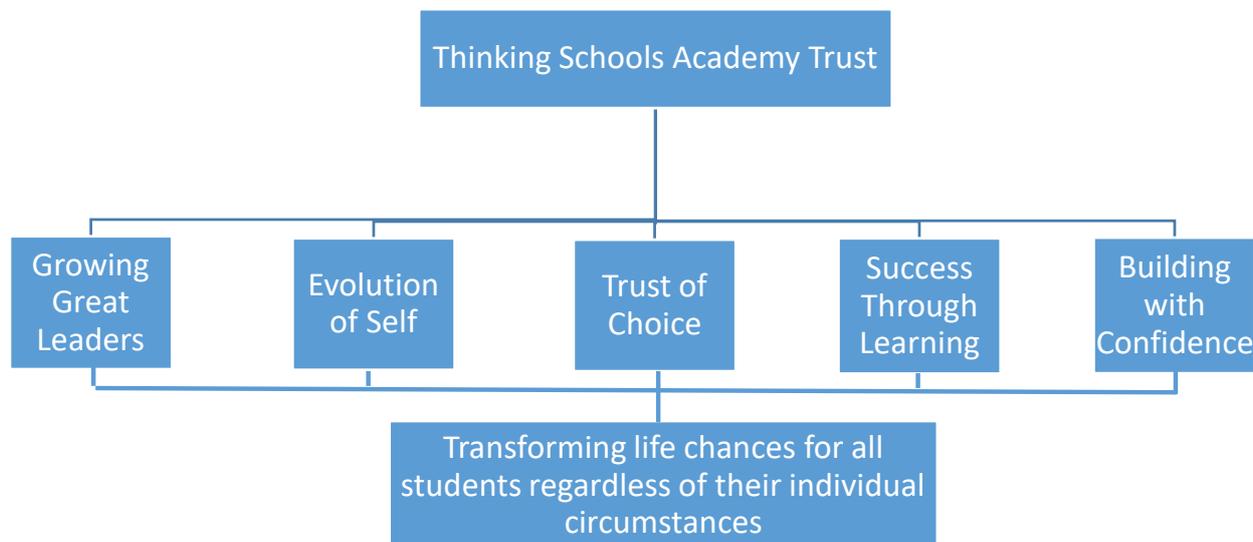
Our KS1 results have consistently been in line with National outcomes – this is fantastic given that as a Trust we support communities well above national for levels of deprivation. We have seen year on year improvements in our Primary KS2 SATs outcomes – this year, for the first time, we will be at national for students achieving age expected in combined (Reading, Writing and Maths) and again, for the first time, will be above national for progress in Writing and Maths.

Our secondary outcomes are consistently high with our Trust being in the Top 10 performers nationwide at GCSE and A Level every year. It is also worth noting that we are one of the best performing Trusts in the country for the progress of students from deprived backgrounds – truly transforming life chances.

We are the leading Trust in the country for the use of metacognition in the classroom and have gone from 2 schools being accredited Thinking Schools by Exeter University in 2016 to 10, with another 2 expecting accreditation by September taking us to 12. Together, we have achieved all this at the same time as delivering the fantastic learning and growth experiences for our students that you can see in every copy of Our Trust over the last few years.

So, what next?

We will aspire to become even better, by focusing on 5 key projects across our Trust. You will hear more about these projects in future publications but if you would like to know more then please visit my VLOG at: <https://www.tsatrust.org.uk/2019/07/ceo-vlog-term-6-2018-19/>



Stuart Gardner

Stuart Gardner, MSc, NPQH, NLE
Chief Executive Officer

CEDAR CELEBRATE THEIR ALL-ROUND OFSTED “GOOD” RATING

The excellent education that Cedar Children’s Academy in Strood provides has been confirmed after it was rated “Good” by Ofsted in every single category.

Ofsted has highlighted how the school’s strength is underpinned by “good, strong leadership” and the clear vision set out by senior leaders and shared by all staff. Cedar Children’s Academy has been part of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust since 2016. Thinking Schools Academy Trust is a family of 17 high-performing schools across the South East that prides itself on providing a high-quality education to all children and young people.

The Ofsted report praises Cedar Children’s Academy in numerous other areas, including:

- How “the headteacher and deputy headteacher have embedded a culture of improvement across the school”
- Effective phonics teaching which means pupils read with interest and enjoyment
- Improving outcomes in reading, writing and maths, thanks to engaging lessons
- Excellent behaviour across the school
- How parents are complimentary about the school and its leadership, and have confidence in the teachers
- Good use of pupil premium for disadvantaged pupils and of the sport premium, which ensures a wide range of activities are available to all pupils
- Effective support for pupils with special educational needs



Kirstie Jones, Headteacher at Cedar Children’s Academy, said:

We are absolutely thrilled to have received this resounding endorsement from Ofsted across all areas.

This is testament to the hard work and dedication that pupils and staff have demonstrated in our first three years as an academy and under the leadership of Thinking Schools.

This is real team effort and I would like to thank everyone who has played a part in this achievement, and extend my deepest gratitude to all parents, who have continually shown their support for the school.”



Stuart Gardner, Chief Executive of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said:

I would like to congratulate everybody at Cedar Children’s Academy for achieving such a positive Ofsted rating across the board.

The school provides a supportive, engaging and dynamic environment for pupils to learn and develop. Today’s Ofsted report confirms the superb work of everyone involved to make this such a special and successful school.”





ROCHESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL'S NCHANT CHOIR REACH THE FINALS

Rochester Grammar School's resident choir, NChant, are celebrating after their participation in the Songs of Praise Young Choir of the Year Competition final was announced, having already performed with excellence by reaching the semi-final stage.

After a rigorous audition process, NChant was successful in making it to the final five senior choirs to be chosen from schools across the UK, performing in front of a panel of celebrity judges, including singer and vocal coach Carrie Grant, ex-JLS member JB Gill and opera singer Russell Watson.

From the five senior choirs, they were one of three that were chosen to go into the final round of the competition.

.....

CEDAR RAISE £7,000

Cedar Children's Academy held an amazing summer fair raising £2,100.

The PTA at the school has also raised over £7,000 this academic year which is such a huge contribution to go back into the school to benefit the children.





THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION PRAISE OUR TRUST FOR OUR PUPILS' EXCELLENT PROGRESS

Lord Agnew, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System, and the Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State for School Standard, have written to our Trust to congratulate our staff and pupils on the excellent progress our pupils are making.

The letter recognises our Key Stage 4 results that were published 24 January 2019 in the multi-academy trust performance tables showing a Progress 8 score of 0.32, and that our Trust is amongst the top 10 in England in terms of progress our pupils make between Key Stage 2 and the end of Key Stage 4.

Further reading also shows that the DfE are keen to see how the important role we play in supporting schools in our Trust can be developed to support schools beyond our Trust, whether academies or maintained schools.

We strive daily to transform the life chances of our children and young adults and are delighted to be praised for the hard work and professionalism we put into producing such high standards.



VICTORY ACADEMY
GREEN DAY

UNITED NATIONS WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

On the 5th June The Victory Academy joined in with the UN World Environment Day. The theme of the Day was #beatairpollution.

The UN encouraged people to take photos wearing air masks to highlight the impact that the burning of fossil fuels is having on the composition of gases in the atmosphere. The school also joined in the day by encouraging staff to switch off their computers and whiteboards for the last lesson of the day to reduce energy consumption.

Year 7 took part in a site litter pick, taking pride in their community whilst helping to reduce the impact of rubbish on the environment, with the class who collected the most rubbish receiving the school's Green Day trophy.



ROCHESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL STUDENTS CELEBRATE EXCELLENT IB RESULTS

Students at Rochester Grammar School are celebrating after they again achieved excellent results in the international Baccalaureate (IB) this year – ahead of the school offering the high-quality qualification exclusively in its sixth form from September 2020.

The overall average score for students at RGS, part of our high-performing Trust, was 36 - equivalent to A*A*AA at A-Level. The excellent individual results mean many RGS students have won their first choice of university, including at some of the best universities in the country, or will undertake highly prized training or apprenticeships with leading firms.

The universities include Bath, London School of Economics, Warwick, King's College London, Lancaster, Imperial College London and Bristol.

Some of the exceptional individual results this year included:

- Arwen Pike – Arwen gained 45 points, having studied four Highers instead of the usual three, in French, Spanish, English Literature and Theatre Studies. She intends to pursue drama. Arwen's achievement was matched by only 260 people worldwide in 2018, equating to 0.4% of the global IB Diploma candidates each year.
- Elizabeth Castell – Elizabeth gained 42 points, with Highers in Anthropology, History and English Literature for which she gained 7, 7 and 6 points respectively. She holds an offer to read Sociology at the London School of Economics.
- Caitlin Jackson – Caitlin obtained 43 points, with 7s in each of her Highers of Biology, English Literature and History. She will take up her place to study Liberal Arts at King's College London in September.
- Damilola Matthew – Damilola, who joined Rochester Grammar School from The Victory Academy (also part of our Trust) at the start of Year 12, obtained 35 points altogether. This included Highers of Biology, Psychology and Chemistry, where she achieved a 7, 6 and 5 respectively. She will take up her place to study Medicine at Aston University.

Arwen and Damilola also formed part of the Executive Officer team during their time at Rochester Grammar School. The IB is studied in the Sixth Form at Rochester Grammar School as an alternative to A levels, and has been offered at RGS for the last 12 years. Students must take six subjects, incorporating both sciences and humanities.

Rochester Grammar School is routinely ranked the best in the country for IB and from September 2020 it will be exclusively offered, with all students joining the sixth form from then on taking it.

“ [Joanna Wade, Acting Head of School at Rochester Grammar School, said:](#)
I am absolutely delighted for all of this year's cohort of IB students for achieving such excellent results in a world-leading and rigorous qualification. We have watched their hard work and commitment first-hand and their success is truly deserved.

The IB encourages students to deeply engage with their subjects, developing their ability to learn and readying them for university-level material. Their accomplishments this year really show the long-term value of studying the IB and we are incredibly proud of them.”

“ [Stuart Gardner, CEO at the Thinking Schools Academy Trust, said:](#)
The calibre of the results that this year's cohort of students has achieved is really fantastic and reflects the level of effort and dedication that went into their studies.

Our students are a real credit to the school and the Trust, and we are all very much looking forward to seeing where their journeys take them next. A big thank you must also go out to all our staff and our wonderful community of parents and carers, who have supported our students the whole way.”



ADVENTURE ON THE HIGH SEAS

The Victory Academy and Holcombe Grammar school students are looking forward to taking to the seas, as they are due to set sail this September.

A group of students from both Chatham secondary schools will take command of the sail boat Faramir for five days, travelling from Chatham to Portsmouth in a trip organised by the charity Cirdan Sailing Trust, which helps disadvantaged young people experience life at sea.

Alongside learning to sail, they will develop their team building, leadership and communication skills, as well as boost their confidence, self-esteem and resilience. The students will be taught all practical and mental skills needed by the boat's crew and the jobs will be rotated so everyone will be able to control each aspect of the boat, working beside a trained skipper to become a competent crew.

The trip will forge stronger links with Portsmouth-based schools and The Portsmouth Academy will spend the following week sailing the boat back to Medway.

Every student taking part will receive a Voyage Certificate and some will also achieve Royal Yachting Association (RYA) accreditation.



Mandy Gage, Executive Principal of The Victory Academy and Holcombe Grammar School, said:

This sailing trip is a brilliant initiative that will greatly benefit the students. It's an invaluable chance to learn a whole range of vital life skills whilst taking part in a hugely exciting experience, and I'm looking forward to hearing all their stories upon their return.”





GOODWIN'S "BEST" APPROACH

Goodwin Academy strive to ensure that their students develop thought processes to ensure that they aspire to achieve their best. As part of this they have developed the B.E.S.T Agenda. This not only provides students with recognition of their achievements but allows them to see that all aspects of learning and development are important.



BRILLIANCE

Standard of work beyond what is expected, progress through dedication and attainment above expectation.



ENRICHMENT

Active citizenship within the academy or the wider community, through a variety of educational opportunities outside of the classroom.



SOCIETY

Encouraged to develop as a responsible, active and informed world citizen, demonstrating mutual respect, empathy and community spirit.



THINKING

Demonstrating creative thought, challenging the thinking of others or themselves in a reasoned and informed manner.

Ensuring that students know what it is to achieve is something Goodwin and our entire Trust feel passionate about.

Key stakeholders have been involved in developing the strategy, including Heads of Year, Heads of House, Senior Leaders, teachers and most importantly the students, to ensure every voice is heard in shaping their community.

In order that the B.E.S.T Agenda is promoted around the school, every classroom will have posters on display, alongside these they have created recognition postcards for each element. Teachers and staff will nominate students who they feel have demonstrated a particular element of the agenda and the student that has been nominated will have a recognition postcard sent home. This helps to encourage and promote positivity and engagement, allowing students of all abilities and skill set to be recognised for their individual best.

Last term also saw the launch of our exciting new House system with Heads of House and Mr J Partridge, Assistant Principal, delivering launch assemblies to all students and staff. The Houses have been named after famous patrons who are shining examples of people who gave their BEST to society and helped shape the world today. They have Florence Nightingale, Marie Curie, Stephen Hawking, Isambard Brunel and Elizabeth Carter, all of whom were chosen by students and staff from a selection of outstanding role models.

The House system will give students the opportunity to positively engage with competitions, charity fund raising as well as fostering a positive community ethos. The Academy has chosen the charity Macmillan Cancer Research as the whole school charity for this year, with a number of events planned including their maths teacher Mr G Dixon completing an Iron Man Challenge to raise money.



MEDWAY SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Hanna Miller who has received the prestigious award of Medway Secondary School Teacher of the Year.

Hanna juggles many roles and responsibilities on a daily basis and yet still produces excellent results in the classroom. This is proven by the fact that last year, 100% of students taking GCSE level Sport achieved a grade 8 or 9.

Hanna is the Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning across the Trust, covering schools in Medway, Deal and Portsmouth. She delivers 'Thinking and Metacognition' to all of our schools, helping students to build self-awareness and resilience.

Hanna provides 'Thinking Skills' presentations at educational conferences across the country and has just completed her MA in Education at UCL. She will soon begin her PhD but, despite her many achievements, Hanna's zest for teaching is as strong as ever and her heart remains in the classroom.

MINI TENNIS CHAMPIONS

Year 3 and 4 children at Meon Junior School have taken part in a mini tennis and racket skills event at the Mountbatten Centre in Portsmouth.

The team of 4 played with skill and won the competition which means they will now go forward to represent Portsmouth at The Hampshire Games.

We wish them the best of luck.





SHAPING THEIR SUCCESS

Our first sets of results for this academic year have been announced and we are delighted to share with you some highlights across our Key Stages prior to the summer. What better way to end the year than with our students reaching their goals and Being Their Best! As a Trust serving communities with exceptionally high pockets of deprivation, the work and hours that our staff have dedicated to each and every student is evident in our goal to Transform Life Chances. Our staff at each and every one of our Trust's schools should all be very proud.

The following results demonstrate the successes achieved at our schools:

- Good Level of development: Moorings Way and Cedar Children's Academy achieved two of the highest outcomes for GLD with 77% and 75% of children achieving the required standard in their early learning goals. The national average last year was 72%.
- KS1 Phonics Screening: New Horizons and Cedar Children's Academies achieved our top two outcomes across Trust schools with 89% and 86% of children achieving expected. The national average last year was 82%.
- KS1 Y2 SATs: Penhale Infant School and New Horizons achieved incredible outcomes for Maths at 81% and 86% respectively for achieving expected. The National Average last year was 76%.
- KS2 Y6 SATs: New Horizons have been celebrating the success of their first ever Year 6 cohort with 63% of students achieving Greater Depth in reading, and a progress average of +6.60 with Maths Greater Depth at 72% and a progress average of +6.91 which is outstanding. All Faiths Children's Academy only have 25 students in the year with 72% achieving expected outcomes in reading, writing and Maths with a progress score of +2.59. Isambard have achieved a significant lift in their KS2 SATs results, most notably in Maths with a huge 19% achieving the expected standard. Newbridge Junior school have also increased the percentage of children achieving the expected standard in reading (78%), writing (82%) and maths (87%), whilst Meon Junior school increased the percentage of children achieving Greater Depth in reading and writing.
- IB: RGS is routinely ranked the best in the country for its IB outcomes and this year did not falter. Students obtained an average points score of 36 out of 45 which is equivalent to A*A*AA at A level. Their Year 13s move on to a variety of top universities. One student also achieved the highest points score possible of 45, which equates to only 0.4% of the IB Diploma candidates each year. A huge achievement!

We still have our summer GCSE and A Level results which will be announced in August, however I am sure you will all share our delight in the outcomes we have achieved for our children detailed above.

D-DAY 75TH ANNIVERSARY

The 75th Anniversary of D-Day has captured the hearts of so many who have shown their respect to the fallen.

All of our schools have shown their admiration in many ways from creative arts to performances of dance and song.

To name a few, Portsmouth Academy gave an energised dance performance, Moorings Way dressed up and Meon Junior School choir children took part in a musical documentary alongside The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in collaboration with the leading British composer, James Olsen.



Portsmouth Academy



Portsmouth Academy



Meon Junior School



Moorings Way Infant School



Moorings Way Infant School



Moorings Way Infant School



Moorings Way Infant School

PLASTIC FREE DAY

During May, Newbridge Junior School took part in Plastic Free Day in honour of Sir David Attenborough's 93rd birthday. The children spent the day discussing the importance of reducing single-use plastic waste and creating posters on how we can change this.

Along with this, the classes took part in a Plastic weigh-off where each class weighed their plastic rubbish at the end of the previous day and then again at the end of Plastic Free Day. Overall, the classes managed to reduce their plastic waste from 1.62kg to 420g. An amazing 1.2kg reduction in one day! The school are really proud of the children for taking this topic to heart and hope to see a lot less single-use plastic waste going forward.



MEON INFANTS' GARDEN PARTY

Meon Infant school celebrated the opening of their new sensory garden with a fantastic garden party. There was a mix of games, arts and crafts and delicious treats for the pupils. Since the garden was built the children have been busy planting flowers and really making use of the space. The 'Friends of Meon' raised over £16,000 for the project and continue to raise funds to make the school an excellent environment for the children.



PORTSMOUTH ACADEMY ALUMNI WINS AN AMAZING £10,000 FOR COLLEGE

Naima Ali, formerly a Portsmouth Academy student, has won a prestigious competition through her own endeavours. Her involvement has won £10,000 for Portsmouth College and a further £2,000 for herself.

Naima who is currently studying A Levels in Law, Psychology and Religious Studies, wrote a short essay on the biggest innovation or disruption in the business world in her lifetime and chose Amazon as her topic. The essay was shortlisted from 460 entries from across the country.

As part of the competition, Naima attend a workshop where she was given the opportunity to develop her essay and presentation which she presented to a small panel who listened and then asked questions.

Later in the day and having been further shortlisted to a remaining four competitors, Naima then presented to a wider audience with further rigorous questions being asked by a larger panel. Naima showed evidence of a wider understanding of the subject matter she had chosen.

The judges, impressed by her knowledge and presentation, selected her as overall winner of the new competition. The competition provides a platform to offer students a greater opportunity to access the competitive field of commercial law.

Portsmouth College's full article can be read at:

<https://www.portsmouth-college.ac.uk/news-and-events/portsmouth-college-student-wins-whopping-10k-in-national-competition/>

KINGSWOOD ADVENTURE CENTRE

Year 4 children at All Faiths Children’s Academy had a fantastic three days residential at Kingswood adventure centre, where they took many responsible risks and learned to work interdependently.

The Gordon Children’s Academy worked on their perseverance and taking responsible risks.

New Horizons Children’s Academy also took part in the residential and the Year 4 children learnt some valuable life lessons including how to put a duvet cover on the bed and when you have a new toothpaste, you have to remove the silver film before you can use it.



The Gordon Children’s Academy

During the trip children from all of the schools took part in the ‘Nightline’ walk and completed a range of problem solving activities. Showing determination, they abseiled down the High Wall, balanced at the top of the High Equilibrium, flew through the air on the 3G Swing and practiced their archery skills.



All Faiths Children’s Academy



New Horizons Children’s Academy

GORDON’S HOUSE CAPTAIN ELECTIONS

Year 6 pupils recently gave an inspiring speech to the Year 5 pupils to encourage them to take on the challenge to become House Captains.

The speech led to six Year 5 candidates standing up in assembly to present their manifestos in the hopes of persuading their peers to vote for them in the house captain election.

A great responsibility for each of them and we wish them every success in their adventures to come.



MINI YOUTH GAMES & SPORTING EVENTS

The Gordon Children’s Academy’s rugby team have been working together as a team to develop their skills and having taken part in the Mini-Youth Games, they were place 5th overall.

The football team at Gordon Children’s Academy are extremely proud of their performance. They finished with an excellent and well deserved result.

The children at New Horizons Children’s Academy were placed 8th in Tag Rugby. At the end of each year a ‘fair play’ award is presented to the team who has accumulated the most points from other teams for their sportsmanship. You can find out who the overall winner of the ‘fair play’ award is by taking a look at page 26.



The Gordon Children’s Academy - Football Team

SHAKESPEARE ROCKS

The Thinking Artistically team and the children from across New Horizons Children’s Academy have been working extremely hard to bring together the performance of Shakespeare Rocks. The Art Club children have helped to make some of the props, the children have dedicated time to learning their lines, parents have provided costumes and the staff have made the backdrops. The school are looking forward to watching the fruits of their labour before the summer break.





BREAKFAST TIME AT ISAMBARD BRUNEL JUNIOR SCHOOL

Children at Isambard Brunel Junior School, part of The Thinking Schools Academy Trust, enjoy a freshly toasted bagel every morning to set them up for the day.

The school were fortunate to secure funding through the National School Breakfast programme - Magic Breakfast, a registered charity who aim to ensure that no child is too hungry to learn. Hunger can effect concentration, causing children to struggle to keep up with their classmates in lessons.

The leadership team at Isambard Brunel Junior School jumped at the opportunity to offer this extra support to their pupils and through the scheme have been able to buy a freezer, catering toaster and everything necessary to run a 'Grab and Go Bagel Bar'. Every Monday the school receives enough bagels to feed every child in the school for the week.

During SATs week this year, the school has been able to give extra bagels to the Year 6 students, giving them that extra fuel for their exams whilst providing them with a relaxing start to their day.



Lucy Carroll, Headteacher at Isambard Brunel Junior School, said:

Breakfast is such an important time of the day for our children and it has created a feeling in the school that we care for the whole child as well as ensuring they are in the best possible place for learning.”



Kim Broadbent, who is Office Manager at the school and oversees the Breakfast Scheme, said:

The children are loving their new beginning to the day and it gives them a great start for a morning's learning. There is always a lovely smell of toasted bagels wafting through the corridors too.”



STUDENTS FROM HOLCOMBE GRAMMAR TAKE ON HADRIAN'S WALL

Owain Beaney and Riley Harvey, Year 9, and Josh Botelho and Deren Ormanci, Year 10, spent a week during the Easter holidays walking Hadrian's wall with their Air Cadet Squadron.

This is an 84 mile walk, starting in Newcastle and ending in Port Carlisle. To accomplish this feat, the boys needed to use skills of interdependence, acting with persistence, and taking risks.

The boys received badges at the end of the walk to commemorate their incredible achievements. We would like to say a huge congratulations and well done to the boys.



Deren Ormanci, Year 10, Holcombe Grammar



Owain Beaney, Year 9, Holcombe Grammar

.....

MEDWAY VICTORY SEA CADETS SELECTED FOR SANDHURST

Cadets from the Medway Victory Unit of Sea Cadet Corps have been selected to attend the World Youth Skills Day at The Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.

Three cadets have been given the opportunity to be part of a group of 10 cadets from different organisations that will take part in the day's events.

The World Youth Skills Day, taking place mid-July, aims to inspire and develop leadership skills through challenges. The cadets will experience a full range of team work and leadership roles and their perceptions of their own potential will be challenged.

The day will consist of a number of workshops and stands, including physical and intellectual problem solving activities that will develop soft skills, resilience, communication, team work, problem solving and leadership.

We look forward to hearing about how the cadets from The Victory Academy and Holcombe Grammar School get on and wish them all the best during their day at Sandhurst.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE AWARDS CEREMONY

Teachers from New Horizons Children's Academy were invited to Buckingham Palace to receive an award on behalf of the children and staff that have been involved in the Burnet News Club, within which primary and secondary schools throughout the country interact with each other on a blog.

Ella Martin, a teacher at the school, introduced the club to the school as it is something she has work with the Economist on since the club started.



LONGDOWN DAIRY FARM

The reception classes from Penhale Infant School enjoyed a trip to Longdown Dairy Farm. They had a wonderful time exploring the farm and were able to get really involved, including feeding the young animals. The only drawback is they are now asking for some cows in the school!

The politeness and behaviour of the children was praised by the farm staff.



SEND INCLUSION AWARD

New Horizons Children's Academy celebrating after becoming the first school in the Kent local authority area to achieve the SEND Inclusion Award

The SEND Inclusion Award offers mainstream schools the opportunity to review, develop and gain accreditation for their provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The review process and report identified a number of key strengths within the school including evidence of strong leadership by the highly trained and experienced SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) and the Inclusion Team and excellent displays around the school echoing the ethos of the school and displays supporting children's mental health.



MULTI-CULTURAL DAY

Children at New Horizons Children's Academy spent a week looking at and celebrating a variety of different cultures.

Nursery looked at England and Italy, using a double bubble map to look at similarities and differences between the two countries. They enjoyed making pizzas, creating their own leaning tower of Pisa and finding out all about St George.

Year 1 spent some time learning all about India, they created their own Mehndi designs and worked together to make Rangoli patterns using coloured sand and rice whilst using mathematical language when describing the symmetrical designs. They learnt some Indian dancing and sampled some delicious Indian food.

The children in Years 2, 3 and 4 were looking at Africa. Year 2 were looking at the incredible wildlife and learning all about lions. They enjoyed an African drumming session in which the children experimented with different drums, rhythms and traditional songs and they used green hats to explore the patterns of African fabrics and their meanings. The year 3 children began the week with a dance workshop and in art they used silhouette to recreate an African sunset scene and paints to replicate African tapestries. Year 4 were able to taste new foods with an African heritage as well as researching African artists and styles.

Years 5 and 6 delved into South America, with Year 5 pupils learning about Brazil, getting involved in the incredible colours of their country – through the creation of parrots, their own Christ the Redeemer statue (with a slight variation) and carnival masks – both big and small. Year 6 found out all about Peru and created information posters. In art they designed their own masks inspired by the traditional Peruvian masks and they learnt some Peruvian dance.

A fantastic week where children could really get involved with a huge variety of activities and cultures.

ROCKSTARS AT NEW HORIZONS

New Horizons Children's Academy introduces Times Tables Rock Stars to the children

Times Table Rock Stars is a fun and challenging programme designed to help pupils master the times table. In order for pupils to become a Rock Star they must be able to answer any multiplication fact up to 12x12 in less than three seconds!



MARIAN THORNE & BRYANT AWARDS

On Friday 28th June the Lord Mayor presented the Marian Thorne and Bryant awards to children at Newbridge Junior School.

These awards are for Year 3 and 6, with the nominees being selected and voted for by the staff. The Year 3 award is for children who have overcome adversity and the Year 6 award is for overall contribution to the school throughout their time at Newbridge. Well done to all of the winners!



RACE FOR LIFE

Children at New Horizons Children's Academy were determined to take part in their Race for Life. The weather though had different ideas as the sky opened up and the school experienced heavy downpours. Luckily the children were able to take part in Joe Wicks, The Body Coach's HIIT class for schools and completed their run during their daily mile. A story of determination to succeed no matter what obstacles were put in their path.





THE PORTSMOUTH ACADEMY ON TRACK FOR SPORTING SUCCESS

Isabelle Brydon, a pupil at The Portsmouth Academy, cruised to victory in the Portsmouth Inter-Schools time trials in the U17 female 1500m. Isabelle beat off a very strong field and will now represent Portsmouth in the Hampshire Games later in the summer.

Also, their Year 8 boys five-a-side football teams came 2nd (A team) and 4th (B team) in the Portsmouth Inter-schools five-a-side tournament. A remarkable achievement considering many of them haven't played together before. The school said that the boys not only performed well on the pitch, but also displayed outstanding behaviour whilst travelling to, during and travelling back from the venue.



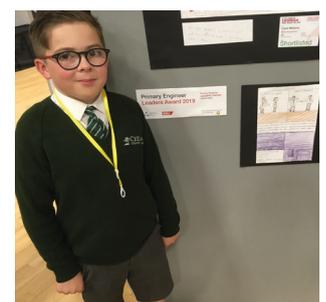
STEM “HIGHLY COMMENDED” AWARD

Pupils at Cedar Children's Academy have received a “highly commended” award for their inventions in the National STEM Engineering Competition. Adria, Jack and Joseph competed against 3,300 pupils, and were further shortlisted to the top 150. They then competed head to head with the final winners in the last 50 entries.

Four Year 5 children at New Horizons Children's Academy were shortlisted for the Primary and Secondary Engineer Leaders Award out of 3361 entries.

Although they didn't win, their work was displayed in a public exhibition at Canterbury Christ Church University. The children and their parents were taken down to Canterbury in a mini bus so that they could see their work on display.

This is an amazing achievement for all of the pupils at the schools and we look forward to hearing more about their future engineering projects in the years to come.



WORLD MALARIA DAY

Children at Meon Junior School held a cake sale in aid of the NUHU Orphanage School in Gambia.

As expected the children enjoyed the cakes but more importantly they raised £114 which will pay for the Gambian school to purchase much needed anti-malaria medication and mosquito nets.



GOLD AT THE BRITISH TRAMPOLINING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Holcombe Grammar School boys have taken Gold at the British Trampoline Championships

Ethan and Nathan both competed at the first English Championship Qualifier in Southampton during April. Both boys are in strong groups with Nathan going up an age group. They both performed great routines with Nathan placing 9th and Ethan in 15th. They need to hold on to places in the top 16 to qualify for the championship later in the year.

They also competed in the boys Synchro Gold Group 15-16 category at the English Championship Qualifier and won gold.



HOLCOMBE BOYS REPRESENT MEDWAY AT THE KENT SCHOOL GAMES

Year 7 students at Holcombe Grammar that participated in the Medway school games athletics competition during May have beaten all their rivals to win the competition overall!

Through their efforts they progressed through to represent Medway at the Kent school game and finished 5th place overall out of 13 regional winners after a challenging set of games.





REVOLUTIONARIES SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDED THEIR NATIONAL JUNIOR SIGNING CHOIR TITLE

All Faiths Revolutionaries successfully defended their National Junior Signing Choir title last weekend in Dundee. The 20-hour round trip was worth it as, following two moving performances, the judges decided that the title was to return to the 32 strong choir from All Faiths Children's Academy. It was another proud moment for AFR, who were formed two years ago through a partnership between All Faiths and Revolution Signing Choir, who themselves claimed third place in the adult competition.

The group have been practising every Monday after school since September, opening with the lively and fun performance of 'Men in Black', and then following it with a highly emotional performance of 'True Colours' which was hugely appreciated by the Caird Hall crowd. The children were extremely proud of their accomplishment, and were very grateful for the support provided by local business Calibre Facility Services Ltd without whose help the journey would not have been possible. The children are already looking forward to next year's competition when Revolution themselves will be hosting the event in London.

The Trust and school are very proud of the choir's hard work and commitment!





ROCHESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL RAISES OVER £5000 FOR AIR AMBULANCE

On 22nd May 2019 students from Rochester Grammar School presented representatives from the Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance with a cheque for £5,795.31 raised from the school's ninth annual charity dance show, Flair.

Over 80 students worked to coordinate choreography, performance, set production and advertising to produce the spectacular show. The theme this year was focused entirely on iconic movies with varied and exciting choices of music.

Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance is an independent charity which operates solely through donations received, and is known for its innovations to improve the care that it can give.



Stuart Gardner, CEO at Thinking Schools Academy Trust said:

What a fantastic achievement for all those involved and such a brilliant charity for all the funds raised to go towards. Every donation is vital and we are very proud of our students' hard work to raise funds for such a worthy cause.”



Jo Wadey, Interim Head of School at Rochester Grammar School said:

I am so proud of the students and the relentless attitudes that they have displayed in ensuring the show was nothing less than exceptional. I was thrilled to present the cheque to the Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance today.”

ABCD AWARDS

STAFF THAT GO ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY



School Name: Rochester Grammar School
Term 4 Winner: Jo Robinson

We have had a number of absentees in our administration team due to sickness and Jo has every time stepped in to do any number of additional duties with a moment's notice and never a complaint. She has been our receptionist, communicated with staff, made school displays, communicated with parents, carried out reprographics requests and many more jobs which are outside her domain. She has enabled our administration team to continue to run smoothly for which we are very grateful.



School Name: Newbridge Junior School
Term 4 Winner: Rebecca New

Rebecca has gone above and beyond with her willingness to adapt to different roles depending on the need of the school and the children. She is consistently flexible and willing to help out in all situations, always with a smile, putting the needs of the children first – nothing is ever too much trouble!



School Name: Isambard Brunel Junior School
Term 5 Winner: Rose Flemming

Rose's role in school this year is to work one to one with a Year 5 pupil who has special educational needs which she does with patience and care.

However, due to the social, emotional and mental health needs of another pupil within the year group, Rose kindly agreed to support the other pupil. In this role she showed perseverance, resilience and patience, continually wanting the best for the child despite their challenging needs.



School Name: Cedar Children's Academy
Term 5 Winner: Stephanie Taylor

Since joining our school in September 2018, Stephanie has consistently demonstrated her commitment to our school. She has an abundance of positive energy and is always smiling. Steph has easily fitted into the team and is always willing to go the extra mile.

During the school's Ofsted inspection, her car was hit by a lorry on the motorway on the way into work. Fortunately, she was not seriously injured. Despite being reassured that we were not expecting her in school that day, Steph was adamant that she wanted to be there to ensure that the inspection team were able to see the great work that goes on here.

LITTLE PRINCESS TRUST

Emmy, a pupil at Portsmouth Academy, has cut off 9 inches of her hair to donate to the Little Princess Trust which provides free real hair wigs to children and young people who have lost their hair through cancer treatment and other conditions.

Leon, Honey, Emily and Connie from Cedar Children's academy also supported the charity by donating their hair. The four of them raised over £1000 by setting up their own fundraising page.



Cedar Children's Academy pupils



Emmy, Portsmouth Academy

NATIVE AMERICAN STORIES

Special guests travelled from Native America to meet the children at The Gordon Children's Academy.

They learned about the Native American's clothes, stories, games and dances and got to take part in many exciting activities.

During the visit they learned traditional Native American stories such as the history of toads. They were told that when a Native American toad dies, it comes back to life as a British school teacher?!

All of Year 4 took part in a Pow Wow and sung traditional songs that were to the tune of I'm A Gummy Bear and Spongebob.

This was a great experience for the children to have and allowed them to demonstrate their Gordon's Great habits.



FAIR PLAY AWARD GOES TO...

New Horizons Children's Academy pupils display outstanding qualities during sporting events, leading them to victory.

New Horizons has participated in nearly all of the Medway Mini Youth games. Achieving success in all of them, even winning on occasions.

At the end of each event, schools vote for other schools to win the Fair play award which recognises children/ teams being a good sportsperson. This includes them supporting and celebrating the success and efforts of children in other schools. The votes are put into points and a table of these points is kept over the duration of the year's events.

New Horizons have consistently shown respect and support during the games and so were invited to an awards ceremony as they were in the top 10 for the overall fair play award, achieving enough points to be invited along.

The children had a brilliant time on the trampolines etc., but more importantly when it came to the final announcement of who had won the overall fair play award for the whole year, New Horizons was victorious!

The children are an absolute credit to the school, demonstrating their habits of mind through sport and being fantastic representatives of the school's ethos and values.



SOAR
TRAMPOLINE PARK

**MINI
YOUTH
GAMES**

Medway Sport
Play - Compete - Spectate

Medway
Trust
Serving You

PIRATES AT CHATHAM DOCKYARD

Year 2 children at All Faiths Children’s Academy had a lovely experience when visiting the Chatham Dockyard recently.

During the day they boarded HMS Gannet, explored historic pirate artefacts and sang a pirate song. The workshops were enjoyed by all and they loved making their very own boats, which they then had the opportunity to race. The design of the boats involved them using their problem solving skills to work out where best to put the motor and to keep the ship water-tight.



CHILDREN EXPERIENCE WHAT A REAL EARTHQUAKE FEELS LIKE

The Natural History Museum in London is a place many of us have had the pleasure of visiting, with so much to see and do, so it’s the perfect place for a school visit.

Children from Year 3 at All Faiths Children’s Academy were given the same opportunity to visit and they explored about volcanoes and earthquakes. They experienced what a real earthquake in Kobe feels like and saw a volcano erupt in volcano town and monitored earthquake levels on the seismometer.

All of the children achieved a NHM Diploma, having completed the workshop on the signs of an imminent eruption at the museum.

In addition, we were proud to hear that during their journey on the train to the museum a member of the public was so impressed with their exemplary behaviour that he felt the need to email the school to commend them on their polite and courteous manner.

Congratulations to all for the way in which they presented themselves professionally as ambassadors of the school.





UNIVERSITY LIFE INSPIRES YOUNG PUPILS

Pupils at Cedar Children’s Academy were lucky enough to be invited to visit The University of Canterbury (Medway Campus). It was so inspiring for the Year 5 children to meet current students at the university and to hear what university life was like for them.

The vast amount of courses that are available nowadays was surprising to the children and hopefully has set their aspirations high for their futures. A walk around the SIMS nursing area was also extremely interesting and showed the hands on approach the university takes to training.

The experience of visiting the university is one that will hopefully set their sights high for their futures.

MEON JUNIOR SCHOOL - BEST SPORTING YEAR!

Meon Junior School are extremely proud of their children as they will be representing Portsmouth in the Hampshire Games.

The school has four teams that are taking part in the Year 3/4 Tri-Golf, Year 5/6 Tri-Golf, Year 3/4 Tennis and Year 6 Girls’ Football. The football team has already played extremely well and has reached the semi-finals with the Year 4 Tennis team competing against 14 other teams and smashing their way to victory as winners of the tournament.

We wish them every success in their sporting categories and look forward to hearing about their achievements in due course.



DEAF AWARENESS WEEK

All Faiths Children's Academy's Treetop pupils have been using their Personal Understanding of Deafness (PUD) sessions to present at Collective Worship.

In preparation for Deaf Awareness week, the Treetop pupils (Deaf children in Provision) used their weekly PUD sessions (Personal Understanding of Deafness) to decide, write and rehearse what they wanted their peers to know about being deaf. The presentation they offered in collective worship was very much their own work. The school also set a challenge for all classes to learn the British Sign Language (BSL) two-handed manual alphabet and to be able to fingerspell their names. The younger pupils were challenged to think about their own sign name and what that would be and to learn the rainbow song in BSL. The school also signed and sang "Greatest Day" which was this year's Sign2Sing song.

The Early Years classes already sign regularly and are learning key phrases in sign language as part of their daily routine. Many of our mainstream pupils have developed their own use of sign language alongside their deaf peers as there is always a Signing Specialist Teaching Assistant in every class.

This was a particularly important week for the school, as it laid the groundwork for launching the BSL curriculum. From September 2019 all classes will have BSL as part of their curriculum, thus enhancing the inclusivity of our learning environment and supporting access to the social and emotional aspects of learning as well as academic, which in turn helps to develop emotional resilience and well-being. A number of our mainstream staff are currently studying for their Level 1 and we wish them all the best for upcoming assessments.



ALUMNI STUDENTS SHORTLISTED FOR THE RCA HELEN HAMLYN FIXPERTS AWARD

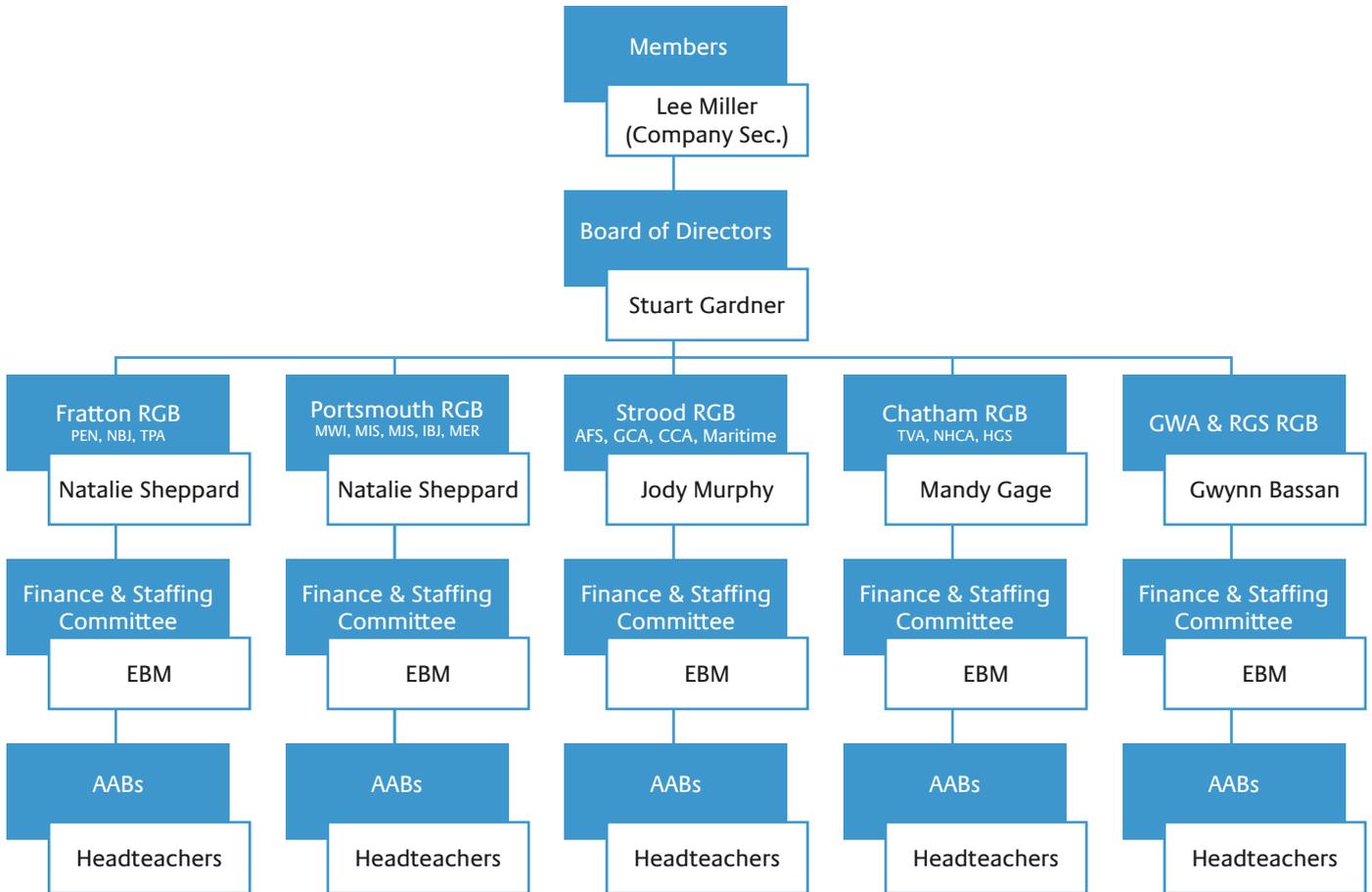
The Victory Academy are delighted to hear that two of their alumni have been shortlisted for the RCA Helen Hamlyn Fixperts Award.

Calam and Jamie are studying BA (Hons) Product Design at the Ravensbourne University. The university said that they are "definitely the shining stars of the university's first year Product Design course."

The Victory Academy are hoping to arrange for the alumni to visit and talk about their experiences and what it is like to study a creative course at university.

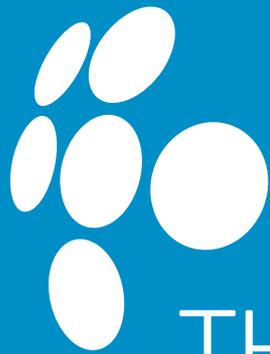
OUR TRUST'S GOVERNANCE

In March 2019 the Board of Directors commissioned a working party to review certain aspects of Governance within our Trust. One of the recommendations was a new structure for the Regional Governing Bodies. The new structure aims to reflect the Trust vision of an all through education model, which was also the driving force for the new Director of Education roles and responsibilities. The proposed structure is:



The working party also proposed the following recommendation that will implemented over the coming months: Academy Advisory Board (AAB) chairperson to be invited to sit on the Regional Governing Body, Reports to Governors standardised at all levels, Board of Directors report to all Governors to have more focus, To review Governor induction for the 2019/2020 academic year, To make training more accessible, to produce role profiles for Chairs and Safeguarding leads and to have a governance cycle that fits with the assessment calendar.

Search for Thinking Schools Academy Trust and you'll find us on:



THINKING
SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST

THINKING ABOUT
THEIR THINKING
BEING THEIR BEST
SHAPING THEIR
SUCCESS



THINKING
SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST

The Thinking Schools Academy Trust
Park Crescent, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6NR

T: +44 (0) 333 360 2000

E: info@tsatrust.org.uk

www.tsatrust.org.uk

Registered company number: 7359755

TRANSFORMING LIFE CHANCES