

TRUST STAFF NEWS



DECEMBER 2024

DEAR COLLEAGUES

As we approach the end of another year it is always a chance to reflect on our achievements. There have been so many, it is difficult to single out any one event. However, the recent Trust-wide Professional Day stands out as a day to remember for us. It is always very humbling to bring the whole Trust together under one roof, to reflect and learn together. Thank you for your feedback on the day which we will use to further tailor future Professional Development Days and thank you for your energy on the day itself.

We hope you have a restful break and get to spend some precious time with family and friends. It's a very important time of the year and it is important to step away from work and truly reconnect with those around you. Merry Christmas and best wishes for 2025. **Christian, Mark, and Sian**



**Christian Kingsley (Co-CEO),
Mark Siswick (Co-CEO) and
Sian Mathias (Chair of Trustees)**



NEWS FROM CHESTNUT GROVE

In November, the Department for Education visited Chestnut Grove Academy to observe the implementation of the literacy programme, with a particular focus on the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised Key Stage 3 phonics (known as CODE). Our visitors saw two CODE phonics lessons and were incredibly impressed with students' engagement and the targeted support they were receiving. They were informed of the wide range of assessment used to identify and diagnose students' reading difficulties and the impressive way in which Chestnut Grove has implemented the intervention. Our guests were also given an opportunity to visit a range of classrooms to see examples of explicit vocabulary instruction in a range of lessons, as well as being shown

resources that Chestnut Grove has created to support teaching.

The DfE were hugely complimentary and inspired by the way in which Chestnut Grove is ensuring a consistent and whole-school approach to literacy and reading, despite the barriers that can come with implementing such a strategy. They praised the level of focus given to this initiative, the training staff receive, the resources created, and the organisation required to offer such a huge level of intervention. It's fair to say Chestnut Grove is very PROUD of its work in this field.

We are also PROUD to announce this year's Wandle Learning Trust Christmas card competition winner – Martha Skinner in Year 9. You can see Martha's winning design at the top of this newsletter.



**WANDLE
LEARNING
TRUST**



Chestnut Grove Academy



**Ravenstone
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**PAXTON
ACADEMY**
SPORTS AND SCIENCE



**WANDLE
LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP**

Chesterton
PRIMARY SCHOOL



NEWS FROM RAVENSTONE

Ravenstone is on an exciting journey to becoming a Rights Respecting School. The children have been learning about the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child and this has involved specific lessons, weekly assemblies and making links to the curriculum.

Our Rights Respecting child ambassadors have been doing an amazing job of promoting it among



NEWS FROM PAXTON

At Paxton, children love any opportunity to lose themselves in the pages of a good book. Thanks to donations organised by The London Book Project the children now have even more opportunities to share a good book with a friend and go on an adventure. Thanks to everyone, including our hard-working Librarians, for making this possible.

Children in the Early Years should always live their best life! This term we've been pleased to be both guest and host as Wandle Learning Trust Headteachers, Early Years Leads and other colleagues have collaborated between schools to look at the learning, explore the provision, discuss pedagogy and share good practice.

Thanks to the National Literacy Trust children across the school

their peers and had the opportunity to visit their counterparts at Chesterton Primary School to gather and share ideas. We have now achieved our Bronze Award and are working towards Silver.

Ravenstone has also become a school of sanctuary this term, the first in Wandsworth, and we're working closely with Wandsworth Welcomes Refugees. This has included a series of assemblies teaching children about refugees and their experiences, developing their understanding and linking themes to the Rights of the Child. The children have started to help promote awareness, including by designing a banner to be used across Wandsworth LA. We were very impressed by the children's maturity, questions and contributions in recent discussions.



have had the opportunity to write to Sarah Jones MP as part of their campaign to help put a library in every primary school.

And finally, it may have been cold, wet and grey outside but, as part of their DT topic, children in Year 1 ventured into London. Once there, they walked over, and then climbed the 206 steps of, Tower Bridge to develop a deeper understanding of bridges and of course, admire the view.



NEWS FROM CHESTERTON

We have had another busy half-term filled with learning, smiles, exciting opportunities and amazing achievements from all the children. Our staff have been wonderful throughout this very long term and have ensured all the children are getting the support that they need.

We have had many visitors this half-term. In conjunction with the English Hub we were honoured to host a visit from Catherine McKinnell (Minster for Schools), Marsha de Cordova (MP for Battersea) and Gita Sisupalan (Head of English at the DfE). They came to see how the English Hub impacts on Chesterton and other schools across the region and to see phonics and reading in action.

Our visitors toured the school, visiting Reception, Year 5 and the Nest to see the children hard at work. They were particularly impressed by the children's reading ability in Reception and their use of vocabulary in Year 5. The children working in the Nest were particularly focused and engaged in their learning. It was a pleasure to host such engaged visitors and talk about some of the government's plans to improve our education system.





NEWS FROM THOMSON HOUSE

Anti-Bullying Week in November afforded Thomson House a dedicated time to discuss the impact of bullying and promote a culture of kindness and respect, as well as the importance of sharing any concerns with a trusted adult. This year's theme, Choose Respect, focused on the active choice that we can all make to respect the rights, feelings and wishes of others.

In November, 10 talented pupils from Year 4 represented Thomson House School at the Wandle Maths Bee held at Ravenstone Primary School. This exciting competition, featuring Wandle Learning Trust primary schools, challenged

participants with quick-fire times table questions, with the goal of being the last team standing. We felt incredibly privileged to be part of this Trust-wide competition and were proud to secure second place among the four schools, narrowly missing first place to Chesterton by just one question.

The festive spirit has truly taken hold at Thomson House School! From our wonderful FOTH Christmas fair to the delightful Year 1 and Reception Nativity, and our heartwarming

Upper School Carol Concert, we have been filled with joy and celebration. Our Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Lunch added to the festive cheer, creating special memories for our pupils and community.



NEWS FROM WANDLE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

MATHS HUB

Forty of our 44 Work Groups are already up and running offering professional development for teachers, including ECTs and leaders of maths at Early Years, primary, secondary and A Level. We are delighted to have colleagues from all five Trust schools participating and/or leading - and we look forward to sharing some of the highlights as the year progresses.

A particular highlight this term was the webinar we co-hosted with Whole School SEND on 'How teaching for mastery supports all pupils, including those with SEND'. It was a fantastic collaboration including representatives from the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) and primary and secondary

specialists in other MATs. The session was extremely popular with teachers both local and national, and included a healthy combination of theory and very real exemplification of classroom and policy practice. This was followed by a Q&A panel with the experts. Click on the picture below to watch the recording!



EMBRACE AI ON VALENTINE'S DAY!

Have you booked your place for our brilliant full day Embracing AI conference on 14th February 2025?

Almost 100 schools from across South-West London have already booked to get hands-on with AI classroom tools and hear practical tips from an expert panel who have successfully implemented AI in their settings.

Trust colleagues continue to get 50% off the conference price. Just use the code WLT50 when booking. [BOOK NOW](#)

NEWS FROM WANDLE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

TEACHING SCHOOL HUB

We are pleased that our work with the Pan-London ITT group on the mentor requirements has resulted in a policy change from the DFE around the number of hours required for mentor training in 2024/5. We are continuing to contribute to the debate with our Pan-London colleagues.

You can read a summary of the change and a link to the statement [here](#)

Our recent ECF and NPQ Facilitator conferences have been highly engaging and successful. A highlight of the Autumn term was working with the teams to develop their practice and strengthen our professional learning communities.

WE ARE CURRENTLY RECRUITING ECF FACILITATORS. This is an excellent professional development opportunity for Trust colleagues - you can apply directly [here](#).

We are proud to have attended the recent Get Into Teaching event in Central London and the UCL PGCE recruitment event, where we spoke to many aspiring teachers.

WE HAVE PLACES WITH ROEHAMPTON UNIVERSITY FOR PRIMARY PGCE TRAINING AND UCL FOR A WIDE RANGE OF SECONDARY PGCEs. If you are interested in any of the above, contact [Katie Colley](#) for further information on how to apply.

ENGLISH HUB

This term saw the first session of the Transforming your School's Reading Culture programme, in which we're working with a range of schools to develop a strategic approach to Reading for Pleasure.

We'd love to see lots of WLT staff at these two free events next term!

Monday 27th January (3.45pm to 4.45pm): Dr Darren Chetty will share findings from his work on racially minoritised people in

British children's books. [Book now](#)
Wednesday 12th February (3.45pm to 4.45pm): Join Professor Teresa Cremin and Dr Helen Hendry to explore their Reading and Writing for Pleasure Framework. [Book now](#)

WLT JOINT PROFESSIONAL DAY

Thank you for all your participation and support in making the Joint Professional Learning day a success and enjoyable for all.

We had over 350 staff from across the Trust and a majority gave your thoughts and feedback through the evaluation which is much appreciated.

Overall, respondents appreciated the event's organisation, variety of activities, and the opportunity to bring the Trust together.

Attendees found the keynotes, especially Miles Berry's session, thought-provoking and relevant. The networking activity was also highlighted as highly enjoyable.

There have been a variety of suggestions and constructive criticisms which we will take on board when planning the 2025 Joint Professional Day.

WANDLE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP X CHESTERTON - THE GREAT BAKE OFF

As part of our continued partnership working, WLP and Chesterton staff participated in the baking competition which saw a variety of cakes and other baked goods lovingly created and then judged by Davina and Danine who had the unenviable task of tasting and scoring all the entries.

The showstoppers were then sold off at the end of school to parents and students. This raised £100 for the school. Maggie Crowell was crowned Baking Champion.

NEWS FROM LITTLE WANDLE

It's been a great year so far for Little Wandle Champion Schools, our ambassador members who meet our 16 Standards of Excellence and showcase their best practice during live events for other members.

In the Autumn term alone Little Wandle Champion Schools have hosted 46 events for a total of 750 guests from 250 member schools. That's included four Champion Schools running their very first events and we've also been pleased to welcome two brand-new Champion Schools to our growing network.

We're also hugely proud of the Little Wandle programme development team whose work on the Little Wandle Fluency programme (in partnership with HarperCollins) resulted in a national Teach Primary award in November. A massive well done to everyone involved in creating this great follow-on reading programme, which many Little Wandle schools are now using after they finish the core programme. And finally, the team, some of whom you can see below, have been sharing their festive read-aloud favourites and best books of 2024 on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

**TRUST
STAFF
NEWS**

