

TRUST STAFF NEWS



APRIL 2025



DEAR COLLEAGUES

On Tuesday of this week, we welcomed Fircroft Primary School in Tooting into Wandle Learning Trust. We have been working closely with Fircroft for a while now, but it is wonderful to officially welcome them into our family of schools. We look forward to working closely with Headteacher, Denise York and her team over the coming years and learning from their expertise.

Also in the last week we had the honour of Mark forming part of the UK delegation to The International Summit on the Teaching Profession (ISTP) in Iceland as a guest of the Department for Education. Mark was able to share the fantastic practice that exists within our Trust schools and Hubs with colleagues from around the world.

Earlier this term we launched the listening conversations which we initially shared with you at the Trust Professional Day in November. This was the

first step in developing a Trust-wide EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) strategy and we would like to thank everyone who put themselves forward to be part of those listening conversations. We have collected some rich evidence based on your own experiences and we will be reflecting on the initial findings over the coming weeks. We look forward to sharing our next steps with you after the Easter break.

On that note, the break beckons. We wish you all well over the Easter period and look forward to welcoming you all back in the Summer term.

Best wishes **Christian, Mark and Sian**



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

NEWS FROM THOMSON HOUSE SCHOOL

Thomson House's literary celebration exemplified our unwavering commitment to nurturing a love of reading. Our book week featured engaging visits from author and illustrator Jane Porter, who led creative workshops for Lower School, and historian Charles Boundy, who captivated Upper School with insights into Roman Britain through his publication. Pupils enjoyed the 'Mystery Reader' challenge, deciphering a masked reader's identity, along with book quizzes and

storytelling sessions. The festivities culminated in a vibrant World Book Day catwalk, showcasing THS creativity, performance and love of reading!

Promoting Internet Safety at Thomson House School

We are committed to fostering a safe and responsible online environment for our pupils. Safer Internet Day provided an opportunity for in-depth discussions on protecting personal information and avoiding



online scams. We were privileged to host a parent volunteer, who works in cyber security, who delivered invaluable sessions for Reception to Year 4. Year 5 and Year 6 will benefit from an upcoming workshop led by Cyber Choices, in collaboration with the Metropolitan Police. We look forward to their valuable guidance in reinforcing responsible and safe online behaviour.



**WANDLE
LEARNING
TRUST**



Chestnut Grove Academy



**Ravenstone
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**PAXTON
ACADEMY**
SPORTS AND SCIENCE
INDIVIDUALLY EXCELLENT. COLLECTIVELY BRILLIANT



**WANDLE
LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP**



Chesterton
PRIMARY SCHOOL



NEWS FROM PAXTON

Across the Trust children in KS2 take part in three competitions: Maths Bee in the Autumn term, Battle of the Books in the Spring term, and Football Fanatic in the Summer term.

This term, children in Years 5 and 6 have been busy reading six books and taking part in knock out competitions against their peers. The two top scoring teams headed to Ravenstone to take part in the Battle of the Books final.

Question after question, the children worked together in their teams to share their knowledge of the six books they had to read.

After a nail-biting final featuring 18 questions and a tie-breaker worth 17 points, Paxton was crowned not only



the 1st place winner but also the 2nd place winner. Congratulations to all the children who took part!

Lights Camera Action

Just when we thought the end of Spring Term 1 couldn't get any better, we received an email from the Literacy Trust inviting us to take part in a short film. Some of our KS2 Librarians, members of the School Council, and children from Nursery and Year 1 shared their love of reading with ITV.

Please take a look at our contribution to the short film [The Power of Books](#).

NEWS FROM CHESTERTON

As always, the term has been busy and filled with moments of pride. We have had two special visits this half term. The first one was from representatives from the Department for Education to talk all things Nursery. We had a really interesting discussion around the place of school-based nurseries and how they sit within the wider school system, and government policy on Early Years. It was great to be able to share our thoughts and visit our wonderful Nursery to see effective practice in action.

We were also honoured to host a visit from the New Zealand education minister, her advisors and key figures from the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM). The New Zealand government are reviewing their



maths curriculum offer, so we talked in detail about maths at Chesterton and the wider work of the South West London Maths Hub.

We saw Mastering Number sessions being delivered in KS1 and KS2 and discussed the impact that this programme has on our children. Both visits were really positive and an exciting opportunity for us to share what we offer at Chesterton.

NEWS FROM RAVENSTONE

We have launched a comprehensive programme of workshops for families at Ravenstone, with topics selected for their links with our school improvement objectives. Our first in the series focused on 'Challenge Across the Curriculum'. The workshop included the opportunity for families to observe a live lesson with one of our Year 6 classes. Miss Turner and the class confidently demonstrated some of the many sophisticated ways in which we ensure our children are made to 'think harder for longer' throughout a lesson.

Future workshops include a focus on Rights Respecting Schools, Mastering Number, our new PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) social and emotional learning programme and showcasing our work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) within the curriculum.

We were also delighted to welcome poet and author Valerie Bloom to Ravenstone this half term. Valerie led poetry performances for children in Reception to Year 6, as well as hosting a poetry writing workshop for our Year 6 children. Children and families also had a wonderful book signing opportunity with Valerie.





NEWS FROM CHESTNUT GROVE

As part of National Careers Week, we were incredibly fortunate to welcome celebrity chef Ainsley Harriott to our school, where he took part in our after-school cooking club. Ainsley spent time meeting students, sharing his expertise, and bringing his trademark enthusiasm and energy to the kitchen.

Ainsley's visit was made possible thanks to the initiative of one of our Year 11 students, who has a keen interest in cooking and is set to begin professional chef training at college next year. This student wrote to Ainsley, expressing their passion for the culinary arts and how much they had benefited from the cooking club; a perfect example of how National Careers Week encourages students to explore

different career paths and take bold steps towards their futures.

A huge thank you to Mr Smith, Ms Holmes, and Ms Patel, who not only organised this fantastic event but also run the cooking club all year round, ensuring students continue to gain valuable skills in the kitchen. Their dedication has made the club a highlight of the school week, and Ainsley's visit provided some well-deserved recognition of their hard work.

This was truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience for our students, and we are incredibly grateful to Ainsley Harriott for taking the time to inspire the next generation of chefs. National Careers Week has certainly been a memorable one, and we look forward to seeing what our aspiring young chefs will create next!



NEWS FROM WANDLE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

MATHS HUB

In March, one of our primary mastery specialist teachers from Alderbrook School hosted the new cohort currently in training. Georgina taught a superb lesson in Year 2, with 21 teachers stood around the edge of her classroom, modelling how a teaching for mastery approach can enable all children to keep up and think deeply.

Georgina's use of representations and mathematical language were skilfully woven together in a coherent way such that one boy, having heard another explain that "doubling is always going to be the two times table", confidently offered up "can I tell you why?", so secure was his learning!

Accompanying the visit was Debbie Morgan, Primary Director of the NCETM, her colleague Paula Allaway and Nicki Ashton, Maths Hub Lead. Debbie ended the visit by telling the class that she would be talking to the Prime Minister about her time with them, assuring him that they could now confidently explain how a multiplication equation with 2 as a factor is related to doubling.

Take part in EEF trials

We're pleased to let you know that next year we're going to be involved in an Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) funded independent evaluation of the Specialist Knowledge for Teaching Mathematics (Secondary Non-specialist Teachers) Programme.

We have four places to offer on this trial, so do look out for the upcoming booking information. For now, you can read some [general information about the trial](#).





NEWS FROM WANDLE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

ENGLISH HUB

Our highlights for this half term include webinars focused on Reflecting Realities and Reading for Pleasure, hosted by Farrah Serroukh, Professor Teresa Cremin and Dr. Helen Hendry. Our new Building a Reading Culture series began with a deep dive into why developing our knowledge of children's books and other texts is important. Missed the first session? Don't worry! [Book our next fully-funded session on 12th June \(3.45pm to 4.45pm\).](#)

With summer right around the corner, we are delighted to announce a special Wandle English Hub collaboration with the British Library on Friday 4th July. For now, save the date and make sure you are [signed up to our newsletter](#) for updates regarding ticket release and speaker lineup! We love seeing the familiar faces of WLT staff at our events — thank you for your continued support.

TEACHING SCHOOL HUB

We're delighted to share that we have a fresh new image for 2025 with new branding which brings us in line with Wandle Learning

Partnership and the Trust and a [new website](#).

We would love to know what you think of it and also have your suggestions for research, blogs or other information you would like us to feature to grow the professional learning community you are part of. Please get in contact on: enquiries@wandlelearningpartnership.org.uk

Also this half term, Hub Leads Denys and Katie hosted a visit from the Ministry of Education for the Basque Country.

Sharing best practice about professional development was a thoroughly enriching experience.

In particular, the Basque education team gained valuable insights into how we support new teachers with a structured induction process using University College London (UCL) content, and how we navigate both the opportunities and challenges of implementing these strategies effectively.

We truly appreciate collaborating with educational teams from overseas and look forward to continuing to build these impactful partnerships!

LITTLE WANDLE

Peer Reviews are central to the Trust's collaborative approach to sharing best practice. This half term it was Chestnut Grove Academy's turn to showcase how they are piloting the Little Wandle Code phonics programme for Key Stage 3.

Chesterton Primary Headteacher Danine Smith joined Little Wandle Deputy Programme Developer Sarah Paxton and Wandle English Hub Lead Matthew Courtney to see Code lessons in action, hear about Chestnut Grove's Literacy Strategy and see how the team are promoting Reading for Pleasure.

