

TRUST STAFF NEWS

JULY 2025

DEAR COLLEAGUES

As we approach the end of another successful year at Wandle, we wanted to take this opportunity to thank you all for your dedication and commitment to our children. It has been an incredibly positive year, culminating in a fantastic OFSTED outcome for Thomson House School which we will be able to share with you all in the new academic year when the report is published. Huge congratulations to Jackie and her team at THS.

We're also absolutely delighted to share that the Trust-wide percentage pass for the Phonics Screening Check is **91.2%**. This is the highest score we've ever seen, and a great testament to the hard work of staff and children across Trust primaries. We would like to wish you a restful summer and look forward to welcoming you back in September.

Best wishes **Christian, Mark and Sian**



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

NEWS FROM LITTLE WANDLE

One of the highlights of the half term for the Little Wandle team was our annual Champion School conference. Thirty schools from around the country descended (or should we say ascended!) on the 18th floor of HarperCollins HQ for a day of inspiration and collaboration.

Our keynotes from Trust Co-CEO and Little Wandle Co-Founder, Mark Siswick MBE, and Professor Kathy Rastle were extremely well received. Champion Schools heard a detailed and highly accessible presentation from Kathy about the science of reading. Feedback from schools included:

'The evidence-based research from Kathy Rastle was a highlight - I loved hearing about recent and

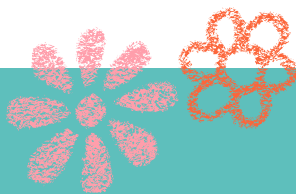
up to date research that can be used to reaffirm the importance of how we teach phonics back to staff and parents - definitely food for thought.'

Much of the conference was given over to presentations from Champion Schools themselves. This included some inspiring case studies showcasing how the patience and persistence of their staff has meant they've reached children with a full range of abilities and supported them to become readers.

This comment from a Champion School captures perfectly our

'by schools, for schools, with schools' ethos:

'I feel very supported in a wonderful community of very talented educators.'





This is a remarkable achievement, and a powerful reminder of the impact educators can have beyond the classroom.

Summer term adventures

The summer term has been packed with enriching trips that bring learning to life. We began with 90 Year 8 students enjoying a residential in Paris—visiting the Eiffel Tower, cruising the Seine, practising their French and experiencing

Disneyland. Still to come: Year 7 head to the Isle of Wight, Year 9 embark on a watersports adventure in Spain and all students in Years 7–9 will have the opportunity to take part in at least one free trip during Culture and Communities Week. These experiences build confidence, curiosity, and cultural awareness, a huge thanks to all staff who make them possible.

NEWS FROM CHESTNUT GROVE

Congratulations to Nona Anderson, Geography teacher at Chestnut Grove Academy, who has been awarded the Winning Dissertation Prize at the 2025 GEReCo Masters Dissertation Awards. Her dissertation, “Is climate justice racial justice? A critical analysis of

a GCSE Geography textbook”, was praised for its originality and critical insight into how the curriculum presents climate change. GEReCo described it as “a compelling case for revising versions of ‘official curriculum’ that hide important causes of global problems like climate change, and silence certain voices in doing so.”

NEWS FROM RAVENSTONE

Ravenstone recently celebrated 110 years as a proud part of the Balham community with a special tea party for families, past pupils, special guests, and local residents. The event was filled with moments of reflection and creativity. Children listened to captivating memories shared by adults who attended Ravenstone back in 1954, offering a glimpse into the school’s rich history.

Each class also took part in an art lesson inspired by a different decade from the past century, with a focus on a notable artist from that era. A time capsule was buried to mark the milestone, containing children’s aspirations and personal reflections on what school life is like at Ravenstone today.

Separately, we were delighted to host MC Grammar, who gave an electrifying performance just before heading off to Glastonbury. Every class joined in with songs and raps themed around grammar and punctuation, reinforcing his inspiring message about the power of reading. MC Grammar’s energy and enthusiasm were contagious—even prompting some staff to take to the stage to rap and entertain the crowd!

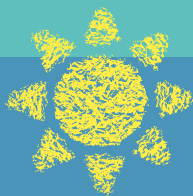


TRUST STAFF NEWS





NEWS FROM PAXTON



Kelly Reid and Sam Dedman represented Paxton at the Croydon Education Partnership's Oracy Conference, held at the Hilton Hotel in Croydon. With over 150 delegates in attendance, the conference showcased exciting developments in oracy: the ability to think and communicate effectively through spoken language.

Speakers included experts from Oracy Cambridge and Topsy, alongside three national partners, Shakespeare's Globe, Rap Therapy, and Little Wandle through the Little Wandle Foundations programme. These organisations will be working with schools across the borough on a two-year oracy project aimed at developing children's spoken language from Early Years through to Key Stage 4. It was a proud moment to see Paxton and Little Wandle at the heart of such important, forward-thinking work in Croydon.

Paxton at 11 Downing Street

Paxton Academy was honored to attend a reception at 11 Downing Street, hosted by the National Literacy Trust. The event celebrated the work of schools and organisations across the country who are championing Reading for Pleasure and tackling literacy inequality.

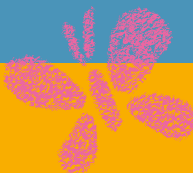
Headteacher Theresa Moses and Reading Leader Sam Dedman were invited to attend the event as part of Paxton's involvement in the Libraries for Primaries action research project. As part of the event three of Paxton's Key Stage 2 Pupil Librarians, who were previously featured in ITV's World Book Day news item, were invited to speak about the transformative power of school libraries. They shared their passion for inclusive, inviting library spaces and the importance



of reading nooks filled with representative texts. Their voices reminded everyone that libraries are more than shelves of books, they are places where every child can see themselves reflected and discover new worlds.

From digital reading logs to parent workshops and reading breakfasts, Paxton's approach has helped bridge the gap between home and school. The Literacy Trust event was a powerful reminder of the role that schools play not just in raising standards but in shaping a culture of reading that extends beyond the classroom.

NEWS FROM FIRCROFT



The whole school participated in The National Gallery's Take One Picture project, this year inspired by 'A Regatta on the Grand Canal' by Canaletto. Our Arts week culminated in a gallery event, where Fircroft families could wander the school, visit every classroom and view the end products of our learning.

Year 2 have been inquisitive budding scientists this term! They have been busy identifying and classifying living organisms and learning about microhabitats, discovering snails, ladybirds, bees, wasps and many more creatures in our Garden Hub!

Year 6 enjoyed a four-day residential trip to Osmington Bay, Dorset. Besides all the high-

octane activities that PGL is renowned for, the children also consolidated their learning about coastal regions AND developed their collaborative, problem-solving skills.

A team of eight children from Year 4 and Year 5 took part in a SEND Panathlon earlier this term. With the perfect balance of competitiveness and fun, they participated in a range of tennis-themed team events. The team were absolutely thrilled to win this special event for the second year in a row!

Our Year 5 and Year 6 girls' footballers have been competing in Girls Super league, a three weeklong league. We very comfortably made the finals, but after finishing 0-0 after full time and extra time, the



trophy was decided on penalties. Excitement was at fever-pitch and team spirit was even higher despite the loss. We are super proud of our 2nd place medals.

Continuing to champion girls' sports, we took teams from Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 to a Touch-Rugby festival, organised by Battersea Ironsides Rugby Club. We learnt fast, played tough and scored lots of tries!



NEWS FROM THOMSON HOUSE SCHOOL

At Thomson House School, personal development is just as important as academic achievement. Our residential programme focuses on building resilience, confidence, independence and above all else, fun. This half term has been particularly exciting, with Year 3 through Year 6 pupils embarking on unforgettable adventures.

Year 3 conquered their first night away from home during the Big Sleepover at our Upper School site, enjoying bracelet making, disco dancing, movie time and for many, their first night away from home. They developed independence and self-reliance while being absolutely amazing—calm, courageous and ready for this milestone experience.

Year 4 spent a magical night under the stars at Youlbury Scout Campsite, zip-lining through forests, cooking over fires and testing their courage on low ropes while building problem-solving skills and teamwork, consistently showing THS values of kindness, curiosity and courage.

Year 5 conquered Condover Hall, Shropshire, with

extraordinary spirit, tackling archery, rock climbing, abseiling and the legendary “Leap of Faith.” These challenges developed their determination, trust and leadership skills. Evening activities included silent discos and team competitions—they were absolutely phenomenal!

Year 6 concluded with spectacular adventures along Portland’s coastline, trying rock climbing, coasteering, kayaking, and raft building. Their exceptional team spirit, resilience, and collaborative problem-solving skills were truly impressive.

All these experiences build essential life skills, emotional intelligence and lasting memories, proving our pupils are capable of far more than they ever imagined!

This incredible programme would not be possible without the support of our amazing school staff, both those accompanying

the children on their adventures and those in school providing cover. A huge thank you!



NEWS FROM CHESTERTON

It’s been a busy year at Chesterton Primary School filled with so many things to celebrate from the children as well as the staff.

It has been wonderful to see the children grow and change over the year and we are excited by all that they have achieved. The summer term always flies by but as always, the highlight of our term and year is International Day.



This is a day where we celebrate our diverse community and come together to celebrate who we are. The children come to school in clothes that are meaningful to them and their community. We started the day with a whole school walk around our local area, which was a sea of colour, dancing and laughter. In the afternoon we enjoyed sharing food together, provided by all our wonderful families. International Day really is a special day!



TRUST
STAFF
NEWS





NEWS FROM WANDLE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

CPD

We're thrilled to share that over 60 schools, spanning primary, secondary, and special settings, have now joined the Wandle AI Network. Our first session, focused on AI policy for senior leaders, was a great success, marking a strong start to this exciting collaborative journey.

We're also excited to launch our upcoming Leading with Wandle cohort: an internal development programme for aspiring and current senior leaders across the Trust. Designed to nurture future leadership, the programme combines core training with optional sessions on key topics such as HR, governance, and finance, as well as opportunities to visit and learn from other schools within the Trust.

JOINT PRIMARY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DAY

This half term Trust primary schools joined together for a Joint Professional Development Day with the theme of 'AI: Keeping the Human in the Loop'.

Following an excellent keynote from Daniel Emmerson (Good Future Foundation) primary colleagues took part in a range of interactive sessions, working collaboratively and in the spirit of our values to understand how best to harness AI within our primary community. A big thanks to all staff who contributed so effectively and openly.

TEACHING SCHOOL HUB

We'd like to wish our community of learners a restful summer break. Well done to our Trust Early Career Teachers (ECTs) on the successful completion of their ECT training induction and our NPQ participants on successfully passing their NPQs. Thanks also to our community of ECT and NPQ Mentors who have been instrumental in supporting the learners in our community this year.

We would also like to congratulate our Initial Teacher Training (ITT) trainees on the successful completion of their programme with UCL and Roehampton universities and look forward to working with them over the coming years as new members of our professional learning community.

As a professional learning community, we are keen to share new developments in teaching, please join us via social media and share your professional learning too:

LinkedIn:

[@Wandle_Teaching_School_Hub](#)

X (Twitter):

[@WandleTSHub](#)

Instagram:

[@wandleteachingschoolhub](#)



ENGLISH HUB

This half term, we hosted our Literacy Specialists at the Southbank Centre for an afternoon of CPD, which included an exciting visit to the National Poetry Library. It was a chance to share successes from this academic year and look ahead to the next!

Lara Kenneavy will be joining as English Hub lead from September, and planning for the next academic year is in full swing. If you or someone from your school is interested in joining one of our fully funded CPD courses, please express your interest using the forms below:

[Supporting Early Language Development](#)

[Reading Ambition for All](#)

[Transforming your School's Reading Culture](#)

[NEW Reading Fluency: The Bridge to Comprehension](#)

As always, we would love to see familiar faces from the Trust, so reach out if you have any questions!





MATHS HUB

As part of an exchange project funded by The Gates Foundation, Co-CEO Mark Siswick MBE, Chesterton Headteacher, Danine Smith and Nicki Ashton, who leads the Maths Hub, attended a conference in Colorado hosted by UnboundEd.

The ambition of UnboundEd's 'Denver Standards Institute' is to enable teachers and leaders to meet the needs of every student and therefore has much in common with the Maths Hub programme.

We were interested to hear about their fresh approach for breaking the predictability of historic achievement patterns. They do this through what they call GLEAM instruction, which breaks down as follows:

- **Grade Level instruction** - our equivalent of age-related expectations and content.

- **Engaging** - improving practices such as intentional scaffolding, productive struggle, fostering academic discussion, and guiding students without betraying the answers.
- **Affirming** - creating safe, supported, and immersive learning environments where every student feels seen, heard, empowered, and respected for bringing their full self to the learning experience.
- **Meaningful** - fostering critical thinking, advocacy, and change in the classroom.

It was an incredibly insightful time, in which we recognised many overlaps in pedagogical approaches (sometimes using different language), but a couple of big takeaways were:

- The simple amazingness of our having a National Curriculum and standards in England! We are

all working together towards common goals. That is not the case in the US, which leads to inequity of expectation and provision.

- A shared priority to meet the needs of all students, whatever their background or starting point. And how we can do this through deliberate planned routines that develop mathematical talk, to take one example.
- We could probably go further to develop a meaningful approach in some topics/lessons. We were encouraged to consider this on a spectrum from ensuring contextual relevance in materials and instruction to enabling application of mathematical learning to the real world in ways that connect to students' lived experiences and to 'challenge imbalance'.