

TRUST STAFF NEWS

MARCH 2026



DEAR COLLEAGUES

Welcome to the latest edition of your Trust newsletter, we hope that you find the contents as inspiring as we do. As we approach the end of a busy term, it is important to consider what has been achieved. All too often in education we move at such a rapid pace that the opportunity to reflect and acknowledge what we have collectively achieved passes us by and so this newsletter provides that very opportunity. Thank you for your hard work and commitment to our children over the past term, we know you will have been busy preparing them for their national tests next term. Enjoy the break over the next two weeks, so we can come back refreshed and prepared for that final push!

Have a great holiday! **Christian, Mark and Sian**



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

NEWS FROM

Paxton Academy, Thornton Heath

Fantastic digital training support for parents

This term, Troy Davis from the Croydon Digital Inclusion Programme has supported nearly 20 parents at Paxton to build confidence in essential digital skills and complete either Pathway B or Pathway C, during 20 hours of study.

Each week, parents attended two-hour sessions, exploring areas relating to 'Building Confidence Online' and 'Employment and Economic Empowerment' where they developed new skills and gained confidence in navigating platforms. It has been fantastic to see so many families engage so positively and complete the course.

This incredible journey will conclude with a graduation ceremony at Croydon College, celebrating the hard work and achievements of all the Croydon residents who took part.

We are incredibly proud of all our parents and grateful to Troy for bringing this opportunity to Paxton and helping to change the narrative for our families.



NEWS FROM

Fircroft Primary, Tooting

Going 'All in' for World Book Day

With 2026 being the National Year of Reading, Fircroft 'went BIG' for World Book Day, enjoying a full week of reading events and, of course, culminating in World Book Day. The week included a well-attended Family Reading session, PTA-funded workshops by children's authors, optional dressing-up, scavenger hunts and 'Golden books' being gifted to every class.

Year 5's Art & DT learning this term has also been inspired by World Book Day and resulted in us creating book-themed cushions.

NEWS FROM Chesterton Primary, Battersea

Parent support for multilingual events

We have enjoyed a number of community events at Chesterton. We gathered in the playground to celebrate another successful half-term. We also shared some of our school improvement priorities in six different languages. Our incredible community helped us to translate into Somali, Arabic, Urdu, Bengali and Portuguese. It was wonderful to see almost every family in the school joining together.

Building on the success of our reading breakfasts last term, we held two more during World Book Week. Again, we had an incredible turnout of families. It was wonderful to see everyone enjoying breakfast together and sharing stories. We have lots of exciting events planned later in the term and have some wonderful new books for our children. We are truly embracing The National Year of Reading.



NEWS FROM Chestnut Grove, Balham

Showcasing cross-phase student leadership

This half-term, we were delighted to welcome Year 6 Head Students from Ravenstone. The visit provided a wonderful opportunity to strengthen the partnership between our schools and further develop the sense of community within our Trust.

Our school council members proudly led the tour, sharing their experiences and offering

a genuine insight into daily life at Chestnut Grove. They spoke confidently about our values, learning environment and the many opportunities available to students. It was a fantastic chance for both school councils to connect; exchange ideas and explore ways they can collaborate and support one another in the future.



NEWS FROM Thomson House, Mortlake

Important activities to mark Safer Internet Day

In recognition of Safer Internet Day, Thomson House marked the occasion both in the classroom and beyond. Across the school, children explored important online safety lessons through our curriculum, building the skills and knowledge to navigate the digital world responsibly. LAC members visited for a dedicated session, receiving presentations from our DSL, Computing Lead and PSHE Lead, highlighting the school's approach to online safety and the measures we have in place to protect our pupils in an increasingly digital world.

Families were also invited to parental workshops on online safety and healthy screen time habits, with resources available via Google Classrooms. It truly highlighted the importance of all stakeholders - LAC members, staff and families - working together and understanding our shared responsibility in keeping our children safe online.



NEWS FROM Hellingly Community Primary, Hailsham

World Book Day celebrations



World Book Day this year focused on reading for pleasure, and it was lovely to see the children come ready to share their interests and passions in reading. From book characters to sports there was a wide variety of interests covered. Our day started off with a special assembly, in which members of staff shared their own childhood favourites with the children. The children shared their favourite texts with their friends during the day, with older classes taking part in an online Zoom book quiz and a live literacy lesson as well.

Early Years have been enjoying reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and investigating life cycles. They are very excited to be watching the changes from a caterpillar into a chrysalis to a butterfly in the classroom and frogspawn changing to tadpoles in the outside area.



NEWS FROM Norbury High School For Girls, Norbury

Marking Number and World Book Days and an artistic honour for one Year 8!

On Number Day, events at Norbury High included an energetic number hunt for Year 7s, a special 'Maths in Everyday Life' lesson for Year 8s, a variety of problem-solving challenges for Years 9 to 10 and a Penny Wars house competition. The atmosphere was lively, positive and full of curiosity. Thanks to the generosity of staff, students and their families, we raised over £100 for the NSPCC.

On World Book Day, staff and students enjoyed dedicated assemblies, competitions and more. Form time activities included music from MC Grammar, audiobooks and jigsaw puzzles and we also hosted writer Caroline Druitt.

We're pleased to announce that Hadeeqa Islam, one of our Year 8 students, has won a prestigious national art competition organised by Shakespeare's Globe. Hadeeqa's graffiti design for this year's *Playing Shakespeare* with Deutsche Bank production of *Romeo and Juliet* was selected to form part of the set and is now expected to be viewed by over 30,000 theatre-goers.

NEWS FROM Ravenstone Primary, Balham

Celebrating International Women's Day

To celebrate International Women's Day, our Year 6 pupils took part in a special workshop with Chestnut Grove Academy's Feminist Society. Supported by enthusiastic Year 7 and Year 8 students, the children explored the idea of stereotypes, including what they are, how they affect people and how we can challenge them.

Through discussion and teamwork, our pupils shared thoughtful ideas and showed great maturity, making the workshop a fantastic opportunity to learn alongside older students and celebrate the important message of International Women's Day. In assemblies, we also

reflected on the theme by celebrating the achievements of women and girls and encouraging pupils to believe in their ambitions, inspired by a story about a girl who dreamed of becoming an astronaut.

Pupils also linked these ideas to school values, British Values such as mutual respect and individual liberty, and the principles of being a Rights Respecting School. The children were encouraged to think about women and girls who inspire them and to appreciate the positive role models in their lives.



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NEWS**





NEWS FROM

Grovelands Community Primary, Hailsham

Springing into outdoor learning!

Spring is beginning to show its magic on Grovelands School Farm, bringing a fresh sense of excitement to our outdoor learning. Children have been delighted to spot the first signs of frogspawn appearing in the pond, sparking conversations about life cycles and change.

The bright sunshine has lifted everyone's spirits, encouraging classes to spend more time exploring the school site and noticing seasonal transformations. Daffodils are now blooming proudly along the pathways, adding vibrant colour to each visit.

These early signs of spring

continue to enrich our curriculum, offering hands on experiences that help our pupils observe, wonder and enjoy the world around them.



NEWS FROM

Kensington Avenue Primary, Thornton Heath

Diving deep into visual storytelling for World Book Day

Kensington Avenue Primary celebrated World Book Day in spectacular style! Our hallways were transformed into a living library as pupils arrived dressed as their favourite literary heroes or adjectives.

The celebrations went far beyond costumes. Each class explored a wordless picture book – "The Midnight Fair" for Nursery to Year 2 and "The Journey" for Years 3 to 6 – spending a week diving deep into visual storytelling. We also held a Class Swap, where students shared books and enjoyed reading with their peers in different year groups.

The literary spark continued with our week-long Book Fair. It was wonderful to see so many children browsing the shelves, eager to discover new adventures to take home.



NEWS FROM

Little Wandle

Little Wandle Code, Handwriting and NYoR

We're delighted to share the news that our first member schools are now being onboarded to Little Wandle Code, our all-in-one phonics intervention and assessment programme with FFT for struggling Key Stage 3 readers. Please share the [link](#) to sign up for a free schools briefing with any secondary colleagues and friends. Thank you.

We're also really pleased to report that lots of member schools are already making use of our Little Wandle Handwriting for Reception programme and feedback has been highly positive. We'll be adding Year 1 Handwriting content to the website in Summer 1 and Year 2 Handwriting content will follow in Summer 2. We're continuing to discuss the timing and content for Key Stage 2 and will provide further information as soon as possible.

And finally, Little Wandle is Going All In for The National Year of Reading. Please take a look at the new [NYoR section of Everybody read!](#) for helpful ideas and information.



NEWS FROM WANDLE TEACHING SCHOOL HUB

At Wandle TSH, we're delighted to be involved in an exciting London wide project focused on developing neuroinclusive practice. Together with partners across the city, we are exploring how mentoring and facilitation techniques can be shaped to better support every adult we work with. We'll be sharing more information soon, including how you can get involved.

We're also pleased to share that the recent White Paper announced several new teacher training entitlements. These include upcoming courses on Reception Teaching, Inclusive Teaching and Inclusive Leadership. While these will sit outside the current NPQ suite, they are designed to complement and enrich the programmes already available. We will keep you updated as further details are released.

WANDLE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP CPD

Wandle Learning Partnership has continued to strengthen collaboration across our schools through the Trust Writing Working Party. Primary leaders have worked together to explore the new DfE Writing Framework, consider its implications and share effective practice.

Alongside this, our newly established Trust Writing Moderators have completed their first round of training and will soon be supporting primary schools to secure accurate judgements, strengthen consistency and identify clear next steps for pupils. This collective work reflects our shared commitment to high standards, professional learning and improved outcomes for every child across the Trust.



NEWS FROM WANDLE ENGLISH HUB

Over the past month, Wandle English Hub has continued to support schools across our region to strengthen early reading and build a culture of reading for pleasure. Our WLP director, Matthew Courtney, contributed to the national conversation for World Book Day through a new podcast series developed with World Book Day and the Open University, and through a Department for Education blog highlighting how schools can move from one-off celebrations to a sustained reading culture.

The recently published English Hubs impact evaluation also reinforces the programme's success, showing that intensive hub support increases the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check by three to five percentage points.

Across the English Hub, this work continues to focus on evidence-informed phonics teaching, professional development and ensuring every child becomes a confident reader.

NEWS FROM LONDON SOUTH WEST MATHS HUB

Do you aspire to be a Local Leader of Maths Education? Why not apply for a maths leadership development programme?

- The Primary Mastery Specialist programme
- The Secondary Mastery Specialist programme
- The FE Mastery Specialist programme
- The Professional Development Lead programme
- The School Development Lead programme

All fully funded!

Full details and application info [here](#)
Applications close 23rd April 2026.

This 2 minute [video](#) explains the impact on one leader's teaching, leadership practice and career!

