



Welcome from the CEO

With the summer holidays on the horizon, I am delighted to welcome you to the latest edition of our Epworth Education Trust newsletter. It brings me great joy to share with you the incredible stories and achievements from our family of schools.

From sustainability initiatives to community engagement, fundraising efforts to inclusive sports and educational events that foster diversity and equality - our schools have been bustling with activities that enrich the lives of our pupils.

One of the key themes across our schools this term has been inclusivity and equality. We have really focused on promoting a culture of acceptance, respect and understanding. These efforts ensure that every child feels valued and empowered within our community.

The start of the summer holidays is also bittersweet. Pupils have had an extra-special summer term, taking part in memorable residential events, fostering personal growth, resilience and lasting friendships.

These experiences offer a chance for pupils to step outside their comfort zones, develop new skills and create cherished memories that will accompany them as they move into the next stage of their lives. We wish them the greatest happiness for the future!

I am immensely proud of the accomplishments and dedication exhibited by our pupils, staff, parents and the wider Epworth Education Trust community. Together, we are shaping the lives of our pupils, instilling in them the values, knowledge and skills they need to flourish in an ever-changing world.

Thank you for your continued support and I hope you find this edition of our newsletter inspiring and uplifting, as we celebrate the collective achievements of our schools.

Warm regards,

Julie-Ann Hewitt
CEO, Epworth Education Trust

Launching our values

Over the last 12 months, the Trust has been working collectively to establish a new common set of values.

United by a vision to be a family of schools working together so all within our communities can flourish and succeed, the values will help to underpin and support the work that is happening across Epworth.

The new values are:

Wisdom
Aspiration
Generosity
Collaboration
Inclusivity
Integrity

Julie-Ann Hewitt, CEO, said: "As our schools work together more and more, they are naturally evolving together.

"Rethinking and realigning our values is an important part of us maturing as a Trust."



Shaping the world through collaboration and discussion

Methodist Schools UK and the International Association of Methodist Schools and Colleges (IAMSCU) invited Methodist schools from across the world to this year's Transforming Lives Methodist Education International Conference in Bristol.

The conference sought to deepen shared understanding of how schools can transform the lives of children, as well as the lives of those in the communities around them.

As part of the conference, the Epworth Education Trust took an active role in shaping discussion and our CEO also chaired a number of debates.

'No Outsiders'

One of the keynote speakers at the conference, Andrew Moffat MBE, shared his insights and experiences as the author of the 'No Outsiders' programme, which teaches diversity and tolerance through picture books.

Summerseat Methodist Primary School has been following the programme as part of its PSHE curriculum and diversity driver for the past two years. It has been a resounding success, with children confidently understanding and embracing the protected characteristics within the Equalities Act.

Julie Whittaker, Headteacher, said: "This programme has fostered a welcoming and inclusive environment at Summerseat, where differences are celebrated and respected.

"Our commitment to promoting inclusivity and celebrating diversity is unwavering and we're pleased to be participating a programme that makes such a difference."





At Epworth, we will build a family of schools with shared Methodist values, but who can support their individual communities in their own unique way. At every level, we are living our values.

Nutgrove Methodist Primary School Excellent in all areas

This June, Nutgrove Methodist Primary School welcomed inspectors for their first Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) since they became one of the founder members of Epworth Education Trust.

At the end of the robust process, the school secured an Excellent grade, the highest possible outcome.

Rachel Bottell, Headteacher, said: "This recognition is a testament to the exceptional commitment and hard work of our entire school community - and I'd like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all those who consistently strive for their "Best, Always, Everywhere".

"Our distinctive Christian vision, combined with the dedication of our staff, parents and children, helps to create an environment where everyone can flourish spiritually and academically.

"We are immensely proud of our achievements and will continue to uphold our values and provide an outstanding education for all our pupils."

In finding the school Excellent, the inspectors noted that:

- Extremely strong Christian leadership and positive, trusting relationships ensure the vision relentlessly drives the strategic direction of the school. This enables pupils and adults to be aspirational, flourish and succeed.
- The impact of the school's engagement with formal partnerships is excellent. This means that areas of innovative practice within the school are shared, affecting the lives of pupils in other schools.
- The Christian vision is deeply embedded in the school and wider community. As a result, the vision meets the context and needs of the school exceptionally well.
- Membership of a multi-academy trust challenges and extends thinking and practice. The Epworth Education Trust ensures the Methodist foundation of the school continues to be embraced. The vibrant learning environment is a celebration of the vision and values.





We are working with and supporting our communities so that we can all flourish.

Can cook, will cook

Westleigh Methodist Primary School kicked off their highly successful "All We Can...Cook!" sessions during the summer term.

The sessions, organised as part of the Epworth Education Trust's commitment to supporting families amidst rising living costs, focused on teaching parents and pupils how to prepare healthy meals on a budget.

The classes showcased a diverse range of recipes and plenty of opportunities for tasting. Over the course of the four-week programme, pupils became more adventurous in trying new ingredients, and parents were able to learn nutritious recipes that are both more affordable and tasty. The 'Curry from Cans' was a particular favourite.

Such was the success, that the national BBC News came to film one session to help show the innovative ways the Trust supports parents and families.

Xanthe Moragrega, Headteacher, said: "We are thrilled to see the overwhelming response and positive impact of our 'All We Can...Cook!' sessions. It has been amazing to witness the children's enthusiasm and the positive changes in their attitudes towards food. We look forward to offering more classes in the future, empowering even more families in our community."



Let it grow!

Since September 2021, Wesley Methodist Primary School has been working hard to bring their outdoor curriculum to life.

The school's commitment to outdoor education was recently acknowledged when they were named finalists at the South Pennines Park Awards in the esteemed category of 'Young Nature Champion of the Year.'

To support this, the school also boasts its own allotment plot where pupils can actively participate in growing their own food - which is then incorporated into the school menu. To help, the school organised an event where parents and other green fingered community representatives joined together to plant new vegetables.

Rhys Jones, Headteacher, said: "It was wonderful to not only see the enjoyment of the children participating but also the connections and links being made throughout the community."





One of the roots underpinning our Trust is that each school will deliver a dynamic and creative curriculum that holds no limits on the achievements and learning of all pupils. This term, there has been much to celebrate.

Residential trips delight

At the end of the SATs examinations, children from across the Trust headed off on a range of exciting residential experiences.

Year 6 pupils from Bedford Hall and Westleigh Methodist Primary Schools enjoyed a jam-packed residential experience in York this term.

The trip began with a visit to the Jorvik Viking Centre, taking in the sights and sounds of Viking-age York and learning about artefacts that were 1,000 years old. Pupils also visited DIG, where they uncovered York's rich history with an interactive excavation, discovering Roman, Viking, medieval and Victorian finds. Next up was a visit to the National Railway Museum, where children could explore world-changing inventions such as the 'Japanese Bullet Train', the world's fastest steam locomotive 'Mallard' and the world famous 'Flying Scotsman'.

On the second day, pupils explored York Minster, a world-famous cathedral with history stretching back 2,000 years to the beginning of Christianity. Pupils from both schools left prayers and lit candles for loved ones.

The 2023 Year 6 trip to Kingswood, Colomendy was also a resounding success for Nutgrove Methodist Primary School, with pupils making the most of every opportunity with enthusiasm and courage.

Children tackled a range of exciting activities, including caving, where they ventured into dark spaces and even encountered some spiders along the way. The 3G swing and Jacob's ladder were among the favourites, offering thrilling challenges and opportunities for teamwork.





A trip to Wonderland

Pupils from Rosehill Methodist Primary School were wowed by a performance from M & M Theatrical of Alice in Wonderland earlier this term.

The visit was just part of the Trust's commitment to ensuring that not only does every child have the chance to be inspired by the arts, but also that every child has access to exactly the same opportunities.

Julie-Ann Hewitt, CEO, said: "What I love most about this visit is the fact that children from the school's resourced provision were such an active part of this day.

"The smiles on their faces were incredible. It was an amazing and magical experience."

YASBA at Epworth

Personal development is a key part of the Trust's approach, and leaders and staff go the extra mile to ensure that every child is given every opportunity to be involved in a wide variety of experiences.

During Wesley Methodist Primary School's Wellbeing Days, a specific focus is set for the day. This term, the focus was on 'self-esteem'.

To enhance this experience, the school invited in Rock Kidz – a band of musicians and educators that tour primary schools around the country providing children with the opportunity to learn important life lessons in a fun way through high energy rockstar workshops.

The Wesley school hall was transformed into a vibrant rock arena and every pupil had the opportunity to enjoy a concert dedicated to self-esteem with the motto: YASBA (You're awesome so be awesome!).





Making friends, celebrating diversity

Summerseat Methodist Primary School pupils have been making new friends through a new programme called 'Schools Linking'.

Schools Linking brings together two carefully matched classes from demographically different schools of Bury. The process allows pupils from different backgrounds to meet and learn together so pupils can explore identity, build connections and celebrate diversity.

Throughout the year, pupils have engaged in a range of activities alongside their peers from St Mary's Primary School – including learning and performing a collaborative song titled 'We're better together' and working on joint art projects.

A visit to Bury Arts Museum provided a wonderful opportunity for both schools to immerse themselves in the rich cultural heritage of our local area. Through email, letters and videos, pupils have maintained regular communication, nurturing the friendships they are making.

Julie Whittaker, Headteacher, said: "Being part of the 'Schools Linking' project has been a fantastic opportunity for our pupils. This year, we were delighted to be paired with St Mary's Primary School, forging new friendships and connections with pupils from a different area of Bury Local Authority.

"The experiences shared through this project have been enriching and filled with joy."



Viva la Wesley Methodist

Wesley Methodist Primary School's annual 'French Day' proved to be a vibrant and immersive experience.

The entire school community took part in a day filled with exciting activities that celebrated French culture and language. Children had the opportunity to engage in competitive games of pétanque and delve into the world of abstract art by creating masterpieces inspired by renowned French artists. The day also included learning new French songs, fostering a love for the language and its rich musical heritage.

Rhy Jones, Headteacher, said: "Our annual 'French Day' is a fantastic opportunity for our pupils to immerse themselves in the French culture and language. It's wonderful to witness the enthusiasm and engagement of our pupils as they explore various aspects of French tradition and artistic expression."



While we will always strive to ensure that our schools are measured against more than Ofsted grades, we are delighted that inspectors have recognised that best practice is being delivered through our school-based models of excellence.

Schools praised by Ofsted



Two Epworth Education Trust schools have been warmly praised by Ofsted in reports that have been made public this term.

Wesley Methodist Primary School was praised by Ofsted for creating a “warm school community” where pupils are happy and “enjoy coming to school every day.”

At the end of the process, the inspection team concluded that the school was Good across the board.

Staff were praised for creating “strong, supportive relationships with pupils” and their “high expectations for a ‘Wesley child’.”

The report also noted that “pupils benefit from an ambitious and carefully considered curriculum” and “develop a rich body of knowledge over time”.

Rosehill Methodist Primary School was also rated Good across the board, with the inspection team finding that “Leaders have high expectations for pupils’ achievement and behaviour, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).”

They also noted that “Many pupils take advantage of the leadership opportunities provided by the school. Pupils live out the school’s value of ‘service’ as eco-warriors, members of the school council and as members of the ‘Working Together Committee’.”

Gemma Yapp, Headteacher, said: “Inspectors were incredibly complimentary about the school and gave us a grading that reflected our own thoughts about how our school is really strengthening as a community.

“What is more important than any rating, however, is the positive feedback about our children, our staff and our community. Inspectors commented upon how welcoming our school is and how our children are confident and always keen to do their best.”





Our schools continue to champion environmental causes and encourage pupils to make the changes they want to see in the world through sustainability, inclusion and courageous advocacy.

Westleigh Methodist Primary School receives Eco Green Flag Award, again!

The hard work and dedication of Westleigh Methodist Primary School's Eco Team has paid off as they were proudly re-awarded the Eco Green Flag Award for the second consecutive year.

The Eco Green Flag Awards serve as a catalyst for young people to bring about changes that have a positive impact on our planet.

A key focus for Westleigh's Eco Team this year has been to make the school more environmentally friendly by putting sustainability at the heart of decision making. To support this, the children organised themselves into committees within the team, with roles such as Garden Forcer, Litter Lords and Electric Sockets Monitors, providing clear areas of focus for driving change forward.

The Eco Team also committed themselves to reducing energy costs for June 2023 compared to the previous year, as part of Epworth Education Trust's Green Strategy project.



Eco-Schools



Bedford Hall pupils become green champions

Members of Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School's innovative Eco Committee were joint winners of the Commhoist Sustainable Schools Project, held at the DW Stadium in Wigan.

Competing against ten schools from across the borough, Bedford Hall walked away as one of three winners thanks to their #ReUse campaign, which aimed to remove the stigma of buying preloved by focusing on the environmental damage of throwing things away and buying new.

Lisa Draper, Headteacher, said: "We are incredibly proud of our Eco Committee's achievement. Their #ReUse campaign has not only highlighted the importance of buying preloved items but also showcased the power of collective action in creating a more sustainable future. This success is a testament to the dedication and creativity of our pupils."

Rainbow running

Schools from across the Trust have all been competing in colour runs to raise money for good causes.

Rachel Bottell, Headteacher at Nutgrove Methodist Primary, commented: "It was a fantastic event that brought together our school community and was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who participated."

"Yet, the spirit of the event is more than just fun. Our children working together to raise money is courageous advocacy in action. Collectively, across the Trust, the efforts of our pupils has made a real and very positive impact."



Sports for all

At Summerseat Methodist Primary School, leaders and staff firmly believe in providing inclusive opportunities for all pupils to engage in sports and to represent the school at various levels.

Pupils have been taking part in a diverse range of sporting opportunities and actively participating in numerous Bee Proud and Inspire events - focusing on promoting fitness, self-esteem and confidence among our pupils.

One of the highlights was the Bee Proud Girl's Football event, where Summerseat's girls showcased their talent and enthusiasm. Additionally, pupils had the opportunity to participate in the Wicket Ball Inspire event.

Julie Whittaker, Headteacher, said: "We are committed to nurturing a love for sports and physical activities. Through these inclusive events, we strive to instill values of perseverance, resilience and healthy competition, ensuring that every child feels valued and empowered to participate."

Captain Max

Max, from Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School, approached his teacher in 2019 and announced his strong desire to play rugby. He has then galvanised his peers, set up a petition and helped form a team.

Under Max's exceptional leadership, the Bedford Hall Rugby Team this year made it all the way to the LLG Sport Rugby Final.

Bedford Hall Headteacher, Lisa Draper, expressed her admiration for Max, stating: "It has always been a pleasure to have Max as captain, as the other players look up to him due to his integrity and sportsmanship."

"His desire to work with other pupils to help create something that they love and inspires them is a great example of courageous advocacy in action."



