

Issue
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SANDSTONE TRUST

Experiencing excellence through dynamic partnership



Hello from our CEO

Dear Colleagues,

As we reach the end of another academic year, I am delighted to welcome you to the final Trust newsletter of 2026. It is a moment to pause and reflect on our collective achievements, celebrate the progress we have made, and look ahead to exciting new opportunities on the horizon.

One of our milestones this year was our Trust Conference on Inclusion, which brought together staff from across our schools to share insights, experiences, and innovative approaches. The resulting directory of practice stands as proof of our commitment to fostering inclusive environments for all. This collaborative resource, shaped by your dedication and expertise, will serve as inspiration and guidance for years to come.

Weaverham's successful Ofsted inspection was a fantastic achievement. The report recognised the exceptional strengths of all staff in all areas. Achieving a 'Strong' judgement is a very high bar in the new framework so to get this for both Personal Development and Inclusion is a testament to the school's belief in nurturing every pupil's wellbeing and sense of belonging. This achievement reflects the unwavering passion and professionalism in the school and across our community.

September will see the opening of Kings Moat Community Primary School. We are looking forward to welcoming its first pupils and staff, and to see the school become a vibrant part of our Trust family. Ruth has written an article about the school and would welcome you next year should you wish to visit.

In November, we will convene once again for our annual conference, themed 'Being Responsive'. Building on our work around Inclusion and Belonging, this strategic theme will guide our efforts in the coming year, ensuring we remain agile and attentive to the needs of all our pupils.

Also included in this newsletter are articles on a new block at Tarporley High School, an art day collaboration between Eaton Primary & Tarporley High School, sporting successes at Tarvin Primary, Ofsted success at Weaverham High, the exciting developments as we head towards Kings Moat Primary opening its doors in September and an article from Emma Gildea rounding up the year in Leadership development.

As we approach the summer break, I want to express my thanks to every member of our Trust for your hard work, care, and commitment. To those moving on to new chapters, thank you for your contribution - you leave a lasting legacy. I wish everyone a restful and enjoyable summer and look forward to all that we will accomplish together in the year ahead.

Kind regards

Jason Lowe, CEO



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Spotlight on Tarporley

Jonathan Deakin



Looking back...what's changed?

As a headteacher, one of the most useful reflective exercises I under-take each year is to pause and ask: How does our school look and feel now compared to twelve months ago? Have we evolved with purpose? This year, the answer is clear: there has been meaningful, visible change in both physical and conceptual ways.

A new block and more...

Perhaps the most obvious transformation has been the opening of our new teaching block: E Block. Designed to house Modern Foreign Languages and Mathematics, it has provided not just additional space but a renewed sense of identity. Twelve months ago, the anticipation of this project required significant logistical shifts for other subjects and teachers. Departments were relocated, routines adapted, and ownership of spaces reconsidered as we aligned the school's physical layout more closely with our faculty structure.

Now fully operational, the block has quickly become a vibrant hub of learning. Students have responded positively to the modern environment, and staff have embraced the opportunity to deliver lessons in a space they truly own. The physical environment has proven to be a powerful driver of positive culture.

Making values explicit

While our school has long benefited from a strong and positive ethos, this year we have taken deliberate steps to articulate it more clearly. One might go as far to say that we have previously relied on implicit expectations at times... understood but not always defined. We challenged ourselves to make these visible.

As a result, we have introduced a clear framework of community values: kindness, representation, contribution, safety, and readiness. Alongside these, we have developed learning values that guide classroom expectations: readiness to learn, listening and focus, purposeful silent work, embracing challenge, and making a positive contribution.

By naming and sharing these values explicitly, we are aiming to secure greater consistency across classrooms and a stronger shared understanding among students, staff, and families.

Uniform

Another significant change has been the introduction of a new uniform. This was not undertaken lightly; it followed extensive consultation with students, families, and staff. The aim was to create something practical, inclusive, and reflective of our evolving identity.

The result is a simpler, more flexible uniform centred around a polo shirt and jumper combination, with additional options for warmer months. While any change in uniform can generate mixed reactions, the process of consultation has ensured a sense of collective ownership. We look forward to seeing it fully embedded in the coming academic year.

Year-group belonging

Finally, we have focused closely on strengthening students' sense of belonging. This has included expanding enrichment opportunities for cohorts to come together. In our Year 6 residential we now introduce the theme 'Roots of Success' each year, exploring what roots students will need to grow and progress in the ways that our school badge invites them to. Year 9 have just undertaken a transition to GCSE event over two days. Other year groups have enjoyed new, collective activities. At the upper end of the school, our Year 11 cohort has also benefited from an adjusted experience. By extending their time in school and increasing opportunities for engagement during the examination season, we have seen a noticeable improvement in attendance, participation, and overall enjoyment in their final year. The goodbyes seemed to go on forever through celebration day, the last "big cohort exam", last small exam, last chance to attend school and even seeing some students beyond those days. And, at the time of writing, The Prom is still to come!

However successful a school has been, I firmly believe that students need to have a stake in their time with us and they deserve to feel part of a school that is moving forward. There's certainly been a sense of momentum this year.

Jonathan Deakin - Headteacher





Spotlight on Weaverham Clare Morgan

Celebrating Our Ofsted Success at Weaverham High School

There has been a real sense of pride across Weaverham High School following the publication of our latest Ofsted report. The inspection recognised the many strengths of our school and, perhaps most importantly, captured the culture and values that define our community every day.

At the heart of the report is a powerful description of what it means to be a pupil at Weaverham:

"Pupils experience an ambitious and inclusive school, which aims for them to be the best version of themselves. Pupils feel safe and respected. They are known as individuals and benefit from high-quality pastoral support and care. Pupils enjoy warm and respectful relationships with staff and their peers. Pupils behave well and typically attend regularly. Lessons are focused on learning and free from disruption."

These words mean so much to everyone connected with our school because they reflect exactly what we strive to achieve every day. Weaverham has always been about more than academic success. We want every young person to feel valued, supported and inspired to achieve their full potential, and it is incredibly rewarding to see this recognised so clearly by inspectors.

Throughout the inspection, Ofsted highlighted the warm relationships that exist across the school. Inspectors recognised that pupils are known as individuals and that staff go above and beyond to ensure every child feels safe, respected and able to succeed. This commitment to inclusion is woven into every aspect of school life, with staff working closely with pupils and their families to understand individual needs and remove barriers to learning wherever possible.

The report also celebrates the strength of our pastoral care. Whether through the dedicated work of our pastoral teams, the support available through the Wren Room and Reintegration Studio, or the everyday conversations that take place between staff and pupils, inspectors recognised that wellbeing is central to everything we do. They acknowledged the personalised support available for pupils who need additional help, ensuring that every young person feels connected to school and confident about their future.

Another area of particular praise was the breadth of opportunities available beyond the classroom. From sporting competitions and performing arts productions to leadership opportunities, Duke of Edinburgh, educational visits and a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, our pupils are encouraged to discover new interests, develop resilience and grow in confidence. Inspectors noted that these experiences help pupils prepare exceptionally well for life beyond Weaverham, alongside a careers programme that encourages pupils to think ambitiously about their futures from Year 7 onwards.

The report also recognises the dedication and professionalism of our staff. Inspectors found that leaders have created an ambitious curriculum that continues to evolve and improve, supported by high-quality professional development for colleagues. They praised the school's ethical leadership and the shared commitment to ensuring that every decision is made with pupils' best interests at its heart.

One of the most pleasing aspects of the report is the recognition of the culture we have built together. Inspectors described a school where pupils behave well, enjoy learning and benefit from classrooms where learning is calm, purposeful and free from disruption. They also recognised the positive relationships between pupils and staff, something visitors to Weaverham often comment on and something that everyone in our community works hard to nurture.

We are absolutely delighted with the outcome of this inspection. It is a wonderful reflection of our pupils, our staff, our governors and our families, who all contribute so much to making Weaverham such a special place to learn and work. The report recognises the caring, ambitious and inclusive culture that we have built together and celebrates the strong relationships that are at the heart of everything we do. While we are incredibly proud of what has been recognised, we also remain committed to continuing to improve and ensuring every pupil receives the very best education and opportunities possible.

This report is a celebration of the entire Weaverham community. It reflects the hard work and dedication of colleagues across every area of the school, the enthusiasm and determination of our pupils, the support of parents and carers, and the invaluable contribution of our governors and the wider Sandstone Trust.

While we are proud of what has been achieved, we know that improvement is an ongoing journey. The report recognises the clear ambition that exists within the school, and we will continue to build on our many strengths as we strive to provide an exceptional education for every young person.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all staff at Weaverham High School for the commitment, care and professionalism shown every day, which has been rightly recognised in this report. Your dedication to pupils, your high expectations and the strong relationships you build lie at the heart of our inclusive and ambitious culture, and we are hugely proud of the difference you make to young people's lives.

Clare Morgan - Headteacher



Spotlight on Eaton Lorraine Skellon



Summer 2026

It has been another fantastic term at school, filled with exciting learning opportunities, memorable events and wonderful achievements. Thank you to all our pupils, families, staff and volunteers who have helped make these experiences possible.

Our Year 4 pupils have continued to enjoy their weekly ukulele lessons, kindly funded for another term. They delighted parents with not one, but two fantastic ukulele concerts, showcasing the skills and confidence they have developed.

Our pupils have been involved in some lovely community projects this term. Year 3 were proud to have their artwork displayed as part of the Jessie Hughes Village Hall Centenary celebrations. The organisers shared wonderful feedback about the quality of the children's work. Year 2 have been taking part in this year's Churches Count on Nature project by planting runner bean seeds. Before the summer holidays, these will be planted alongside wildflowers in St Thomas' Churchyard, helping to support local wildlife and biodiversity.

Our whole-school Arts Day, organised by our Art lead, Suzanne Thorp, in conjunction with colleagues from Tarporley High School, gave pupils the opportunity to explore their creativity through a range of inspiring activities. The children explored all the arts during the day, including, music, dance, drama, art and D&T. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day and we were very grateful to our high school colleagues for their support and expertise. We look forward to future joint Trust events.

A Team GB athlete visited school to inspire pupils through a whole-school assembly, sharing stories of determination, resilience and the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Following the assembly, Key Stage 2 pupils enjoyed energetic circuit training sessions led by our special guest.

Although postponed due to the weather, our Sports Day finally took place and was a fantastic success. Pupils demonstrated excellent teamwork, determination and sportsmanship throughout the day. The whole school also took part in a sponsored walk at Oulton Park, organised by the PTA. It was a fantastic community event that encouraged everyone to get active while raising valuable funds for the school.

Residential visits have once again provided pupils with fantastic opportunities to develop confidence, independence and teamwork. Year 1 enjoyed an exciting stay at Foxhowl, Year 2 had a wonderful residential experience at Delamere, and Year 3 spent time at Burwardsley, taking part in a range of outdoor learning activities. These exciting experiences help pupils build resilience and learn new skills, while creating lasting friendships and wonderful memories.

Pupils across the school have enjoyed a wealth of educational visits that have brought their classroom learning to life. Year 4 travelled to DEVA in Chester for an immersive Roman Experience Day to support their History learning, while another visit saw them explore science through hands-on activities at the Catalyst Science Discovery Centre in Widnes. Year 5 visited Jodrell Bank as part of their exciting Space topic and also attended a STEM Challenge Day at Tarporley High School. Reception children had a wonderful day discovering marine life during their visit to the Blue Planet Aquarium.

Year 6 pupils enjoyed a careers-focused day at Reaseheath College, exploring a range of future career pathways through practical activities. Some pupils also represented the school at a football tournament held at Liverpool Football Academy, while others enjoyed a golf morning at Westminster Park. Those moving on to Tarporley High School in September also attended their Conway Centre residential visit on Anglesey, helping them prepare for the next stage of their education.

Mrs Lorraine Skellon - Headteacher





Spotlight on Tarvin Andy Davies

Summer 2026

It has been a wonderfully busy and rewarding summer at Tarvin, packed with experiences that have taken our children well beyond the classroom.

The term began with a flurry of residential trips, with almost every year group heading off on an adventure. Year 1 stayed at Fox Howl in Delamere, Year 2 visited Burwardsley, Year 3 went to Tattenhall, Year 5 explored Manchester, and many of our Year 6 pupils enjoyed Conway as part of their transition to Tarporley High School. Our Reception children had a splashing time at the Blue Planet Aquarium, while Year 1 also loved their woodland walks closer to home.

Creativity and community have been at the heart of school as ever. Right at the end of last term, Years 3 and 4 had a fantastic Egyptian Day and more recently an Art Day and represented the school beautifully in the Chester Midsummer Watch Parade. The infants (and many parents and staff) took part in a vibrant Colour Run. We marked Red Nose Day and World Down Syndrome Day, and enjoyed an Easter Disco, as well as a visiting Digital Wizards assembly. We fully appreciated the PTA organising our ever-popular Summer Fair. Our Year 6 children sang for the community at the Methodist Church, earning lovely feedback from villagers, and visited the church to climb the bell tower. Year 2 visited the village twice as part of local area studies in History and Geography and had a visit from the Methodist minister as part of RE learning. Year 5 visited Tarporley High school to develop for a special STEM Day.

Our clubs have been thriving too. We were thrilled that our Zoo Club took part in the Takeover the Zoo Day, getting a real life behind-the-scenes insight into the world of animal care and conservation. Year 6 also enjoyed a visit to Reaseheath College, giving them a taste of the exciting learning and opportunities that lie ahead.

Sport has been a real highlight. Sports Day went ahead on our newly levelled and re-seeded school field, and our pupils have continued to take part in a wide range of competitions, fixtures and clubs throughout the term. We are especially proud that 188 children have represented the school at sport this year, and we are hoping every single one of our 230 pupils will have done so by the end of July. Keep an eye out for our Raft Crew taking on the Chester Raft Race on 12th July!

Looking ahead, our Year 6 pupils have an exciting few weeks to round off their time at Tarvin. They are busy in rehearsals for their end-of-year production of Robin and the Sherwood Hoodies, which promises plenty of laughter and song. They also have a thrilling visit to Go Ape to look forward to, before we celebrate everything they have achieved at our End of Year Assembly - a proud send-off as they move on to high school.

It has been a term full of effort, enthusiasm and smiles, and we look forward to finishing the year on a high.

Andy Davies - Headteacher



Spotlight on Kings Moat Ruth Cadwallader

At Kings Moat Community Primary School, we are excitedly preparing to open our doors in September.

Over recent months, significant work has taken place to prepare the school for its first ever pupils. From designing inspiring learning environments to appointing a dedicated team of staff, every effort has been focused on ensuring the school is ready to offer a high-quality educational experience from day one.

The new school, on the Kings Moat Garden Village development in Chester, will open to children in preschool, Reception and Years 1 and 2 to begin with. Our vision is to create a warm and inclusive community where every child feels they belong. Diversity, kindness and respect will be celebrated, ensuring that everyone is valued and supported.

We will inspire our children to believe in themselves, nurturing curiosity, confidence and a love of learning. Through encouragement and high expectations, we will empower each child to achieve their best – academically, socially and emotionally.

Rooted in our values of curiosity, kindness, courage and creativity, we will help our children grow into confident, compassionate and capable individuals who contribute positively to their communities and the wider world.

This project has been a real team effort, and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed, including colleagues in central trust roles, the newly appointed Kings Moat team, the local authority, the building company, trustees and governors.

We look forward to sharing updates as the school begins its journey. What an exciting time for our Trust!

Ruth Cadwallader - Headteacher



Spotlight on Future Leaders

Emma Gildea



This year has been an exciting milestone for leadership development across the Sandstone Trust. Working with partners and colleagues in the Learning Trust, Bishop Heber and Bishop's Blue Coat High schools, we have successfully extended our Aspiring Middle and Senior Leadership Programme, designed to equip colleagues with the knowledge, confidence and practical skills to take the next step in their leadership journey.

The programme brought together talented professionals from across our family of schools, creating a collaborative learning community where participants could share experiences, challenge thinking and learn from one another. Through a carefully planned series of workshops linked to participants' identified leadership development needs, colleagues explored key aspects of effective leadership, including invaluable inputs from Jason Lowe, Andy Davies, Clare Morgan, Ellen Green and Jonathan Deakin.

A key feature of the programme was the opportunity for every participant to design and deliver a bespoke leadership development project. These projects were tailored to each person's leadership aspirations and the specific priorities of their school, ensuring that learning was immediately translated into meaningful practice. From curriculum innovation and improving teaching and learning to strengthening pastoral provision and enhancing staff development, each project demonstrated a thoughtful response to schools' needs while providing valuable leadership experience for colleagues on the courses.

Participants shared the outcomes of their projects at the end of the programme, showcasing not only the positive impact within their schools but also the personal growth they had achieved as emerging leaders. Their creativity, commitment and willingness to embrace challenge have been inspiring to see.

The success of this programme reflects the strength of collaboration. By investing in leadership development and creating opportunities for colleagues to lead authentic improvement work, we are building a community of future leaders who are well equipped to meet the challenges of an ever-evolving educational landscape.

We would like to congratulate all participants for their dedication and achievements throughout the programme. Their enthusiasm, professionalism and commitment to improving outcomes for young people embody the values of our Trust. We look forward to seeing the continued impact of their leadership as they take the next steps in their careers and continue to make a positive difference within and beyond our Trust.

'It was excellent that the programme was responsive our needs, with a wide variety of topics that we wanted to cover'

'Hearing from the range of leaders we did was inspirational'

'It has been really thought provoking. We have learned how to 'think' like leaders'

'We heard from passionate and extremely experienced leaders'

'It has given me the confidence to be the leader I want to be'

Emma Gildea - People Strategy Lead



GET IN TOUCH

Contact Us

Tel: 01829 731780
enquires@sandstonetrust.co.uk
sandstonetrust.co.uk

Trust Central Office

Dragon Hall House, DragonHall,
Whitchurch Road, Chowley,
Chester, CH3 9DU