



Multi Academy Trust

Opportunity • Achievement • Kindness

**DECEMBER 2023**

# OUR TRUST NEWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF  
OAK MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



**Opportunity**

**Achievement**

**Kindness**





## CEO Update

### Andy Wilson

It is always a huge privilege to visit our schools and witness the diversity, respect and kindness that is evident in each of them. As I attended nativity productions over the last week I have been reminded of the way we engage with the full range of faith celebrations, particularly over this long autumn term. Seeing children across our trust “Growing Together” is a real joy and a hugely positive aspect of the OAK family.

This newsletter brings together some of these wonderful activities and events and, in addition, I am also delighted to be able to report that a new sports hall for Manor High School has been given the go ahead which means that we will have a fantastic new facility available to students and community. We very much look forward to seeing this take shape over the next 12 months.

I also want to recognise that 2023 has been a hugely difficult year for many, with people suffering unnecessarily across the globe. At this time of reflection we trust that our political leaders across the world will recognise their duty to not only protect innocent civilians, but to work to rebuild, and actively engage with the many charities who seek to support an end to conflicts. Whatever your background or faith, we thank you for adding to the diversity and ethos in each of our schools. Have a wonderful break and we look forward to working with all our stakeholders in 2024.



# Welcome to our new Trustees...

We continue to welcome new trustees to our team. This term, we have appointed Dina Nathwani and Farhan Adam.

Dina is a qualified solicitor; having practised for many years she is now non-practising and teaches law at university. She is also a legal trainer, providing corporate legal training to various industry sectors. Dina is a devoted mother and is passionate about a fair & inclusive education system – both inside and outside of school.



Farhan is the Principal of Crownhills Community College. He was recently the recipient of the Pearson National Teaching Awards award for Headteacher of the Year in a Secondary School, awarded for his values-led approach and transformation of the progress and attainment for the pupils. As a long-time senior leader in education and having been an Ofsted Inspector for ten years, we are thrilled to benefit from the breadth of experience and skills Farhan will bring to the Board.



## What do Trustees do?

MATs have a board of Trustees who are accountable for all the schools within the Trust. Trustees can delegate the day to day running of schools within the trust to local governing bodies (LGBs). Each school in OAK Trust has its own LGB which considers issues relevant to the individual school. Trustees are all volunteers. Their main responsibilities are to:

- Set the strategic direction of the Trust
- Hold senior school leadership to account
- Oversee the Trust's financial performance

# **Estates News**

## **Overdale Expansion Project**

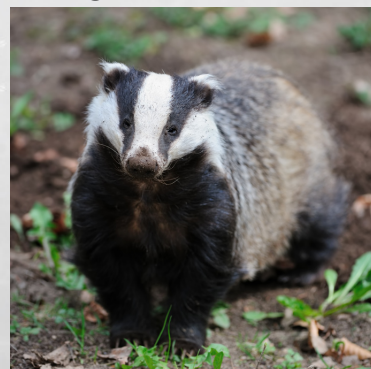
After many patient years, work finally started earlier this year on the expansion project at Overdale Infants and Juniors. On the Junior site, the old swimming pool has been removed and replaced with a stunning new 3 classroom block, built to the latest sustainable building standards, incorporating an air source heat pump and a heat recovery system. Expected completion is February 29th 2024.

Also at the Juniors, the old store room to the rear of the main hall has been demolished and replaced with a brand new store doubling the old capacity, with the expected completion date being January 30th 2024.

Overdale Infants have been coping well with their own 2 classroom extension which has involved the temporary closure of a main corridor and toilet block and access to a classroom severely hampered. Thankfully the end is now in sight with completion expected by the end of February 2024.

The Infants much needed storage solution has been addressed with an extension to their main hall with completion of this project expected mid-February 2024.

These projects have thrown up numerous challenges not least of which has been accommodating the onsite badger population. They now have a lovely new badger mansion located in the woods by the stream and to mark their unique contribution to the Overdale site, the Juniors new block will be named the Badger Building.





## **Brookside**

Brookside suffered a major flood earlier this year after unprecedented rainfall but thanks to Miss Brown and her dedicated team the clean up operation was carried out quickly and effectively with the school only having to close for 1 day. Hundreds of square meters of flooring had to be ripped up and replaced, after a 3 week drying out period, this operation was carried out during the summer holidays.

Brookside's aged and dangerous swimming pool has now been removed and replaced with an Astro-turf play area, which is proving popular with the children, as is the installation of the new Cubbie, which is an immersive sensory sound and vision experience located in the old, and now refurbished, ICT suite.

## **Woodland Grange**

Owl's Hoot, the pre and after school care unit which was in desperate need of some TLC has finally had a full interior and exterior refurbishment which included the installation of new heating and cooling, upgrading the insulation both inside and out to keep its occupants cool in the summer and cosy in the winter, and a whole new drainage system, along with new lighting, flooring and kitchen.

A big thank you to Friends Of Woodland Grange for funding the wonderful and innovative new library and to the many staff members who gave up their time to help with the painting; this is a fantastic new resource which will benefit the school for years to come.





## **New Governors**

Manor High welcomes Laura-Jayne Ward to the Governing Body. Laura is an EHC Inclusion Officer at Leicester City Council with a wealth of experience in working with children and young people. The school also welcomes Monika Bassi, a former pupil and local resident who, as a content designer for HMRC, brings some excellent skills to the Board.

The new Chair of Governors at Manor High is Miss Grace Brown, a primary school headteacher with significant experience.

## **Design Technology, Food and Art Dept**

This term we had the privilege of taking several groups of Design, Technology and Art (DTA) students to London, where they visited the National Portrait Gallery and National Gallery and took part in live sketching workshops. Following the students' projects in Art & Design on 'Stories' and 'Identity', students had the experience of responding personally to famous traditional and contemporary art pieces from the Galleries. After exploring Trafalgar Square and some of London's most icon structures, students enjoyed lunch in Covent Garden while watching some of the impressive street theatre. Students then rounded off the day with a first-hand look at costume and set design in live musical theatre in the West End, where they watched a critically acclaimed musical, such as The Lion King, Matilda, Back to the Future and Mrs Doubtfire. A great taste of both the culture of London and the wide range of opportunities in the arts.





10 GCSE Art and Design students got to experience higher education options at De Montfort University on 6th December for an Art and Design Experience Day. Students had a hands-on experience in a subject taster session. To loosen up, they were first tasked to create continuous line drawing of each other's faces – always an opportunity for a laugh. Students were then tasked to create any design they wished onto life size templates of hoodies, jeans and trainers, supported by lecturers with backgrounds in footwear design, fashion design, contour fashion and textiles design. The students were praised for their designs before giving a catwalk of their final designs.

Students were fully immersed in the experience, enjoying a lunch from the hub together before ending the day exploring the campus with the aid of student ambassadors. Mrs Wilson and Miss Booth were extremely proud of how the students conducted themselves and represented Manor High School



The DTA department house competitions have been in full swing this term, starting with the Art house competition to create our annual 2023 Christmas card. Students were very creative, using a range of media styles to design their entries, all of which were fantastic! A big well done to everyone for taking part and spending a lot of time on the entries. The winners are:

1st place: Fa Na (C3 – Year 10)

2nd place: As Tr (B6 – Year 9)

3rd place: Is Ch (C2 – Year 7)





The gingerbread decoration competition followed. This competition was extremely popular with students with over 30 students taking part. Students designed their gingerbreads on paper before using a range of edible decorations to create their designs. We saw a range of imaginative ideas, from 'The Grinch' to 'Spiderman'. Students had a fun, festive time whilst competing in their house. Another well done to everyone who took part the competition was really tight. The winners are:

1st place: Am Wh B7

2nd place: Ha Da K7

3rd place: Am Da K5

4th place: Kh O'S W1

## English Debating Competition

On Monday 11th December, Miss Jordan hosted a debate competition between local schools (Manor High, Lutterworth High, Gartree, Abbot Beyne and Welland Park). 8 of our inspirational public speakers in Year 10 were firstly provided with full training for the Parliamentary debating style before researching and speaking on issues such as social media and its potential harm, and whether or not parenting classes should be mandatory! A huge well done to Tania, Niamh, Edward, Yusuf, Zeina, Maryam, Mia and Zara – a true display of excellence in action!



## **Tutor Time Reading Programme**

The Tutor Time Reading Programme is well underway and students have been enjoying reading the variety of texts on offer. At the beginning of the year, all students started off with a collection of non-fiction articles on a range of different topics. The articles were short enough to be read within in a single session and were supplemented with comprehension questions. After all forms completed the non-fiction booklet, they moved onto their first text of the year. This year we tried something different: we have two fictional stories, a collection of short stories and a short play. This gives students an opportunity to be exposed to different forms of literature during the year. We hope you have enjoyed the books we have selected and we are always open to suggestions/recommendations.

Finally, a massive shout out to B5 who were the first form to finish their text.

## **Performing Arts News**

### **A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES – Performing Arts Showcase Evening**

On 6th December, the Performing Arts department hosted an evening of Film-themed Music and Drama. This included a range of items from our talented performers and extra-curricular groups, including Drama Club, Manor Voices, Pitch Perfect, Orchestra and Ukulele Group. Years 4, 5 and 6 from Brookside Primary School were given a performance in the afternoon and then parents and families were invited to watch the evening performance. It was wonderful to have such a large audience and to see so many students taking part in the production. A huge well done to all involved.







## **Philharmonia Orchestra Concert at De Montfort Hall**

On Wednesday evening, 26 of our musicians visited De Montfort Hall to hear the Philharmonia Orchestra play music by George Gershwin and Duke Ellington. The concert programme also included a violin concerto written by jazz musician Wynton Marsalis, performed by renowned violinist Nicola Benedetti. Our students conducted themselves impeccably throughout the concert and really soaked up the experience of hearing a professional live orchestra.

## **Music Exam Success**

Many of our students have instrumental tuition and a strong team of peripatetic teachers offer a full range of instrumental lessons in school, including piano, keyboard, drum kit, guitar (bass, electric, acoustic), brass (cornet, trombone) and woodwind (flute, clarinet, saxophone). Many of our students are practising hard and working towards their music exams. Some of our students have passed grades this term. Our congratulations go to...

Isla for passing her Grade 8 Violin with Merit

Jack for passing his Grade 3 Trombone with Merit

Kirsten for passing her Grade 4 Flute with Distinction

## **Modern Foreign Languages European Day of Languages**

On 26th September, we joined schools all over Europe in celebrating the European Day of Languages, an initiative led by the Council of Europe to promote linguistic diversity and to achieve greater intercultural understanding. Students at Manor High School participated in a house competition to find out more about the linguistic diversity of staff in school, and our colleagues in other departments displayed dates and titles in a variety of languages including German, Italian and Welsh. There was also the opportunity to sample delicious albóndigas from Spain and ratatouille from France that day in the school canteen.



## **French theatre production**

This term, the Modern Languages department was delighted to welcome French native speaking actors from Onatti Productions to perform a play for all Year 9 and 10 French students. The play was thoroughly enjoyed by all, and we even had some audience participation from our students, who were excellent ambassadors for the school. We look forward to welcoming back Onatti Productions in 2024, when our Year 9 and 10 Spanish students will enjoy the same experience.



## **PE news**

### **Leicester Riders Basketball Trip**

Our Year 7 students had a great evening at the Morningside Arena where they participated in a basketball session led by Leicester Riders Foundation coaches. Congratulations to Lia and Seb who were awarded the most improved players. We finished off the evening watching Leicester Riders vs London Lions BBL. The students were lucky enough to meet the players at the end and even get their autographs!

### **U16 Boys Table Tennis – County Champions**

A huge well done to our KS4 boys. They put up a fantastic performance at the county rounds finishing in 1st place.

### **Year 10 Boys Basketball**

Congratulation to the Year 10 boys who won both fixtures at the basketball central venue league. They now progress on to the county rounds. We wish them the best of luck!

### **KS4 Girls Basketball**

We have had more basketball success with our KS4 girls winning their area tournament again this year. They now progress on to the county rounds. We wish them the best of luck!



## **Year 7 and 8 Rugby Festival**

Our Year 7 and 8 boys competed in their first ever Rugby Festival held by Leicester Tigers in November. The team won one game and lost one game. However, it was a fantastic experience for all! Every Tuesday, Matt from Leicester Tigers is delivering coaching sessions at Manor High School 3:15-4:15pm. Be sure not to miss out on this opportunity.

## **Girls Netball**

At the start of this term, our netball teams finished off their league games and participated in some friendly competitions. KS4 girls won 14-5 against SWHS. All KS3 teams won their matches against Beauchamp. A great end to the season.

## **Sports Leaders**

Well done to our sports leaders who have supported at the primary schools cross country and table tennis competitions this term. Students have been completing workshops every Wednesday lunch time with Mrs Gondwe and are now working towards their volunteering hours. A huge well done to our sports leaders who have already achieved their bronze award. Keep up the great work.

## **Sponsorship**

We want to send our thanks to the generous businesses who have kindly sponsored our football teams and Year 8 netball team. The students loved wearing a squad kit this year as they felt part of a professional team. Thankyou!

- CreativeTriangle
- CBA Business Solutions
- JB Business Services
- Heitrich Ltd
- Dale Studios







Another fun filled term at Brookside! Pirate days, Cadbury World visit, Diwali celebration day, Space Centre visit, anti-bullying week, Remembrance assemblies, Magistrates court session plus new monthly parent coffee mornings with a learning focus!

We have held 2 Open Morning sessions for potential new 'Brooksiders' which have been well attended, continued with our Happy Lunchtimes activities, with the ongoing collection of pom poms for the much-coveted golden lunch box!

We held a fabulous 'Hello Yellow' day with our link Mental Health team support worker, Jess. We looked at how we all have a responsibility to look after our own mental health and build in ways to help us stay as upbeat as possible. The children and staff had an amazing day and felt empowered to help build their own and others mental resilience.



Our Cubbie is still very well used and we have now built 'Cubbie time' into our Star of the Week reward. This has been very well received, the children love it!

Our Year 3s are becoming fanatical bird watchers, they have spotted 11 different types of bird, the now rare greenfinch being one of them!





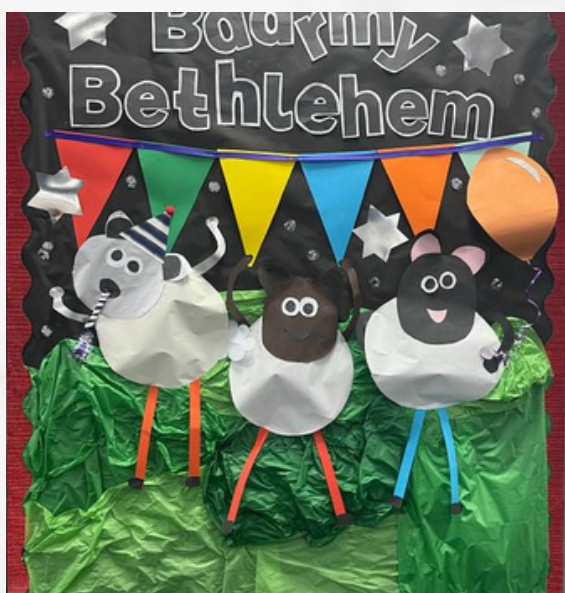
We are looking forward to Christmas, with our usual nativity, reverse advent calendar and food galore!

Thank you to everybody who has been so generously donating to the Oadby food bank. They came to collect the wonderful array of offerings in time for Christmas.

The Christmas coffee morning was well attended and the parents who came had a lovely time. The next one will be run by Jess, the mental health lead, and she will be talking about building positive mental health. This will be on 11th January at 9am.

Pupils were very happy to watch the Manor High School Christmas production rehearsal. One of the many benefits of sharing a site with the High School!

Brookside pupils held their own school nativity on 14th December. Thank you to everyone who came to watch them...and to the staff whose hard work made sure it was a wonderful production

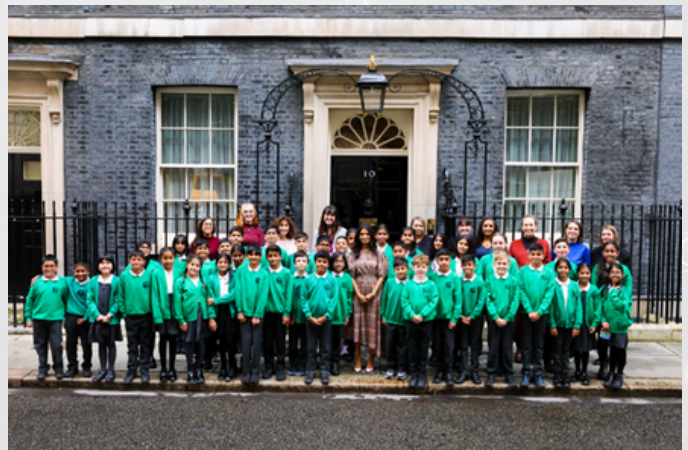






## Lessons at Number 10!

A once in a lifetime experience, Woodland Grange was invited by Mrs Akshata Murty (wife of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak) to visit 10 Downing Street and spend the day behind the world famous black door. The children had a tour of Number 10, workshops and even interviews for BBC Newsround; incredible! Speaking to the children after the event, it was clear that lasting memories had been made. They described the huge interior of Number 10, and gained an insight into what it is like to govern the country. The workshops covered sustainable travel and were run by the Young V&A Museum.



## Silver Music Mark

This term welcomed Leicestershire Music into Woodland Grange to carry out an assessment of the music offer we provide for our children. Mrs Bowe explained all of the curriculum provision as well as the many additional music activities that are planned for our children. We are delighted to say that they agreed that music at Woodland Grange has a high priority and awarded us with the Silver Quality Mark.





## **Spark Arts**

In November we were delighted to welcome the 'Spark Arts For Children' group in to Woodland Grange for three special performances as part of their Spark Festival. Spark Arts are a local organisation who help children access the arts in a variety of places, for us that was in our very own school hall. The shows were amazing spectacles which captured the children's imagination.

## **New School Library**

During November, staff and parent volunteers worked hard clearing, sorting and painting a room, ready for our new school library. The old library was not easy to access and was uninviting to the children. Following several meetings with companies we were delighted with a design produced by Peters Ltd and they came into school in November to install our brand-new library. We are now in the process of organising the shelves and bookcases ready for the classes to start using it. The new school library has only been made possible by the Friends of Woodland Grange (FOWG). Through their hard work, and parental support at the events they have organised, this project has been able to be funded. There will be a grand opening ceremony soon which we are really looking forward to.

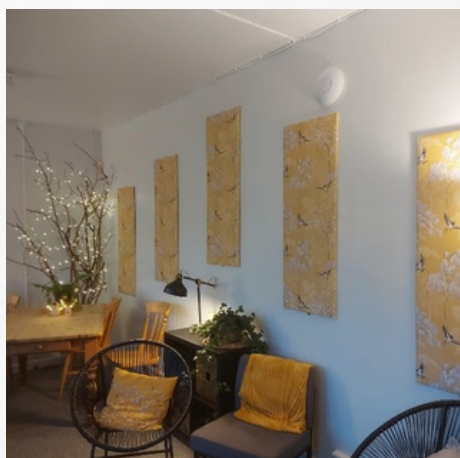






The beginning of this academic year saw Overdale Infant School remind staff on their training day about the importance of reading. Staff were challenged to find the most extreme reading spot. They came up with some excellent ideas.

The school has continued to work on making social spaces within the school more inviting for staff to support the wellbeing of our team. A team of staff volunteers have revamped the staffroom and it is now a wonderfully calm, relaxing and inviting space for staff to take a break from the busy school



Overdale Infant School delivered the NSPCC speak out and stay safe assembly to all of our children in Key Stage 1. This assembly delivered an important message to the children that if something makes them feel uncomfortable they should always speak to someone they trust.





On Friday 29th September Overdale Infant School hosted a MacMillan Coffee Morning for parents. We were thrilled with the number of families who joined us and it was lovely to see some of our wider community in attendance. Staff and parents donated some delicious cakes for the event and the school raised a total of £200 for MacMillan cancer support.



On Friday 10th November the whole school including our Pre-School children gathered together in the playground for a 2-minute silence to mark Remembrance Day. Each class made a poppy wreath and these were laid together on our pyramid in the playground. The children were brilliant at observing the silence and we discussed how important it is to remember, but also to hope for peace in the future.

During Arts week, all children created artwork linked to The Dot. This culminated in a wonderful art exhibition showcasing the creative talent of the school. Parents and carers were invited to come in and view the stunning artwork.





## Mindfulness

Some children had the wonderful opportunity to take part in some relaxation and mental health workshops. These sessions aimed to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing support and included interactive discussions and activities. The workshops began with an introduction to the brain (explained as the wise owl and the guard dog) so that young people were able to understand how their brains work.

## Pom Pom Jars

Children have been enjoying the challenge of filling their pom pom jars to recognise good choices throughout the day. A half full jar of pom poms is rewarded with a treat chosen by the class. This half term, we have had rewards of a Science investigation afternoon and a movie afternoon. The full jar rewards are soon to come. A great incentive to be 'caught being good'.



## Warning Zone

Year 6 represented the school exceptionally well on their trip to Warning Zone this term. The children spent time immersed in different safety-related situations, discussing how to make good choices and minimise potential risks. Key areas included online safety, fire, roads, water, electricity and safety on the railway.





## Nativity 2023

Overdale Junior School visited St Mary's Church for their Nativity again this year. Half the school visited on Tuesday 19th December and the other half on Wednesday 20th December. The school's nativity drama club and the Year 3 and 4 choir worked so hard in preparing for the special occasion. We were so pleased see so many families also in attendance to join the school and Trust in our Christmas celebration. The choir also visited Overdale Infant School to showcase some of their Christmas songs which were enjoyed by staff and children alike.

Keeping with the Christmas theme, Alex Scott and crew from Holy Trinity Church in Leicester visited to do a Christmas assembly on Wednesday 6th December. These interactive assemblies are always full of music and singing!

The Overdale Junior School Christmas tree looked fantastic at the St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival (2 and 3rd December) – well done to all involved!



## Young Voices

Members of the Young Voices Choir and the Year 3 and 4 nativity choir were invited to perform at the Salvation Army Leicester South concert on 12th December. They were very excited and honoured to be representing Overdale Junior School out in the local community.

**Have a fantastic winter break and to those who celebrate, have a very merry Christmas. We look forward to seeing you in 2024!**





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