



Chief Executive Officer – Mr Jonathan Taylor



I have really enjoyed speaking to so many staff and pupils this term, often discussing the importance of education and what we can do to make things even better. Pupils, as ever, are extremely thought provoking and insightful. This week I have been reminded by pupils in all four of our secondary schools that education should develop independence, resilience and that high quality teaching frequently extends well beyond the requirements of examination courses. As we approach Easter I would encourage you to reflect on your understanding of world class education and the contribution that you make to our pupil's educational experience.

On 23 April we are hosting our first Secondary Teachers Professional Learning Conference with a focus on world-class education. Zoe talks more about this below and I am delighted that we have secured Professor David Hopkins (recently ranked as the 16th most influential educator globally) and Alan Parnham, Deputy Director RSC Office to deliver keynote addresses on global and national perspectives of what it means to be world-class. In June we are running our first cross-phase SLT seminar which will further explore world class leadership and our recently developed Trust school improvement pathway. As our Trust becomes much more established more and more opportunities will develop to share best practice, engage in meaningful professional learning and to network with like-minded colleagues. This in turn will benefit our pupils.

David Rzeznik's has now visited all of our Primary/Nursery and Infant schools this year and he reports very positively on improvements evident in writing, through the widespread use of Talk 4 Writing. A recent EEF presentation to National Leaders of Education confirmed the value of Maths Mastery based on extensive research and the DfE has now officially endorsed PowerMaths as an appropriate mastery approach. I love seeing Talk 4 Writing in action in classrooms and pupils and teachers speak so positively about the difference it has made. It is an excellent example of research informed practice improving the learning of our pupils.

In our next update, I will outline in more detail the plans for our two new Primary Schools, the teaching school offer for next year and plans to further build our subject networks.

Finally congratulation to Robin Jones who successfully cycled around all 12 schools in a single day – a great fundraising activity!

I hope you enjoy the updates below and have restful Easter.

Best wishes

Mr Jonathan Taylor
CEO - Sapientia Education Trust

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Chief Operations Officer Update – Mr Robert Moorhouse



Governance

- The Board of Trustees have established a new Infrastructure Committee to oversee Estate Management, Health and Safety and ICT across the Trust schools.
- Trustees have visited Trust schools throughout the term and received feedback from staff and students.

Finance

- Larking Gowan have completed their first two internal audit inspections since the start of this financial year. Their reports are considered by the Board Audit & Risk Committee.
- The Finance Department completed the Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning training and review in the Spring Term and the outcomes and recommendations of the review have been reported back to the Board Finance Committee.

Health and Safety

- The H&S Officer has been carrying out termly inspections in the second half of the spring term. A summary of the inspection process is provided to each local governing body and to the Board Infrastructure Committee.
- It is noticeable that a number of recommendations made by the Trust H&S officer have been addressed during the year by the Trust Estates Team.

Contracts and IT Strategy

- New contracts have been put in place at Stradbroke for catering, cleaning and grounds maintenance. All of the contracts combined have resulted in significant financial savings for the school.
- A renegotiated catering contract at Rockland St Mary and Surlingham schools has also resulted in savings to the school's budgets.
- Work has taken place at Seething and Mundham Primary School to bring their IT set-up in house. This has also resulted in significant savings for the school and has allowed some IT upgrades to take place.
- New IT servers for Rockland St Mary and Surlingham Primary schools have been purchased and will be installed in the coming months.

Estates

- The Peter Rout Centre at Wymondham College will be handed over before the end of this term.
- Work is underway to support the planned Primary School Project at Wymondham College.
- Various improvement and statutory inspection works have been completed at schools across the Trust during the term and more are planned during the Easter break.
- A complete refurbishment of Boys and Girls toilets in the Science Block at Old Buckenham High School is near completion and should be ready for students to use post-Easter. This work has been carried out in-house.
- A former storeroom at Great Hockham primary school has been converted into a nurture room by the SET estates team.

Mr Robert Moorhouse Chief Operations Officer

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Mrs Kelly Stokes – Director of Improvement – Primary Lead



Another successful term across the primaries with lots happening to feel proud of.

OBPS had Ofsted where they showed such great teamwork and enthusiasm to get a really strong GOOD. The whole school shone with everyone showing their pride at being part of the school community. The inspectors made some lovely comments and the areas to improve identified were ones already clearly mapped out on the Improvement Plan for both the school and the Trust. It is definitely worth reading the report as there are strong connections to the journey of our other primaries.

Helen has been out and about supporting staff with mastery as well as inviting staff into her classroom to see Power Maths in action in a mixed age class. She has also led with support from Sandhya, Chris and Jo twilights focussing on Maths as our key priority this term.

There has been so much supporting of each other and collaboration in all areas not just with maths but also with TAs visiting other school settings looking at nurture to support the use of sensory circuits and compass. Zoe has also been 'instrumental' in conducting our SET choir made up of Year 2 pupils who sang their hearts out at the Norfolk festival. Our pupils had a really lovely opportunity thanks to Zoe and her commitment and enthusiasm to bring us together along with the other school staff who helped pupils learn the songs and supported them on the day.

Pupils have also had a chance to meet each other in the Year 6 Maths Masters weekly workshops which allowed higher attaining children an opportunity to look at greater depth mathematics in groups. They have also had a chance to compete against each other in our English and Maths competitions where the winning school for maths was Seething and Mundham Primary and the winning school for English was Old Buckenham Primary. Rockland won the best team award and Surlingham were second in both events (missing out by only 1 mark in the maths) so declared themselves the winners overall! Well done to all those involved and hopefully it has supported them with their progress towards their SATs.

Schools have also had David Rzeznik and his external QA this term. David has seen such positives across our schools with comments such as 'I can't believe how far the schools have come in their Talk 4 Writing journeys.' He has seen children who are loving their writing and classrooms that are incredibly engaging environments with 'Hooks' that have captured their imaginations.

Lastly, our schools have welcomed our new Heads, Mark (plus Waffle the dog) and Iain, this term. They have joined the teams really well and already contributed to wider SET aspects of life. To add to the team will be Natasha Hall at Great Hockham starting as Head in May. She is very excited to be joining the SET and Grwat Hockham. White House Farm is progressing well with the steel frame in place for the school to be ready for opening in September and lots of interest in the EYFS teaching position.

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Director of Improvement – Primary Lead

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Mrs Zoe Fisher – Director of Improvement – Secondary Lead



2019 seems to be flying by and already the year has been jam-packed with activity.

The Literacy Network, which includes teachers from each of our SET secondary schools, have been devising a research informed approach to a whole school literacy strategy. Education Advisor Dan Keates has been meeting with Katie Woods from Framingham Earl, Harriet Rowe from Stradbroke and the Head of English at Old Buckenham, Christie Greenacre. The focus has been on developing resources to create a culture of inquisitive readers amongst our students and pilots have taken place with really positive feedback.

There has been lots of discussions around approaches to enhancing the progress of our Disadvantaged students. The research is extensive and the practice equally so. I attended a Pupil Premium conference in London and have worked with staff in our schools to review our current approaches and how we can further support our young people. What has come out of this work is the recognition that each child may have different barriers to their learning and in some cases no barriers at all. What is important is the need to recognise our disadvantaged students as individuals and if there are barriers to learning, we know what they are so that we can best support the child to overcome them. The Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit identified the effectiveness of strategies to improve attainment, the most effective being feedback, metacognition and self-regulation, and reading comprehension strategies – you can read more about their work here <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk>

Staff have been engaging with IRIS Connect within their schools and across the Trust. Probing discussions are taking place in forums, footage of lessons are being shared to demonstrate pedagogical strategies, students' work is being shared for external moderation across schools and the online interviews and discussions that explore educational topics through the 'Film Club' are stimulating professional debate. If you are yet to get involved, please contact your school's IRIS Connect Champion: FEHS - Dan Keates, OBHS Sarah Morgan, SHS - Jo Beale, WC - Fiona Borrett, and join the community!

There have been further Trust Networks developed focusing on Teaching and Learning, Achievement and Curriculum. This has given leaders from each school the opportunity to share good practice, ideas and provide peer support. With the education landscape going through further changes under the proposed Ofsted framework, the opportunity to discuss emerging themes is quite exciting.

The data analysis software, 4Matrix is now in all of our Secondary schools and supports teachers and school leaders in identifying the progress of our students. Special thanks to Wymondham College Deputy Head, Becky Arnold, for delivering 4Matrix training to staff at OBHS and will also visit FEHS to train staff at the end of April.

We are really looking forward to our Professional Learning Day in April. The opportunity for us to come together for a day of professional learning, collaboration and 'getting to know each other' is one we are really looking forward to. We have planned the day with the intention of our external speakers providing a perception on World Class Education that we might reflect on, in relation to our own practices. This will lead into an afternoon that will give us some time to think about what a world class curriculum should be; what we want to teach our young people, why we want to teach it and how we might teach it - embracing the opportunity this gives us to shape our students' education.

I love seeing our students getting involved in school life and I have had lots of opportunities this term. I was in the audience of the SHS school play of The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe; there were Incredible performances in what was a script heavy production, from students as young as Year 7 holding their own in principal roles. It was a real whole school affair with staff and students working together creating

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impressive make up and costumes, set designs and a seamless back stage operation which culminated in a wonderful show.

World Book Day and Comic Relief have also been standout days; The imagination that went into costumes for WBD was fabulous. For Comic Relief the students' charity spirit was second to none. OBHS was a buzz of activity at lunch time with nail painting, live bands, cake sales, soak the teacher and an auction of promises in which £180 was bid to be Headteacher for the day! A special thank you to Y13 student Phoebe Powrie and her team at Wymondham College who have raised awareness and resources as part of The Red Box Project, an initiative that aims to tackle period poverty in the UK, ensuring that nobody misses school due to their period. Their campaign has been so successful that the team has been able to fill enough red boxes to provide one for each of their school houses as well as all of our Secondary schools.

This term has also seen Year 9 choosing their options. One of the biggest decisions students and their families have had to make in their education thus far; we must never underestimate the impact of our guidance and the importance of promoting high aspirations. It is encouraging to see that in a time when many schools have had to significantly narrow their curriculum offer, our students still have the opportunity to choose from a broad range of courses.

Of course, this time of year cannot go unmentioned as we get ever closer to the exam season. There is still some way to go to ensure our students secure the successes they are capable of and we need to continue with our high expectations, rewarding effort and building a can-do confidence in our students. Thank you to the many staff who are giving up additional time to provide the targeted support and care needed.

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Our Safeguarding Network met again this term and welcomed external trainer PC Donna Flannigan, Prevent Officer for the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit. PC Flannigan gave the team enhanced Prevent training which will further support the safeguarding of our children. Notably she said social media is the biggest concern and we must remain vigilant to what our young people are accessing online, use every opportunity to talk about e-safety and create a culture of safeguarding.

All of our DSLs have been trained in the online safeguarding referral system, MyConcern, which is now installed in all of our Primary and Secondary schools. The software achieved the Queen's Award for Enterprise: Innovation 2018 and DSLs will be delivering staff training in the coming months to further enhance our safeguarding practices.

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Director of Improvement – Secondary Lead

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Mrs Tina Smith – Director of HR



Firstly, I would like to say a fond farewell to Jo Myers, HR Systems Development Manager who left the Trust in March. Jo led the implementation of MHR iTrent and without her uncompromising testing and analytical approach; the system would not be where it is today. As she throws her energy and drive into the creative arts she will be busier than ever making theatre costumes and stage props and we all wish her our very best wishes for the future.

I would like to introduce Simon Jessup, our new HR Systems Development Manager. Simon joins us from the public sector with a wealth of experience in iTrent and payroll. Simon is planning the next phase of iTrent rollout which is “People Manager” (an integrated HR facility to assist in the management of attendance and performance management); if you are a line manager, you will receive notification and training in due course.

We are pleased to announce that Framingham Earl High School will be transferred into the central pay system in April; if any member of staff has any queries in relation to this transfer please do not hesitate to get in touch.

HR and Payroll have been extremely busy this term to ensure that all recruitment for September is progressing, of course with processing payroll in-between, however we have been working in the background to introduce a new on-line job application form and applicant tracking system to make the recruitment process smoother and more accessible for prospective candidates, more to follow on this in due course.

Sodexo benefits are fully up and running and I hope that you are using the opportunity to obtain some discounts from the lifestyle discounts or cashback offers, if you need your account login sent to you again please let HR know.

The new e-learning Health and Safety training package from iHasco has been implemented and I urge you to complete the courses you have been and will be assigned. You will also be able to view the full range of courses iHasco offer so please log on and, if there are any you would like to complete, speak with either your line manager or the HR Team to arrange this.

Thank you to all staff who participated in the wellbeing survey. The results of the survey will be used to develop wellbeing strategies within schools which specifically focus on the areas you raised. Feedback and suggestions on wellbeing initiatives is always welcome, so please do get in contact.

I wish you all a happy Easter!

Mrs Tina Smith
Director of HR

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