



Chief Executive Officer – Mr Jonathan Taylor

I had the pleasure of delivering a professional learning session to all of our Newly Qualified Teachers recently. Amongst many things we discussed the moral purpose of our work and what excellent classrooms look and feel like. I shared with them reflections from a highly experienced School inspector, she stated that great lessons are "... of a quality of such interest that you want to be a pupil yourself, you find yourself enjoying the lesson just as much as the pupils clearly are" and that 'Pupils in an outstanding lesson have a rapport with the teacher where they are learning together. It's exciting and there's an ingredient that's hard to quantify. You can feel it in the atmosphere. Whoever is in the room is carried along with the interest, the stimulus and the content of the lesson.'" The ability of staff in our schools to build strong relationships and to encourage, inspire and motivate is something that I am privileged to see and hear about regularly. We can and do make a difference to the lives of the young people we educate.

Opportunities to learn outside of the classroom are a vital part of our vision. This term pupils in our schools have been provided with numerous opportunities to learn outside of the classroom. I always enjoy hearing about successful trips, fixtures, exchanges, performances and visits – for example within the last fortnight pupils have performed at the Royal Albert Hall (Seething & Mundham), presented a music and drama evening exploring the work of Roald Dahl (Framingham Earl), participated in the British Council School Partnerships Seminar in Duisburg (Old Buckenham High School), produced Christmas plays (Ghost Hill), enjoyed residential trip including quad bikes, archery and buggy building (Old Buckenham Primary School) and even grilled all four local parliamentary candidates in an election hustings (Wymondham College). The commitment that staff make to offer these types of opportunities day in and day out to our pupils is commendable.



I will highlight two things this term that I particularly enjoyed:

- Opening White House Farm Primary School was certainly one of many highlights for the Trust this term. The team have done an amazing job – the EDP quoted parent Chloe Woodrow saying that 'her son Hugo, four, thought it was "brilliant". "It's a lovely building and the facilities are really lovely to have," she said. "There is a nice community feel about the school as well." The buzz of opening a new school and the excitement of the first day is something that is memorable.

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- Our first Year 10 masterclass, which brought together pupils from all four secondary schools. The day focussed on aspiration and included contributions from Governors and Trustees, older pupils, masterclasses in Humanities and STEM subjects, as well as a lecture style session I delivered introducing ethical thinking. The talent amongst the 40 attendees was inspiring.



I would like to end by thanking all staff who move on to pastures new at the end of term. In particular it is appropriate to pay tribute to Nicola Furneaux who retires from her position as Headteacher at Framingham Earl this term. Nicola has been a brilliantly successful headteacher, who always finds time for staff and pupils. I am delighted that she will remain with Sapientia next term, working in a new capacity in our central team, focussing on developing professional learning and supporting school improvement. Becky Arnold will start as Headteacher at Framingham Earl after Christmas, Becky has been an exceptional Deputy Head and will be missed by the Wymondham College community. Nikki Hart leaves her position as Head of School at Burston to take up a well-deserved promoted post in Norwich.

Thank you so much for your hard work and endeavour and may I wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Best wishes

Mr Jonathan Taylor
CEO - Sapientia Education Trust

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Chief Operations Officer – Mr Robert Moorhouse

Estate Management

During the Autumn term, we take the opportunity to start the planning required for the major works to be carried out in 2020. Between the start of term, we are restricted in what major works can be done prior to the summer holidays for practical reasons such as time and weather so the major effort over the remainder of this term and into the Spring term will be on ensuring that routine maintenance and servicing is carried out. The Health and Safety Officer carries out his Autumn term checks during the second half of the term.

Major works carried out since the beginning of term;

Framingham Earl High School

Plans revised for possible new parking layout at front of school
Costings for other campus upgrades being sought (likely to be completed in Summer 2020)

Stradbroke High School

Planning work undertaken for work to finish roof replacement project (likely to be completed in Summer 2020)

Old Buckenham High School

New security fencing installed at front of school entrance

Wymondham College

Boiler servicing and repair

Planning application for Refectory extension submitted and extension plans finalised

Contractor appointed to re-surface Lincoln road that runs around the back of the campus and re-surface the Water Tower Car Park.

Ghost Hill Infant and Nursery School

Repaired the leaking roof (hopefully!)

Seething and Mundham Primary School

New security fencing installed at front of school
New area of artificial grass

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Burston Primary School

Artificial grass installed in play area

Tivetshall Primary School:

Redecoration of pupil toilets

Finance

The Autumn Term is especially busy for the finance staff as the annual audit of the 2018/19 accounts takes place. This process runs throughout the term culminating in the Board of Trustees signing off the accounts and them being submitted to the DfE and Companies House. This a substantial piece of work that draws information from numerous sources and must be carefully collated. Well done to the finance staff at all levels across the Trust for their work.

Mr Robert Moorhouse
Chief Operations Officer

Ms Kirsty Bray – Director of MAT Development

Developing teaching and learning is at the heart of the Sapientia Teaching School. We're delighted that there has been significant uptake onto both our Middle & Senior Leadership Pathways courses. These sessions are led by experts in their field and focus on the Education, Finance and HR knowledge that leaders need to flourish in their demanding roles. After Christmas, the Teaching School Programme will offer a range of CPD opportunities for Primary staff, focused on developing and embedding the core and non-core curriculum. We're delighted that Rob Brewster, who has worked extensively for Angles Maths Hub, Sheringham Teaching School and has run 'Developing Great Teaching' courses to teachers across Norfolk, will be joining the Sapientia core team from January 2020.

Ms Kirsty Bray
Director of MAT Development

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Ms Julia Powar – Director of Primary Standards

I believe one of the aims of education is to prepare our children for the international world and equip them with the knowledge, skills and attributes to flourish and succeed as global citizens in an accelerated and rapidly-changing world. School 21, an outstanding school in east London believes there are 6 attributes vital for success in the 21st century: expertise, professionalism, eloquence, grit, spark and craftsmanship. For the past 28 years, I have had the enormous privilege of visiting different schools both in the UK and abroad and seeing excellent practice. Indeed in a recent visit to Seething and Mundham Primary school, I was blown away by the fantastic teaching and learning in Reception and Year 1. When I think of world class classrooms, a range of models spring to mind. Not one size fits all and an outstanding learning environment can come in many shapes and guises. For example, the outdoor environment can be the classroom - there are outstanding schools where early years children spend all day every day outside in nature. There is strong evidence showing that starting formal schooling later is best, and the practice in many countries, such as Sweden and Finland. These countries have better academic achievement and child well-being, despite children not starting school until age 7.

The Trust maths lead, Sandhya Radhamma, has just returned from a 2 week visit to Shanghai to observe at first-hand how maths is taught using the mastery approach. Their educational system is based on the principle that “The purpose of teaching is not to teach because children can teach themselves.” Lessons are not based on teachers telling pupils how something is done, rather through targeted effective questioning, they encourage children to **discover, discuss** and **reflect**. Recently I visited the outstanding University of Cambridge primary school, where they have 'learning streets' with bustling welcoming corridors used to the maximum for teaching and learning opportunities. Studies show many jobs that exist today won't be around by the year 2050. So for me, the key to developing a world class classroom is developing children and young people with an agile learning mindset, predisposed to be lifelong learners.

Julia Powar

Director of Primary Standards

Mrs Zoe Fisher – Director of Secondary Standards & Safeguarding

The DfE have published validated secondary school data and we are proud of the high performance of many of our schools. Wymondham College achieved the highest GCSE results in Norfolk with Framingham Earl 4th and Stradbroke gaining the 3rd highest progress score and 4th highest attainment in Suffolk. The College Sixth Form has performed extremely well too with an increase in the top grades and its best ever progress score. Old Buckenham maintained national average for progress and have made a really good start to the new academic year.

Mock exams have taken place across our schools and our Year 11 pupils have approached them with a mature conscientiousness. The data for this year group and Year 13 is suggesting we could have our best ever trust-wide results.

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We launched our first Trust masterclass event in November with 40 Year 10 pupils coming together from across our schools. The focus was on expanding horizons and raising aspirations with careers and higher education talks, STEM and humanities masterclasses and a session on Causing Deaths and Saving Lives: An introduction to ethical thinking. The pupils enjoyed an evening in Lincoln Sixth Form House with a competitive debate. The end of the evening, new friendships had been made and the feedback was positive with requests for more events and a return to the College for a tour. We hope this will be the start of wider cross school events for our pupils to come together.

There has been much work in all of our schools on the curriculum with some great collaboration between staff and subject areas working across schools to share best practice, ideas and quality assure curricular. Jonathan and I were invited to speak in London at a Westminster Insight conference about the work that has taken place in our schools around curriculum in response to the Education Inspection Framework. It was great to have the opportunity to share the work so many of you have been doing with delegates from around the world. Teachers will have an opportunity to further their work at our Trust professional learning day in January. I am able to share with you that we have secured our keynote speaker for our April professional learning day and excited to announce that Professor Rachel Lofthouse Director of CollectivEd and Professor of Teacher Education in the Carnegie School of Education at Leeds Beckett University will be joining us.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains at the forefront of our Trust work. Our DSLs have had Family Support Planning training this half term as well as further training on MyConcern to take back to schools. Claire Fox and Chris Lloyd are now qualified Step On Step Up trainers and will be rolling this out to all schools over the next few months. I would also like to welcome Claire Fox into her new Trust role; from January Claire will be working as our Safeguarding Attendance and Student Support Leader based across the Trust and will spend a day a week working with the team at Old Buckenham High School.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and I thank you for the work you do in keeping our children safe.

Mrs Zoe Fisher

Director of Secondary Standards and Safeguarding

Mrs Tina Smith – Director of HR

The Trust's Performance Management procedure was launched in a number of our schools this term for all staff. Everyone has a right to a Performance Management review each year and it is important to the Trust that **everyone** benefits from this process. Please remember to refer to the Teaching School Programme for professional development opportunities when considering your training and future career progression.

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I am pleased to announce that through careful monitoring and review staff absences are improving. Absence is by far the biggest unproductive cost to the Trust (currently in the region of £600,000 per annum). Whilst it is acknowledged that sickness absence cannot always be prevented, the Trust has a good support mechanism in place to help staff rehabilitate back into work after long periods of absence and offers good phased return to work provision. Please remember that Validium (validium.com) offer counselling and wellbeing support to all staff free of charge. This can be accessed through the Employee Self Service Portal (ESS), www.validium.com or by calling: 0800 3 58 48 58. For further details please contact HR.

The Trust is in the process of arranging a Sapientia new staff induction, this is an exciting event for the Sapientia Team as we will get to meet all our new starters across all our schools. If you are new to the Trust you will be invited to attend a one-off half day session. More on this in the new year.

Don't forget to maximise your shopping discounts by signing up to the Sodexo benefits platform, provided by the Trust, which is free and easy to register. If you have not already signed up and would like to benefit from good discounts of your everyday shopping and Christmas presents, please do not hesitate to contact HR.

And finally, as we near the festive season from myself and the HR team, we wish you all a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

RELAX AND RECHARGE THIS FESTIVE SEASON!

Mrs Tina Smith
Director of HR

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