

# Achieve and Learn Trust Newsletter

## Issue One: January 2026



### Welcome to *Issue One* of our very first Trust newsletter!

Here's a roundup of what's been happening at Trust level this year with some good news stories from each of our schools we would love to share with you!



As it's our first issue, let me start by telling you a little bit about what Trusts do, the value they bring to Education and my role within our Trust. As CEO, I have been working closely with our Trustees, local Governors and Headteachers to ensure the smooth running of both schools so that our students and staff are able to give their best every day. I co-ordinate what happens across the central team down into schools, reporting back regularly to our Trust Board and sometimes the Department for Education or Ofsted.

I know and understand that for people of any age to make good lives for themselves a supportive environment is a key factor. Staff across our Trust therefore, **work together to drive improvement across teaching and pastoral care to ensure the highest standards of educational provision are on offer to all our young people.** This is our main driver as a Trust. For this reason, we invest a lot in staff development and resourcing our curriculums.

Following on from our Parent/Carer Survey at the end of last term, I'd like to respond below to the areas on which you would like a little more information.

#### Our responses:

##### **What does a Trust do to support its schools?**

With our Trust vision and values at the heart of all we do, we ensure our schools receive **bespoke support** to help them improve at all levels, such as:

- ✓ Close collaboration between staff
- ✓ Staff Training

- ✓ Leadership Development and Talent Management
- ✓ Subject and Senior Leadership and Management
- ✓ Attendance
- ✓ Teaching and Learning
- ✓ Safeguarding
- ✓ SEND
- ✓ Ofsted inspections
- ✓ Human Resources and Finance
- ✓ Estate Operations and Safety

In the past, schools may have used their Local Authority for help with these areas, they still can, however when a school academises (no longer a 'maintained' school), the Trust is their first port of call; their 'guardian'.

The CEO and central Trust team help Headteachers and Senior Leaders take individual approaches to **what** they provide to their students and **how** they provide this to best meet the needs of their individual schools. These approaches are based on work and research we've already done to identify what works best. There are two schools in our Trust so far, and this brings many benefits through:

- ✓ working collaboratively together on challenges schools may be facing
- ✓ sharing expertise which exists across the Trust both inside and outside the classroom
- ✓ sharing best classroom practice at subject-specific levels and across all key stages to ensure all students are able to learn confidently and achieve their best outcomes
- ✓ taking the pressure off Headteachers through financial and operational support sitting at Trust level, allowing them to focus on student learning.

Our Trust also works with local authorities and other Trusts, so we forge strong relationships and sometimes broker external support as needed for our schools, to ensure our students consistently get the best out of their education.

### **How are schools better off in a Trust?**

Collaboration is key to school improvement and professional support, therefore we believe schools are better off in a Trust where this happens regularly in order to navigate an ever-changing educational landscape and improve outcomes for our young people. Regardless of the number of schools in the Trust, we are **one team!**

### **How does being in a Trust support our students more than you've said here?**

It's really important that our students also have opportunities to work collaboratively to improve their own learning and their own schools, also to learn life skills. Student Voice underpins and runs through many whole school strategies and the Trust supports schools to facilitate this.

Through activities such as joint Student Council meetings and our Cultural Diversity Days, appointing Head Students and establishing student committees for things like

charity fundraising, we ensure our young people come together to share thoughts and ideas – they have a hand in what we adults do!

Comment from a Y7 student:

*“I’ve really loved meeting up with other children across our Trust! Even though our schools aren’t close together, we feel like we are part of something bigger than just one school. I didn’t really understand what it meant to be part of a Trust – I’ve got a better ideal now.”*

Student Voice is also a fundamental part of Quality Assurance processes in our schools. We want to know how students learn best and what we as staff need to do to help them learn even better. All groups of students are represented at all levels thus ensuring we continue to embrace inclusion, diversity and equity.

We know our staff and students like being in a small Trust; our offer is more personal, they see staff from the other school and staff from the Trust central team, they see Governors and Trustees in their schools, supporting staff or attending events.

Students know that the Trust only employs people who are genuinely interested in what students think and feel; we know this because students are part of all interview processes and have highly perceptive qualities which never fail to amaze us as adults!

One comment we received from a Year 8 student said:

*“I’ve never been on a student panel until I started at this school. I also didn’t think I’d be representing Trust students in this way. It’s an important job I’ve been given and I’ve learned a lot from doing it.”*

I think that sums it up really! Shared experiences and collaborative learning – the same goes for our approaches with staff.

### **What else do Trusts do to help children learn better?**

I believe it is vital that our staff continue learning too and taking care of yourself is part of bringing your best to the job each day. Our Trust INSET Day last year, a bi-annual event, focussed on **WELLBEING: how to take steps to look after yourself (fit your own oxygen mask first!)**. The day kicked off with keynote speaker, Mark Wright former footballer (but also TV personality and presenter!) talking about his education and his wellbeing regime plus his own fitness brand “Train Wright”.



Workshops were led by professionals such as those from Manchester Mind and covered topics including improving sleep, dealing with anxiety or stress and building healthy futures.

Of course, all of the learning that day was later cascaded down to our young people! Your child may have had direct support with some or all of those issues in the past 12 months, based on new staff learning.

### **What does being in a Trust mean for Parents/Carers over and above this? Why might we choose to send our child to an Academy rather than a maintained school?**

The Trust may be made up of different schools in different areas, however we view ourselves as one team and we mutually support each other for the benefit of students. Trusts are all different sizes and shapes; I feel our ethos and what we believe most strongly is summed up on our website and in the images of our children and staff. Even though our schools are different, we all believe in the same vision and values and that's what drives us to do what we do for those we serve.

As taxpayers, you can be assured that we ensure best value for the public purse without 'short-changing' our students. We believe we can do this more efficiently as a Trust rather than as standalone schools, and with more impact. Trusts are held to account by the Department for Education and Ofsted.

I will continue to update you via newsletters over the academic year and look forward to seeing you at future school events! Please take a look at our Trust website; the address can be found at the bottom of the page, and if you have any other questions about our Trust please contact us via the website.

Thank you for entrusting your child's education to us.

Kim Earle  
*Chief Executive Officer*

## Good News Stories!

### Reddish Vale High School

#### Student Success

**The students below have been nominated for the **Stockport Youth Awards** this year!**

Ruby L played the lead role in "Beauty and the Beast" and was absolutely amazing! Her willingness to learn, practise and improve was exemplary and her final performances were full of drama, expression and warmth. She is also an integral part of our school vocal groups, has performed solos in concerts and has now formed her own rock band. And this is all in year 8! Ruby is able to sing in many different styles and she is the perfect role model for all students at Reddish Vale High School.

Poppy D, who won the Trust Award last year, has a fantastic voice and also plays piano and ukulele. She has played lead roles in the school musicals "Matilda", "Beauty and the Beast" and "Shrek" during her time at RVHS. She has sung as a soloist in many concerts and is an integral part of our school vocal group. Her songwriting skills are excellent. She is a fantastic role model to all our students.

Rico O'N is currently an U14 footballer at Blackburn Rovers and recently was called up for England U15 squad at St George's Park. Rico has shown not only exceptional ability as a footballer but also resilience from setbacks. Rico was initially signed for Blackburn U9s and played until U11s but was then not offered a contract extension. However, this did not stop Rico's determination and following time at Man City and Man Utd development squads, he was offered a contract for Blackburn Rovers at Under 13s and subsequently also played for Blackburn's older year groups too! Academy football is extremely competitive and also time consuming through travel and training on top of full-time education. Rico's efforts are testament to his determination and ability.



## Staff Success

Deputy Headteacher, Mr Platt, has recently been awarded the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). This qualification recognises Mr Platt's commitment to school leadership and his own professional learning. Successfully passing this qualification did not come as a surprise to colleagues as Mr Platt is an excellent school leader with a proven track record for raising school standards, going above and beyond what is asked of him and all with a positive attitude. A real team player. Well done Mr Platt!



## Altrincham College

### Student Success

Y12 student Billy C, has secured an apprenticeship with **The Times** newspaper starting this week! Billy has been involved in school newsletters, ACTV channel and many other initiatives during his time at Altrincham College so this seems like a natural progression for him! Billy said he wasn't sure he stood a chance on interview as he was the youngest applicant shortlisted, but he tried to put that aside and just give his best on the day. That obviously worked, as Billy beat off all opposition (everyone else was a graduate with a degree) to be offered this amazing opportunity.

Everyone is very proud of all he has achieved and as he moves to London immediately, we wish him every success in the future!



This year, Altrincham College is proud to support the **National Year of Reading**, a nationwide initiative that highlights the importance of reading as a lifelong skill and a source of enjoyment, learning, and wellbeing. Reading really matters!



### **What We're Doing at School**

Throughout the year, students will be involved in a range of reading-focused activities, including:

- Teacher led reading during Form Times
- Library lessons, reading challenges, and themed events, such as the Trafford Young Readers programme
- Increased access to diverse and engaging texts through our learning Resources centres, based in main school and Sixth Form
- Opportunities for students to explore reading connected to their interests, cultures, and future pathways through reading
- The introduction of Sparx reader -Sparx Reader helps students build strong reading habits by encouraging regular reading and improving comprehension through personalised quizzes. We encourage all students to read consistently and engage with Sparx Reader each week.

### **How Families Can Support Reading at Home**

Parents and carers play a vital role in encouraging positive reading habits. You can support your child by:

- Encouraging regular reading at home, even for short periods
- Talking with them about what they are reading and why they enjoy it
- Valuing all types of reading, including novels, non-fiction, graphic novels, magazines, and digital texts
- Modelling reading for pleasure in everyday life
- Sparx Reader motivates students to read regularly and develop strong comprehension skills. Parents can support by encouraging consistent reading at home and discussing books their child is enjoying.