

## CONNECTING WITH CENTRAL OFFICE



Dear colleagues

Firstly, thank you for your continued commitment to our pupils this half-term. I have visited all of our schools over the last two weeks and have seen many examples of staff upholding our values of excellence and dedication. Thank you.

I am particularly encouraged, during my visits to lessons, to see an increasing number of teachers having the confidence to 'teach' their subjects. It is great to see colleagues, as a result of our 'Teaching for Excellence' training, sharing their knowledge through well planned explanations. This is so much more effective than teachers trying to 'tease' information out of pupils.

Our pupils have also been benefitting from the wide range of curriculum opportunities that many of you are providing. The inter-academy sporting events (FMAT games) are being attended by an increasing amount of our pupils. As a result, many pupils are now taking part, competitively, in sports that are new to them. On behalf of our pupils, I'd like to thank all of our colleagues who are making this possible.

The number of colleagues working together across the Trust has continued to grow this term. Meetings between SENCOs, curriculum leaders and lead practitioners are a just a few examples of this. To find out more about our inter-

academy work please follow us @Fairfax\_MAT

I am pleased to advise that the catering provision at Smith's Wood and Erdington has been improved. As a result of the partnership with Aspens, our pupils and staff are now benefitting from improved facilities and provision. The long awaited (and much needed) improvements to the facilities at Bournville will be taking place over half-term.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a relaxing half-term break.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

In order to improve our communication links and promote our Academies and the Trust as a whole, we would like to encourage all of our employees, Directors, Associates and parents to follow our social media sites. Links to social media can be found on our new websites.

Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust - <http://www.fmat.co.uk> - Twitter, Facebook and Instagram

Fairfax - <http://www.fairfax.bham.sch.uk/> - Twitter and Facebook

Bournville School - <http://www.bournvilleschool.org/> - Twitter

Bournville Primary Provision - <http://www.bournvilleprimaryprovision.org/> - Twitter

Erdington Academy - <http://www.erdingtonacademy.bham.sch.uk/> - Twitter and Facebook

Smith's Wood Academy - <http://www.smithswood.co.uk/> - Twitter

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# CONNECTING WITH FAIRFAX

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE

### ANNUAL CELEBRATION EVENING

It was a real pleasure to attend our recent annual Celebration Evening and to see so many of our students picking up awards in recognition of their commitment and achievement.

The evening's awards were punctuated with the winning and runner-up performances from our Eisteddfod. The performers brought a real energy to the evening and I enjoyed the acts tremendously. Our students that took part in the Schools Shakespeare Festival also presented a ten minute excerpt from the "Comedy of Errors" which showcased the students' talents for responding to challenging text.

Our guest speaker was Richard Metcalfe, the third Headteacher of Fairfax (I am the sixth) who ran the school from 1991 to 2005. His address to the students was a thought provoking and an enjoyable insight into his time at Fairfax and how the traditions of the school remained. The traditional values we hold at Fairfax remain at the heart of everything we do. Celebration Evening, originally known as Speech Day, is another example of how we believe in maintaining our ethos and values.

As a school leader, it is important to know when change is necessary, but I believe it is just as important to know when to stay true to traditions. We are proud of our traditional values at Fairfax, and we are very proud of those students that uphold them.

### MRS D BUNN | HEAD OF FAIRFAX ACADEMY



I would like to say huge congratulations to Jamie Marriott, Alex Owen, Jake Turner and Sam Williams, Year 11 students who currently have 100% since they joined the school back in Year 7. This is a massive achievement, well done lads!

### ATTENDANCE

Most schools' pastoral teams are seen as the 'key stone' to ensuring effective relationships are built between school staff, families and outside agencies. At Fairfax, these relationships are vital to ensure that the academy's attendance figure remains at a high percentage each year.

Over the past three years, new initiatives have been introduced to encourage students to gain an end of year attendance figure of 95% or more. The Attendance Officer, alongside the pastoral team and colleagues from CSAWS work tirelessly to ensure student attendance remains high.

With meetings and phone calls, Heads of Years offer support and guidance to parents when their child falls below 94% (95% for PP students). If attendance then falls below 92%, the Attendance Officer will send a supporting letter to the parents prior to CSAWS getting involved or the start of Spotlight procedures taking place.

In recent months, we have introduced a 'PP nudge letter', which has led to pleasing outcomes. Personalised letters are sent out to parents/carers of PP students comparing their child's attendance to that of their child's year group. Key details are displayed in a graph ensuring that all parents/carers are able to access the information clearly.

Another effective strategy that is in place is the four tiered U code invention process. Students that receive a U code will automatically reduce their attendance percentage. The process allows for monitoring and intervention to take place from various members of staff, including Heads of Years through to Fairfax Academy Associates.

Whilst recognising the importance of support to families, we strongly believe in rewarding those who have achieved outstanding attendance and improved attendance. Each term, letters are sent home to those students who have achieved 100% attendance for that term. Students receive reward points that can be added to their 'My Stickers' account which allows them to move up the milestone rewards ladder.

The dedicated approach of the academy's attendance and pastoral teams ensure that students have high attendance levels, thus allowing every student the opportunity to succeed and strive whilst attending Fairfax.

Well done and thank you to the attendance and pastoral teams for all of your hard work.

# CONNECTING WITH ERDINGTON

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE

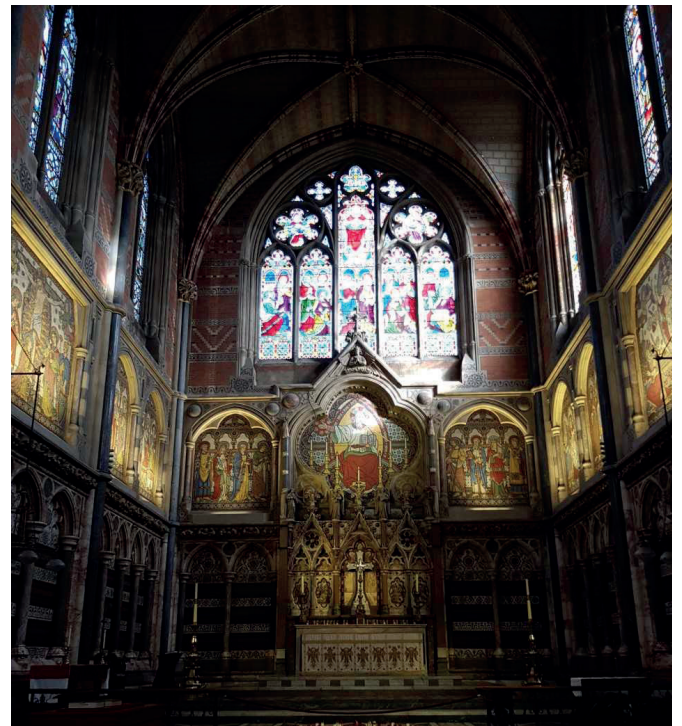
### AMBITION

Ambition is one of our key values and some of the activities at Erdington last week certainly reflected that. Attached is Mrs Smyth's report of the trip to Oxford University. I met with the students myself the morning after they returned and they were incredibly enthusiastic about Oxford and University in general. We know that students from disadvantaged backgrounds with grades equal to or better than their non-disadvantaged colleagues will often not even apply to university let alone Russell Group universities or Oxford and Cambridge. So any strategies that encourage applications can only be a good thing. I look forward to many of these high achieving Year 10 students joining Fairfax Sixth Form in the future.

Ambition does not just relate to university admissions, at Year 8 Options evening last week we launched a new opportunity to study a Pre-Apprenticeship through our links with Jaguar Land Rover and the EEF Technology hub. Students who select the Pre-Apprenticeship as part of their curriculum offer will get a unique opportunity to gain a Level 2 First Diploma in Engineering Technology and gain some valuable hands on work experience and coaching at Jaguar Landover castle Bromwich.

Another trip last week at Erdington was to Symphony Hall. All students in year 7 were given the opportunity to extend their 'cultural knowledge' by seeing a classical music concert entitled 'A Brief History of Music' at the world famous Birmingham Symphony Hall. Schools from across the region attended the concert which was specially produced for Key Stage 3 students. The City of Birmingham Orchestra played classical music spanning different musical styles and composers over time. The students learnt about composers including Beethoven, Vivaldi, Stravinsky, Brahms and more recent modern composers. One of the pieces was interactive and students were given the opportunity to perform body percussion. Students not only learnt about different musical periods and composers, but also the variety of musical instruments that create different sounds and emotions when played in solo or as part of a larger orchestra. Student voice has been positive and many students now have an appreciation for classical music and would like to visit the Symphony Hall again.

**MR M RHATIGAN | HEAD OF ERDINGTON ACADEMY**





# CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

## HEAD OF ACADEMY UPDATE

Following a full review of teaching and learning we introduced the new trust-wide Teaching for Excellence strategy here at Bournville. Assistant Headteacher, Charlotte Cross spent some time at Smith's Wood looking at the model in action and then, with the support of Chris Stevens, trained key teachers as 'TfE Ambassadors'. A great deal has happened since then! All staff have observed the ambassadors teach and spent time discussing effective practice. Staff CPD has included ambassadors demonstrating effective modelling and deliberate practice in practical sessions in subjects as diverse as art, English, maths and even drumming in a music lesson!

Recent formal observations indicate that far more colleagues are meeting our expectations and some of the teaching observed has been exceptional. Many staff have also commented positively on the benefits of watching the Ambassadors teach;

'I just wanted to say a big thank you for allowing me to observe your lesson yesterday. It was fantastic to see all

the students fully engaged, and making lots of progress, as well as your excellent delivery of the 'teaching for excellence cycle'. It was really clear for me to see each stage during the lesson.'

'Thank you for taking the time to allow me to observe your lesson today. It was excellent, and gave me some tips to improve my own teaching; I was particularly impressed at little things like the wait time you gave students – small things I could do more often to make my lessons more effective.'

Feedback from students has also been positive, many have stated that they now feel 'more knowledgeable' and are able to access the more challenging aspects of the work.

We look forward to continuing to use this model and to seeing the positive outcomes it will have on student achievement in the summer and the longer term.

**MRS J COTTLE | HEAD OF BOURNVILLE ACADEMY**

**MRS C CROSS | ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER, TEACHING AND LEARNING**

# CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE PRIMARY PROVISION

## MATHEMATICS FOCUS

We have had a really exciting start to the spring term in Bournville Primary Provision with maths being a key focus for us this half term.

Shane Walsh, a maths consultant from Birmingham City University, has been working with us to further develop the teaching and learning of maths across the primary phase. Staff have worked alongside Shane to consider best practice in modelling mathematical concepts and developing the reasoning and problem solving skills of the children.

It was fantastic to see the year one children using mathematical language confidently to prove their theory about a maths problem last week. The children's level of engagement was outstanding and they were keen to share their ideas and explain their reasoning to peers and staff alike.

Shane has introduced some innovative coaching techniques in which staff get to plan together and then watch each other teach the same lesson. This has been a powerful tool with staff learning from each part of the

process. Feedback from staff has been very positive and we look forward to continuing our partnership with Shane throughout the term.

EYFS staff hosted a parental workshop, with a focus on maths, which was well attended during which Miss Kelly and Ms Smyth shared a variety of interesting and fun ways to support maths learning at home with their children. Both parents and children enjoyed the workshop immensely and parents left the workshop with lots of ideas that they were keen to try at home!

**MRS N WARBURTON**



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# CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

## FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

As part of the 'Girls Football' initiative organised by the University of Birmingham, a team of students in Year 7 and 8 from Bournville School took part in a Girls Football Festival on Thursday 15th February. The event took place on the 3G pitches at the University and involved eight schools from the local area.

Bournville took four year 7 students; and five year 8 students, who participated in 7 minute matches against schools in a round robin format. The team had a 1-1 draw with the University of Birmingham School (with Ellie Forde scoring the goal), and two goalless draws against Shelfield School and Moseley School. Despite not getting through to the knockout stages, there was some excellent play, including fantastic saves by Shayla-Moore Samuda as the goal keeper!

Each team had two coach-mentors (female players from the Women's Football teams at the University); who ensured the girls had warmed up, practiced their skills before the games started; as well as organising some mini penalty shoot-outs!

The Year 7 students involved were Ellie Forde; Phoebe Millward, Shayla-Moore Samuda and Ivona Coseru. The Year 8 students involved were Millie Moore; Armani May; Faye Barry and Jade Williams.

The girls represented Bournville with an excellent attitude and tried 100% throughout the tournament, despite it being exceptionally cold! Thank you to Sofia's Dad for coming along to support.

The football club for Year 7-9 girls will continue on a Tuesday after half term in the Girls Gym; organised by two of the Coach-Mentors from the University of Birmingham. This session will take place between 3.00-4.00pm. For more information, please see Miss Hughes in the PE Department.

**MISS K HUGHES | SUBJECT LEADER FOR PE**





# CONNECTING WITH BOURNVILLE

## FMAT TABLE TENNIS GAMES

Bournville School hosted the FMAT Table Tennis Games on Monday 5th February 2018. This competition was part of a series of different events taking place throughout the academic year, involving the four schools within the Trust. On this occasion, the schools involved were Bournville and Erdington Academy.

The overall table tennis competition was split up into six different team events; with up to four representatives from each team. The students played against all team members from the opposing school.

## RESULTS:

### YEAR 7-9 GIRLS:

#### 1st place: Bournville

Ella Kinrade, Frances Collins, D'Arcy Simpson, and Viktoria Spinerova.

#### 2nd place: Erdington

Amber Sheppard, Elisha Rai-Walcott, Shannon O'Connor and Ladajah Wilson.

### YEAR 10-11 GIRLS:

#### 1st place: Bournville

Hannah Murray, Hannah Tolley, Sophie Field and Anoosha Abdoli.

#### 2nd place: Erdington

Molly Page, Ebony Black, Surrayah Smith, Maariyah Sajid and Maryam Zahid.

### YEAR 7 & 8 BOYS:

#### 1st place: Erdington

Abdur Rehman Hayat, Abdirauf Mohammed, Hamza Mahmood and Jaikul Khan.

#### 2nd place: Bournville

Tajay McKoy, Ashar Shamsi, Kieran Coughlan and Oliver Moore.

### YEAR 9 BOYS:

#### 1st place: Bournville

Corey McMullan, Arman Ayubi, Amaan Mahmood and Daniel Wallach.

#### 2nd place: Erdington

Tajay Perry, Michael Odeniyi, Josh Morrison and Zack Rutherford-Hyman.

### YEAR 10 BOYS:

#### 1st place: Erdington

Mohammed Abdullah, Mame Libasse and Zahid Miah.

#### 2nd place: Bournville A

Anton Liburd, Harvey Jevons and Taku Mapiye.

#### 3rd place: Bournville B

David Bickley-Parton, George McGinty and Harry Yao.

### YEAR 11 BOYS:

#### 1st place: Bournville

Saul Greenburgh, Vasileios Charalampos, Huzaifa Asif and Denis Kiurdzhiev.

#### 2nd place: Erdington

Ali Noshahi, Kacper Swialek and Fauzu Ibrahim.

### The following students remained unbeaten throughout the competition:

Saul, Vasileios, Corey, Arman, Amaan, Daniel, David, Harvey, Hannah M, Ella and Abdur.

Well done to all students including several players from both schools who were involved in their first competitive fixture for their respective school. Certain players from Erdington also moved up to a higher age category, and were not fazed by the increased challenge. Each player was given a participation certificate, and the teams in 1st and 2nd place were awarded a team trophy.

Thank you the PE staff at Bournville for helping to organise the events, and the Erdington PE staff for bringing the players over to Bournville. A special thank you to Mr Walker for taking lots of photos!

**MISS K HUGHES | SUBJECT LEADER FOR PE**



# FMAT GAMES - TABLE TENNIS





# CONNECTING WITH SMITHS WOOD

## THE SMITH'S WOOD WAY

**Creating a culture where teachers can teach and pupils can learn**

**First time, every time**

**At Smith's Wood we remember our STEPS**

**We SLANT to show respect in the school environment**

**Golden moments of silence**

These are some of our simple messages on which success is built.

The words above are the fabric of Smith's Wood as we know it today. These words can be heard on every corridor and in every classroom and in our conversations with the children and their parents. The productive learning environment that we have worked so hard to achieve over the last year is as a result of every member of staff believing in the words above and giving their all to ensure that they live and breathe our philosophy of behaviour management.

Our policy of behaviour management is firm and non-negotiable; it is clear and we make sure that it is adhered to, without exception. Through our policy we are able to demonstrate our 'tough love' approach. To be clear, our no-excuses ethos to discipline does not, in any way, preclude caring about our children. We care very much. For us, tough love is about expecting high standards and not accepting excuses, defiance or rudeness. Tough love is also about noticing when children need additional support to achieve these high standards and doing our utmost to resource this support. We are clear that we must never lose sight of the child. Managing behaviour for us is not all about rules and routines; it's also about investing in the person – this is the Smith's Wood Way.

I would like to share with you this term just a snapshot of the incredible work of the Behaviour Support Team in supporting some of our young people in managing their behaviour through bespoke positive mentoring programmes.

'Box Clever' is a 6-week behaviour and mentoring programme. This unique boxing programme is a motivating, inspiring, satellite boxing program for both boys and girls, led by former World and British Boxing Champion Wayne Elcock and his team of coaches. Students are learning the noble art of Boxing as they punch (non –contact!) their way to a much fitter, healthier and positive lifestyle.



Box Clever is providing an opportunity for 16 students to receive a highly positive school experience to help them break

down barriers in their attitudes to learning at Smith's Wood Academy. This level of disciplined physical activity is having motivational impact on the children, increasing their self-esteem and general well-being. We are noticing improvements in social skills, concentration levels and self-discipline. A key learning point from this programme is that the young people begin to think carefully about the impact their actions have on those around them.

The Academy is also supporting a number of Year 7 students in developing the skills and values that are so crucial to a successful academic life. As an Academy we are fortunate enough to have our own climbing wall and we employ an Outdoor Adventurous Activity Instructor, Mr. Cushen. Mr. Cushen, working alongside the Behaviour Support Team, has developed a tailored rock-climbing course; the children are beginning to explore, through the development of climbing techniques, the reasons that the young people, at times, make poor behaviour choices. The team also develop strategies



to enable students to self-regulate their behaviour in the classroom. In fact, this programme is so successful that it has been rolled out to some of our partner primary schools; a great introduction for them to the "Smith's Wood Way".

In addition to these group sessions the team continue to support individual students on a one to one basis. Therapeutic work covered this academic year has included: art therapy, relaxation techniques, solution focused therapies, cognitive behaviour strategies, anger management, self-esteem work, conflict resolution, peer pressure and friendship issues, bullying and healthy relationships. A significant amount of small group work focusing on social skills, positive behaviour, consequential thinking, self-esteem and anger management has also been well received by students.

This is how we do things at Smith's Wood.

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# CONNECTING WITH SMITHS WOOD

## THE SMITH'S WOOD WAY

Since September Smith's Wood Academy have been working hard to integrate reading into the everyday lives of students. Acknowledging that reading is the foundation for all learning, we want to support all students to develop both an imaginative and critical view of the world in which they live, through reading. To engage with this vision a number of new measures have been launched.



Continuing with our two-year success with the Accelerated Reader Programme, we have developed it a step further this year enrolling all pupils from Years 7-9. This programme is reinforced every morning in tutor time through the display of a PowerPoint slide highlighting the top point scores and tutor group rankings. This slide also

includes key information for pupils to access their quizzes and reading progress at home. Following a review cycle pattern, all students have three weeks to read a book and complete a quiz, allowing us to monitor each child and a year group's progress manageably. With the support of Tutors, engagement in quizzes continues to grow and library book loans have increased exponentially this year.

To maintain the momentum created by AR we have recently launched a reading challenge to inspire more pupils to find books they enjoy. The Recommend a Read challenge encourages pupils to write a short review of their favourite book and recommend it to others. Through the Academy Twitter page we have been Tweeting these reviews in an aim to 'infiltrate twitter with reading'. These have been very successful and have allowed us to engage with authors and other educationalists outside of the Smith's Wood community; a very exciting prospect for students. For example, a Year 9's review of "Nought and Crosses" was liked and retweeted by the author, Malorie Blackman.

In addition to our whole school approach, we have launched two intervention groups to further our work on reading. Firstly, a pupil-parent reading group. The proposal was to create, facilitate and support parents and pupils through a reading group, which acts as intervention for those students significantly below their reading age. Launched in November, we were very pleased to welcome 10 parents and pupils to our library and discuss how

we could improve their child's reading age and ability. Following this initial success another meeting has been scheduled for the end of January with a session focusing on reading for meaning: how to ask questions that will help your child explore what they are reading.

Secondly, to stretch and challenge those going above and beyond their reading age, a pupil-led book club was created for Year 9s. Currently reading the challenging and thought-provoking, "The Book Thief", they meet bi-weekly and have so far discussed amongst other things, the difficulties of living in Nazi Germany and the relationship between education and power.

Inspired by the success and motivation of our pupils to engage in all the reading programmes designed for them, Smith's Wood Academy is committed to ensuring that all pupils are able to become competent and confident readers.

**Emily Meachin | English Teacher & Accelerated Reader Co-ordinator**

