



YCAT SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Issue 13  July 2024

CEO Update *Jo Robinson*

Dear Colleagues,

As we approach the end of term and I reflect on my visits to our family of schools throughout the year and my many conversations with children, colleagues and governors, one thing particularly stands out - the huge commitment shown by everyone to make a difference to children’s lives. On behalf of our children a special thank you to all school staff and governors for your incredible hard work throughout the year; it is greatly appreciated.

This year we have benefitted from extra DFE capacity funding; this has enabled us to provide schools with additional expert support for SEND provision. This funding has also supported our very successful RAWW project.

I am very proud of the end-of-year outcomes in national assessments that our pupils have achieved, and which are testament to the highly effective teaching and learning provided across our schools. These have resulted in very strong trust averages that are well above national averages.

Assessment	Subject	Trust Average	National Average
Year 6 SATS	Reading	88%	74%
	GPS	84%	72%
	Maths	82%	73%
	Writing	85%	72%
	RWM combined	74%	61%
Year 1	Phonics	88%	79% (2023)

The trust’s new curriculum toolkit is now available for all our schools and provides planning and assessment materials for all subjects that are aligned and connected across the whole curriculum.

I am really pleased to welcome Threshfield Primary to our family of schools and know we all look forward to working with the staff team further next academic year. Finally, once again thank you for all your support and I hope everyone has a great summer break and I look forward to seeing you all next term.

With very best wishes

Jo

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Chair of Trustees' Update

Jenny Baynes

Dear Governors, headteachers, schools' staff and the central team,

I am very proud of how our family of schools continues to strive to provide all our children with the very best education, including children's personal development and wellbeing. We have further improved CPD and support for staff in our schools, including specialist networks for teachers and teaching assistants' CPD. This year the trust prioritised the need for extra support for SEND pupils with the appointment of an expert SEND adviser.

At the start of the year our school's catering contracts became more expensive and did not always provide a consistent quality of food and meal choices for our children. The trust's central team and school staff worked tirelessly to develop our in-house catering provision. The new arrangements have bedded in well and are providing our families with improved, consistent quality and value for money.

As a trust we continue to focus on maintaining our school buildings and this year we have had successful bids from the DFE Conditions Fund to carry out capital improvement projects in three of our YCAT schools. Our Schools' total capital funded projects for the last three years have amounted to over £1,300,000.

During this year our trust has continued to grow, and I am pleased to warmly welcome Threshfield Primary School to our YCAT family. The new schools bring new skills and experiences that will further benefit our trust.

On behalf of the trustees, I would like to thank governors, headteachers, leaders, administrators, teachers, teaching assistants, support staff, and the trust's central team for their sterling work on behalf of our schools.

Best wishes
Jenny

YCAT's KEY AREAS FOR FOCUS 2024/2025

- Continue to provide additional expert support for SEND to our schools.
- Continue to improve internet connections and maximise the benefits of technology for the benefit of administration and children's learning.
- Further develop our schools' specialist leaders and strategically share their expertise across the trust in further collaborative projects.
- Further support the implementation of strong learning practice identified in the OFSTED English Review March 2024.
- Review the trust's Estates Manager role and identify ways to further improve provision for our schools.
- Provide a trust curriculum toolkit for all schools.
- Provide a trust "Primary Curriculum Quality Mark" to verify and celebrate our schools' well-connected and effective curriculum for all subjects.

"Our family of schools continues to strive to provide all our children with the very best education"

'Working and learning together to improve children's lives'

OTHER NEWS

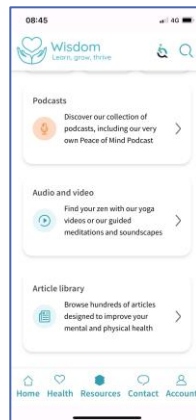
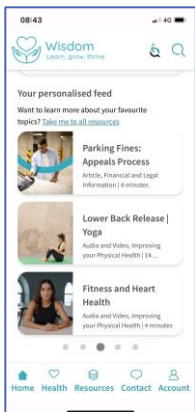


YCAT Year 6 Writing Moderation

In June colleagues from across the trust gathered to moderate their Year 6 writing. It was a really productive session where colleagues worked collaboratively to moderate judgements against the writing assessment criteria reviewing pieces of work from each school assessed as working towards, expected and greater depth. Staff also noted the increased expectations about dialogue, and it was pleasing to see this reflected in the pupils' work. It's important for all teachers to be aware of this to ensure all children develop their ability to write effective dialogue as they progress through school.

Health and wellbeing support

All YCAT staff have access to the Health Assured Employee Assistance Programme. Accessed via the Wisdom app, this can provide you with confidential support on a range of medical and personal issues. Just download the Wisdom app to your phone and log in using our employer registration code: **MHA000258**.



School Awards and Achievements

Last month, children from **Lothersdale School** attended the Global Learning Awards in Leeds and were commended for their hard work hosting Fairtrade Coffee Mornings.



Several other YCAT schools have received accreditation and recognition for their efforts in many different areas.

Bradleys Both school has achieved the School Games Gold Award, and

Bilton Grange school has been awarded the Primary Science Quality Mark, the Youth Sport Trust Silver Quality Mark and the Walk to School Gold Award.

Huge congratulations to all the children and staff for these achievements.

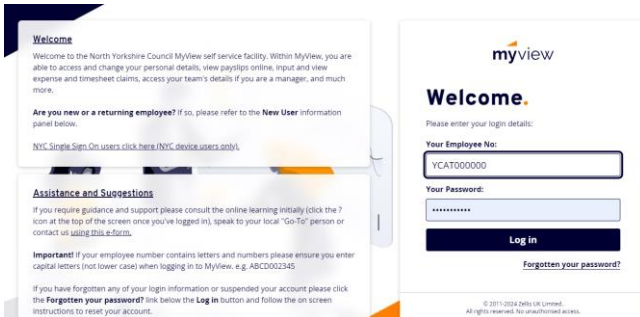


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OTHER NEWS

My View

Don't forget that you can find lots of interesting and useful information about your role, salary, tax and pension on [My View](#). It is really important to check your pay slips each month to identify any issues quickly. When you log in you can reset your password if you have forgotten it – bear in mind the email your temporary password will be sent to will probably be a personal email you submitted, not your YCAT email.



April Staff Training Day

The April staff training day provided the perfect opportunity for staff across the trust to come together for our first face-to-face YCAT training day since Covid. It was a really positive day and staff feedback was invaluable in terms of planning future CPD opportunities. The trust has already responded to this and was pleased to be able to provide a CPD session for all support staff on Monday 8th July on Attachment and supporting pupils who have suffered trauma – thank you to all those who were able to attend.



ESTATES NEWS

For 2024-5, YCAT submitted a total of 9 CIF (Condition Improvement Fund) bids to the ESFA and 3 were successful. These three projects amount to more than £600,000 and represent 4% of all CIF projects across the country. The projects (which will be completed during the summer) comprise:

- Hawes School - Urgent Safeguarding Works
- Bradleys Both School - Urgent Fire Safety Works
- Darley School - Urgent Asbestos Removal

Last term, the YCAT central team with support from Tenets Procurement Consultancy conducted a procurement exercise to identify a project management organisation to oversee YCAT CIF projects. Schools can apply for CIF funding to address issues with poor building conditions, compliance, energy efficiency or health and safety, and for approx. 7 years Eddisons have managed the projects on our behalf. Following a rigorous process, Atkins Realis were appointed as our CIF project managers. Eddisons will see current CIF projects through to completion in the summer.



Neil Mallinson,
YCAT Estates
Manager

We would like to say thank you and good luck to Ian Moore, who is moving on from YCAT at the end of term. Our new Estates and Premises Manager Neil Mallinson will take up the post in September. Neil is a very experienced plumbing and heating engineer, rugby coach and former volunteer firefighter. Neil will be visiting schools in the autumn term to introduce himself and begin to get to know the school sites and their needs.

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YCAT and HART Professional Development

Primary Curriculum Toolkit

We are pleased to announce that Askwith School have created a toolkit for primary schools. Many schools have benefitted over the years from Askwith sharing their curriculum resources and this toolkit will provide their latest full programmes for all subjects. The toolkit includes:

- School curriculum statement including learning culture
- School curriculum documents:
 - Rationales for each subject
 - Progression documents for each subject showing the buildup of knowledge from EYFS to Y6
 - EYFS progression documents showing the buildup of knowledge from pre-nursery to the end of Reception for the prime and specific areas of learning
 - Year group long term plans
 - Essential knowledge documents in small steps for all subjects (medium term plans)
 - Examples of daily planning for each subject

This is an amazing achievement and will be such an essential resource for many schools.

Primary Curriculum Quality Mark (PCQM)

Another very exciting development from the YCAT/HART team is the soon-to-be-launched Primary Curriculum Quality Mark scheme. This award will enable schools to celebrate the commendable quality of their school's well-connected, ambitious curriculum that ensures pupils consistently remember and develop fluency in the intended curriculum for all subjects and age groups and personal development. The PCQM will also identify areas for further improvement. The quality mark will provide external validation of a strong primary curriculum, and, on accreditation, schools will receive the PCQM Quality Mark logo that can be displayed on their documentation and website.



An online portal for participating schools will provide a wide range of programme support including CPD, videos and leadership materials to support the development of a strong and coherent curriculum.

The programme will be in three stages:

- Each stage will provide a CPD session linked to the materials on the PCQM portal
- The PCQM award will recognise the special features and ethos that the school's curriculum is built on
- The PCQM award will also include a final moderation visit
- The PCQM is awarded for a period of 2 years and can be renewed at the end of this period

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YCAT and HART Professional Development

Dates for the diary

Curriculum Toolkit Introduction	16 th July 2024	4.00 to 5.00pm
HART members meeting	24 th September 2024	9.30 to 11.00am
Primary Curriculum Quality Mark Introduction	25 th September 2024	3:45 to 4:45pm
Review your school's reading considering the Ofsted English Review	1 st October 2024	3:45 to 4:45pm
Governors' Update	3 rd October 2024	6.30 to 7.30pm
Review your school's writing considering the Ofsted English Review	14 th October 2024	3:45 to 4:45pm
Improving your impact as a subject leader	22 nd October 2024	3:45 to 4:45pm
The implications of the OFSTED English Review on the role of TAs	23 rd October 2024	2.00 to 3.00pm
How to review your Early Years curriculum	6 th November 2024	3:45 to 4:45pm
Teaching assistants termly network meeting	6 th November 2024	2.15 to 3.00pm
HART members meeting	7 th November 2024	1.30 to 3.00pm
Supporting headteacher wellbeing	15 th November 2024	3:45 to 4:45pm
Developing and supporting pupils' learning behaviour and independence	19 th November 2024	3:45 to 4:45pm
SEND update for leaders and teachers who are not SENCOS	27 th November 2024	3:45 to 4:45pm
HART members meeting	9 th January 2025	9.30 to 11.00am
Aspiring leaders	20 th January 2025	3:45 to 4:45pm
Pedagogy and assessment for TAs	28 th January 2025	2.00 to 3.00pm
Review your school's oracy considering the Ofsted English Review	3 rd February 2025	3:45 to 4:45pm
Teaching assistants termly network meeting	26 th February 2025	2.15 to 3.00pm
HART members meeting	6 th March 2025	1.30 to 3.00pm
Teaching assistants termly network meeting	7 th May 2025	2.15 to 3.00pm
HART members meeting	22 nd May 2025	9.30 to 11.00am

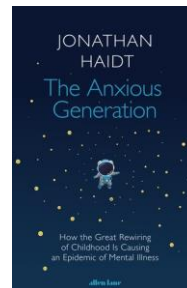
For full information, including booking links, please see this term's [HART Summer Update](#)

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RESEARCH UPDATE

The anxious generation: How the great rewriting of childhood is causing an epidemic of mental illness

By Jonathan Haidt



In recent weeks the latest book by research psychologist Jonathan Haidt has created controversy in the educational world. Haidt provides a wide range of research that shows smart phones and social media have increased children and young adults' anxiety. He considers the growing belief that children are not safe outdoors on their own, and the result that children spend lots of time at home on their smart phone, even though this is unregulated and more dangerous for children than walking home from school on their own. Haidt maintains that this trend has increasingly isolated children in an artificial and dangerous world of social media. Most apps are built on addictive behavioural psychology, (for example continually picking your phone up to see if you have received more likes) plus children and young adults communicate by text and many prefer not to communicate directly with others.

The media response has mainly focused on Haidt's proposal to ban smart phones in schools, but there are other aspects in this work to look at when considering children's anxiety and wellbeing.

What does the book suggest should change?

- Smart phones are safely stored away at school to prevent distraction and boost opportunities for students to socialise with others. It is important to encourage children to communicate directly with each other rather than spending too much time on online games.
- Upper KS2 and above pupils, when possible, should be encouraged to walk to school and nearby shops on their own or with friends.
- Encourage children to play outdoors with other children making up games that are not supervised by adults, so they converse more and learn how to resolve disagreements.
- Play that involves taking risks eg skateboarding is a valuable part of children's development and teaches them to assess risk; schools using OPAL play will be aware of the risk-benefit principle.

Should our curriculum for personal development focus more on:

- Reducing anxiety by encouraging pupils to communicate directly with each other in real activities and learn how to resolve differences of opinion.
- Encouraging children to take risks at the right level to learn how to manage risk. The author refers to overzealous "Safetyism" that is preventing children from learning how to assess risks and increases their anxiety.

The author's findings have links with the research on the benefits of outdoor learning. Many schools are focusing more on outdoor learning for all age groups and identifying which specific curriculum areas would be best taught outdoors.

BOOK CLUB

Award winning author Katya Balen's book *October, October* was recommended two years ago, and this review recommends two more of her books. She is a wonderful writer who explores changing family relationships in the world we live in today. Her books are written with honesty, humour and are heartwarming. Two books are recommended:



Nightjar is a short story in 14 chapters and will last approximately one hour. It is suitable for eight years and above. The story revolves around the relationship between a father and son.



The Light in Everything is a story about two families - one with a boy, one with a girl - moving in together. Both children are in year 6 and one has experienced trauma. The chapters are narrated alternatively by each child, which is an effective tool for sharing their different thoughts and feelings. This is a powerful story that is 5 hours long.

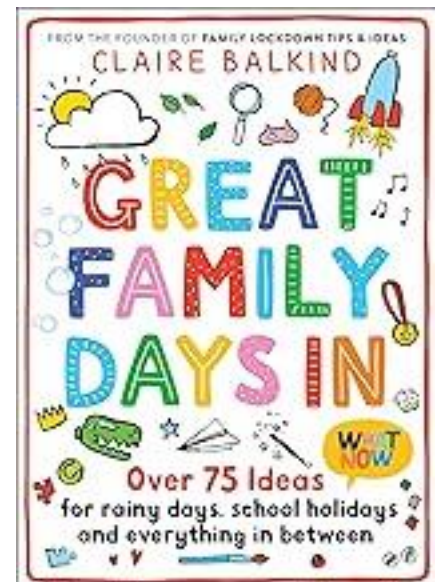
Review from Books for Keeps: 'This story is full of hurt, anger and frustration for all the apparent quiet of its setting. Written for dyslexia specialists Barrington Stoke, the text is perfectly simple in terms of sentence structure and composition, even while acknowledging the shadowy contradictions of relationships. For those who don't yet need to think about the complexities of love and life, this is also a superb animal story, in which a boy saves a wild creature and thereby heals himself.'

Review from the Book Trust: 'This quiet, powerful book looks at the complexities and challenges of getting used to a new family through the eyes of two very different children. Tom and Zofia have polar opposite ways of processing their parents finding each other and starting a new life, but each are as valid and deserving of compassion as each other. It's this compassion that leads to an ultimately happy, hopeful ending.'

As we approach the summer holidays a useful book for those rainy days is *Great Family Days In: Over 75 Ideas for Rainy Days, School Holidays and Everything in Between*.

Review from Amazon:

'*Great Family Days In* has got you covered with over seventy-five tried and tested activities that make the most of spending quality time together. These beautifully illustrated activities do not require any specific skills or hard to get resources. From thirty-minute time-fillers to ideas to last the whole afternoon, activities can easily be adapted to suit any age, interest or timescale, making it easy to enjoy and relax into the process of creating and building memories together, whatever the outcome.'



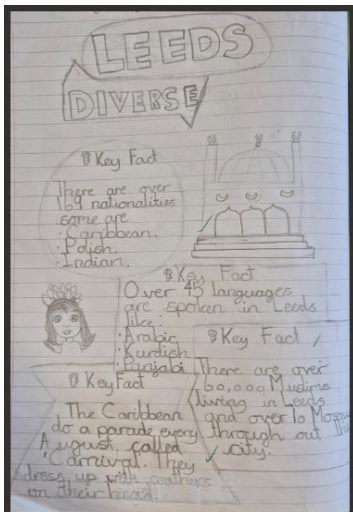
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ASKWITH PRIMARY



“We celebrate the diversity of the world and the contributions made by all communities, races, cultures and beliefs.”

BILTON GRANGE PRIMARY



“Mutual respect and co-operation within a nurturing, secure and stimulating environment”

BRADLEYS BOTH PRIMARY



“LIFE - Learn, Inspire, Flourish, Engage”

DARLEY PRIMARY

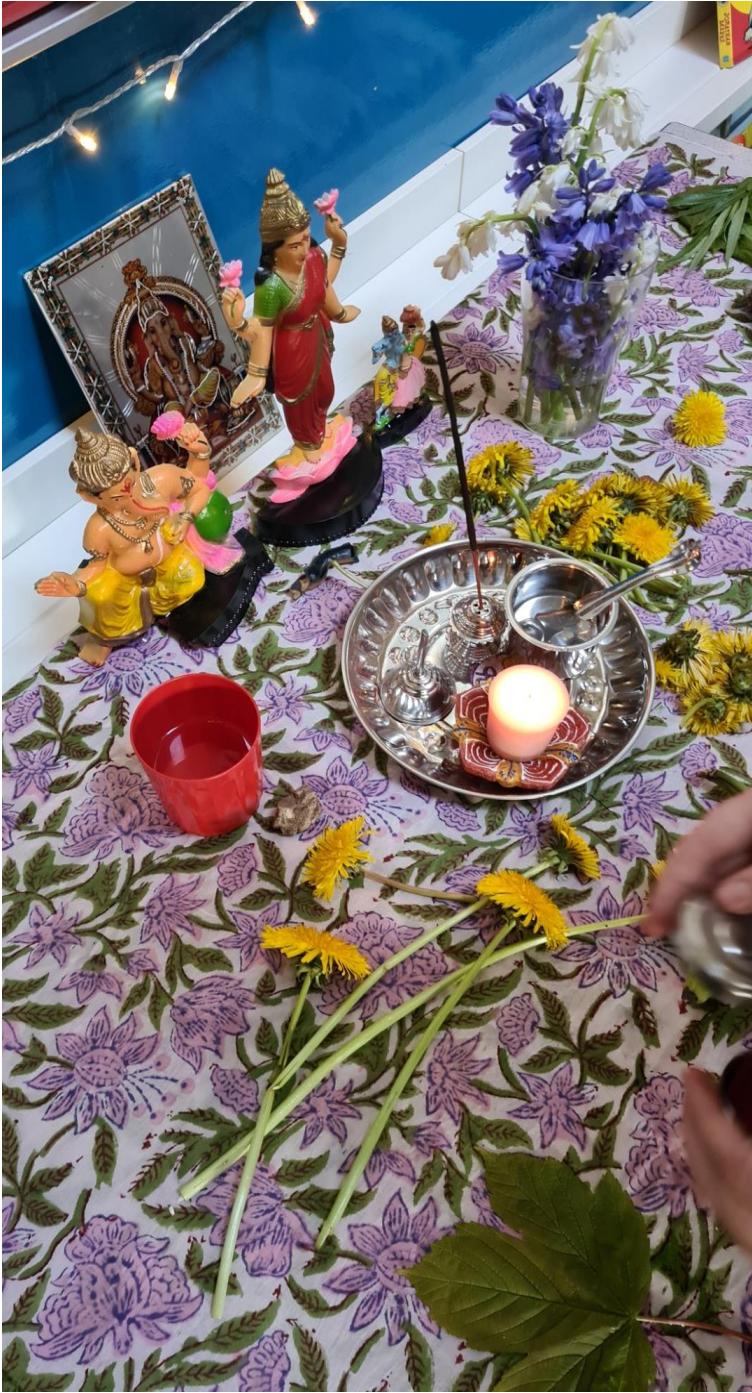


“Keep me safe, make me happy, help me learn”

HAWES PRIMARY



“Not just a school; taking learning to other places”



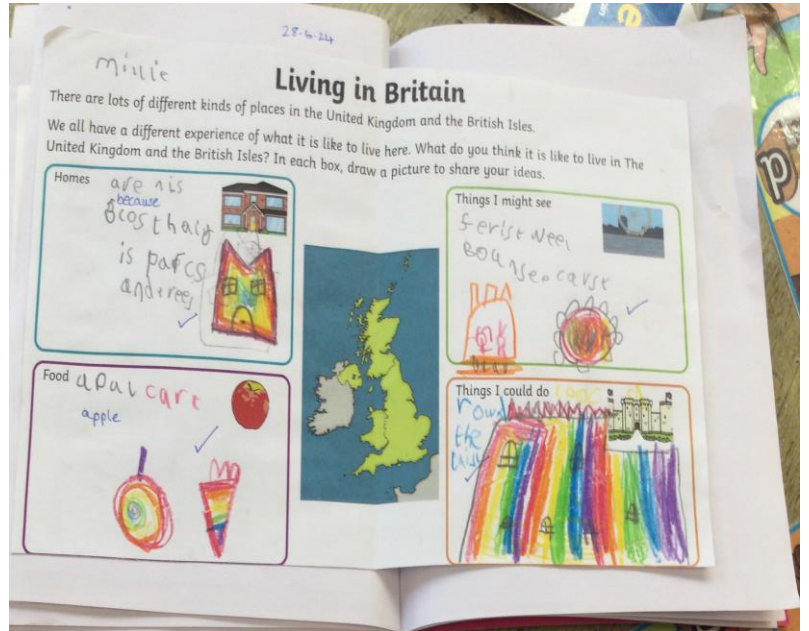
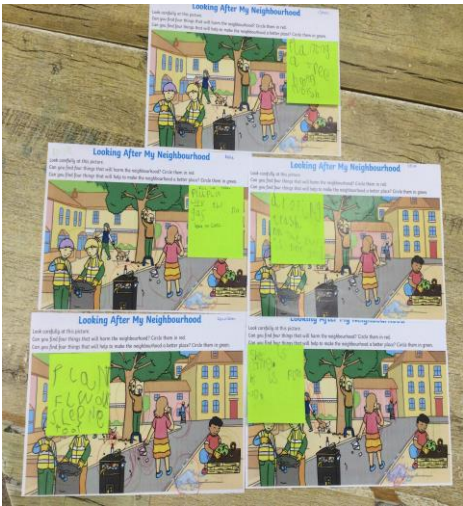
“Inspired to be the best that we can be!”

OSMOTHERLEY PRIMARY



“We endeavour to encourage independent learning through a varied and vast creative curriculum”

SUMMERBRIDGE PRIMARY



“Keep me safe, make me happy, help me learn”

THRESHFIELD PRIMARY



“From tiny acorns, mighty oaks grow”

♥ THANK YOU AND GOODBYE ♥

As we come to the end of another school year, we have to say our farewells to some colleagues who are leaving YCAT. We are very thankful for their contribution to our schools over the months or years and are grateful for the care and commitment they have shown to our children. They will all be greatly missed by our schools and everyone across YCAT wishes them all the very best for the future.

Rowan Barker who has been at Bilton Grange school since January covering maternity leave.



Harry Roberts, who is leaving Summerbridge School at the end of term to pursue his career in teaching. He has been working with Year 4 & 5.



Steve Clifton who has taught in year 2 at Leyburn this year.



Katie Winstanley who has worked in Leyburn in Early Years this year.



GOODBYE
!&!
Good Luck

Ian Moore, who has been YCAT Estates Manager since December.



Andrea Walker who is leaving Hawes after two years as Executive Headteacher. Thank you for all your hard work and enjoy your retirement from school leadership.



Mary Whitbread who has been covering maternity leave at Leyburn in year 4 since November.



Kym Marshall who has been covering a maternity leave in Darley School. We wish her all the very best in the next chapter of her career journey and we'll miss her very much!



‘Working and learning together to improve children’s lives’