

## Learning together, making the difference

### Welcome to the very first Focus-Trust Family Newsletter.



As you may know, our sponsor, Focus Education, established Focus-Trust in May 2012 as a primary multi academy trust (MAT). Since then the Trust has steadily grown to fifteen primary academies. These are outlined in the table and on the **Where are our academies?** map at the end of this Newsletter.

Twice a half term we publish a Newsletter for all our staff and governors and feedback tells us this is a useful source of information. We are very proud of all that goes on across our Trust and wanted to share some of this good news more widely with our pupils and families.

Each academy has sent us a highlight they are proud of in order that you can see the diversity of what is on offer in our academies and enable you to feel a greater connection to academies across Focus-Trust.

We propose issuing this newsletter once per term and hope you enjoy reading it. We welcome feedback and comments to [info@focus-trust.co.uk](mailto:info@focus-trust.co.uk)

Please also follow us on Twitter @FocusTrust1 or look at our website [www.focus-trust.co.uk](http://www.focus-trust.co.uk)

Helen Rowland  
Chief Executive  
Focus-Trust

### Thornton Primary School

We were extremely proud of all our children who took part in the opening ceremony of our new Railway Entrance to school. This celebrates the heritage of Thornton Village. Alan Whittaker, whose father was the last station master at Thornton, inspired much of the writing done by the children which included poetry. Our Samba band also contributed to the event which was attended by all the children and the parents

### Wilsden Primary School



On 8<sup>th</sup> February all the children at Wilsden Primary replaced their usual daily timetable and enjoyed an art themed day of learning. They had a full day exploring lots of different art skills and all the children had a fabulous day and produced some wonderful art work.



### Deeplish Primary Academy

All the children in Deeplish have been working hard on developing their 'Growth Mindset' and collaboration skills. Each class has been working on ways that the children can support each other in lessons so that they are able to overcome any difficulties in their learning.



## Rudheath Primary Academy

In December we ran a Reverse Advent Calendar. Instead of taking something out of a calendar each day children brought in an item of food for Mid Cheshire Foodbank. At the end of the term we donated 91kg to those that needed support in the local area. It was a great success and something we'll be repeating next year. Just some of the food we collected is shown below in the picture.



## Boothroyd Primary Academy

Parents at Boothroyd are contributing to their children's learning and taking every opportunity to come and support them- reading cafes, learn together sessions, parent project days are just some of the ways they have done this. Our first ever Winter fayre was a massive success and we are already planning our Spring Picnic and parent well being fayre. Pupils have had lots of fun learning about how important mental health well being is and have taken part in meditation and mindfulness sessions- they are loving the music that is played at playtimes outside and have a new juke-box for their requests. Watch this space for our new music hub and opportunities...

Staff at Boothroyd are spreading the happiness with new 'You made me happy' rewards and have shown real resilience in introducing new ideas such as editing, reasoning, metacognition and the coaching model into their teaching.



## Old Trafford Community Academy



Our Year 2 children have all begun their Prince William Award this academic year and are thoroughly enjoying the sessions where they can 'dare to be their best self'.

At the heart of this programme are the brilliant instructors, whom have served in the British Armed Forces. The instructors understand the importance of teamwork, resilience and self-discipline.

Our SkillForce instructors, Martin and Stevie, come into school once per week to run a series of workshops, sessions and projects that encourage our children to understand and reflect on the importance of key character traits like resilience, self-belief, team-work and confidence.

At the end of the programme, our children will achieve the award that recognises their journey in developing and strengthening the skills that are essential for them to be life long learners and experience success in life.

## Fieldhead Primary Academy

Six Fieldhead families graduated from the Save the Children's FAST (Families and Schools Together) project recently. The FAST project brings families, teachers and the wider community together, to ensure children get the support they need to fulfil their potential at school. These families are now empowered to work with community partners to run FASTworks sessions in the Summer term to pass on their skills to others.



## Freehold Community Primary Academy

In November, Freehold's Year 5 performed Hamlet at the Contact Theatre in Manchester as part of the Shakespeare Schools Festival. The performance review said, ' This company gave us the gift of perfectly spoken Shakespeare. Everyone in the cast owned the language of the play, making it sound really natural.' The pupils enjoyed the experience, we were very proud of them



## Lyndhurst Primary School

Since January, eight children from Lyndhurst have been working on the VEX IQ Challenge, which is an annual, international robotics competition for children aged between 8 and 14. Our team built and programmed a robot called a 'Clawbot' in order to compete in a game called 'Ringmaster' – a feat which tested their resilience, cooperation and nerve under pressure. They have improved their coding and problem-solving skills and had a huge amount of fun. We are exceptionally proud of the way they represented our school at the regional final at Bolton UTC.



## Manor Green Primary Academy

At Manor Green, like many other academies across the Trust, World Book Day was postponed due to adverse weather conditions. As children had an unexpected day at home, we issued a rather unusual challenge to further promote a love of reading. The 'World Book Day Snowman Challenge' saw children and their families working together to create snowmen in the style of their favourite book characters. Stuart Mycroft, Vice Principal at Manor Green, said, 'We knew that our children would be disappointed at not being able to show off their chosen character in school so, after a suggestion from one of our parents, we thought why not challenge them to create their own characters at home! We've had Snowy Potter, Supertato and many other wonderful creations tweeted and emailed to us and I can't wait to go through them all. We've been so impressed with the commitment and creativity our families have shown with this impromptu task!'



## Shibden Head Primary Academy



We recently hosted a French Theme Day. Our learning challenge curriculum is designed to capture children's imagination and natural curiosity. We regularly host theme days in which we can immerse ourselves in a theme for the day including dressing up, a themed lunch, and a range of exciting and creative activities.

This shared experience across school involving children from reception to year 6 resulted in children learning together and having fun.

## Coppice Primary Academy

At Coppice we have recently re-launched our approach to homework / home-learning with a project-based approach that involves children and their families working together from a menu of activities, with a focus on being creative.

We are delighted with how this is going so far, see photo for examples from KS1



## Thornhill J&I School

On Thursday 8th February, our Rock School performed to a 200 strong audience at Dewsbury Town Hall as part of the National Festival Competition run by Youth Music. Rock School were the first group to perform on stage and really delivered to a very high standard. They performed two songs - Chasing Cars, by Snow Patrol and The Tide is High, by Blondie. The lead singers got everyone standing up and joining in and the whole room was buzzing from their performance. Even more impressive was the fact they did this without any adult help - it was just the kids enjoying making music together! The children had so many positive comments about their performance from Head teachers, parents and musicians in the audience. We are so proud of the children for this fantastic performance and we are waiting to hear if they have been selected to perform in Birmingham later in the year.



## Birstall Primary Academy

Birstall Primary Academy is constantly striving to provide the best education and are committed to making improvements based on sound educational research. It is with great pleasure that they can announce that they have been selected to participate in a trial using ReflectED, a programme of work designed to help teach skills in metacognition, in association with London-based Rosendale School. BPA are looking forward to participating in this over the next five terms whilst hopefully improving outcomes for all their children



## Roundthorn Primary Academy

Developing Critical Thinking through the "Arts "and ensuring our children are life long learners is a key priority for Roundthorn and we are delighted to say that we have achieved the The Artsmark Gold Award.

All our children have regular opportunities to sing, perform to an audience, dance and learn to play a tuned instrument.

We are so proud of the staff and children who have worked so hard to achieve this prestigious award. Access to an amazing "arts " curriculum is making our children even more effective and creative learners



# Our Academies

Academy name	Date joined the Trust
Birstall	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2013
Boothroyd	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2013
Coppice	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2013
Deeplish	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2014
Fieldhead	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2013
Freehold	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2015
Lyndhurst	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2016
Manor Green	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2015
Old Trafford	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2014
Roundthorn	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2013
Rudheath	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2013
Shibden Head	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2013
Thornhill	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2016
Thornton	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2017
Wilsden	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2017

## Where are our academies?

focus-trust

