

Newsletter 8:  
SpringTerm 2019



**A Message from Susannah Connell,  
CEO, The Diamond Learning Partnership Trust**

This term we have welcomed two new schools to our Trust. Braybrook Primary Academy in Peterborough joined us in January and just a few days ago, Roman Way Academy in Royston joined us. We are all thrilled that Braybrook and Roman Way have joined our family of schools. I'm sure there will be exciting times ahead.

The Spring Term is always a short one, but it's never boring! The Year 6 children from across the Trust travelled to London for the Young Voices concert at the O2. This is an event where all schools are invited to join together and create one big choir. Each night, between 5,000 and 8,000 children perform as a single choir to a sold out audience. I am pleased to say that every time we attend, the behaviour of our Year 6 children is impeccable. It was lovely to look at the photos of such a fantastic day. I would like to say a particular well done to Glebelands, who were delayed home after their coach had a puncture on the M11, and they didn't arrive back at school until 1.50am.

We enjoyed a wonderful World Book Day across the Trust. I know that everyone was very creative with their costumes and all the children and staff looked fantastic. This has helped raise money for the schools to spend on books for the children across both key stages. Thank you for supporting this.

I would like to thank the children for working so hard and being a credit to their schools, which leads me on to thanking you as parents for having such wonderful children! I would also like to send my appreciation to all of the staff in the Trust who work tirelessly to ensure every child has the education they deserve.

Each week I personally write to a member of staff within the Trust who has gone above and beyond the normal expectations of their role. Their hard work and dedication really do make a difference to the life chances of the children in our Trust and for that I am exceptionally proud and grateful. The staff members who have received my personal thanks in this way this term are:

Victoria Edgington – The Round House  
Adam Gross – Winhills  
Michelle Collier – Trust  
Gareth Sandy – Leverington  
Melanie Goodey – Winhills

Catherine O'Toole – Trust  
Glenda Dunn – Middlefield  
John De Girolamo – Braybrook  
Katie Goodhew – Murrow

My best wishes for a happy and restful holiday. We look forward to welcoming the children back on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019.

Kind regards

Susannah Connell, CEO

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## Young Voices



Year 6 children from across the Trust had a fantastic time at the most eagerly awaited event of the year: Young Voices at the O2 Arena. It is a long day for them but an amazing spectacle and a once in a lifetime opportunity. The children sang their hearts out and their teachers were all hugely proud of their behaviour and performance – the memories will definitely stay with them for years to come!



Middlefield



The Round House



Kimbolton



## World Book Day



The annual celebration of reading and storytelling allowed children and staff across the Trust to show off their creativity with outfits, story hats, book character potatoes, poetry, writing and art. Children in all of our schools really enjoyed sharing stories on the day with children and teachers from other classes, and 'mystery readers'.

At **Wintringham**, the children learnt about the story 'Journey'. They wrote their own version of the story and used water colours to illustrate it.

**Braybrook's** day was a huge competition fest, with a whole school poetry recital gala - where finalists from EYFS to Year 6 performed for an audience of children and parents - 'Wooden Spoon Book Character' and 'Extreme Reading' competitions. We had some wonderfully creative entries! This year we designed, made and wore our own story hats - the effort that went into these was really impressive.



2019 was the best so far at **The Round House**, in terms of the effort that went into the dressing up! This year all classes based their work around 'Journey' by Aaron Becker, with a fantastic range of writing and art created in response to the story. The book swap and 'Guess Who's Reading' competition were a great success.

Mr Men and Little Miss characters were the order of

the day for Saturn Class at **Great Staughton**. Children came to school dressed as a book character, with lots of princesses, Where's Wallys and Harry Potters. Staff made tabards depicting various Mr Men and Little Miss characters. A competition was held to make a monster from recycled materials as part of our 'reduce, reuse, recycle' theme.



**Middlefield**



**Kimbolton**



This year **Leverington** chose to have a 'decorate a potato' competition where children had to decorate a potato as their favourite book character. Everyone worked extremely hard on their designs and we had some fantastic entries, making it very difficult to choose the winners. Some of the the winning designs were (left): The Gruffalo, The Singing Mermaid, and The Hungry Caterpillar.

## Braybrook



Well, things have moved on apace for our Braybrook Family since Christmas, and we are delighted to now be a part of the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust. Whilst we have only formalised our collaboration with the other 10 primary schools in the Trust since 1st January, we have long since been working with the team across all aspects of school life, to the benefit of the children and their learning. We are incredibly excited about this new chapter for our Braybrook Family and about the opportunities that lie ahead! We look forward to drawing from their skills and expertise as we continue to strive to be the very best that we can be, in addition to sharing and celebrating our many strengths with the other schools within the Trust. We have MUCH to be proud of.



Braybrook Primary Academy took part in their twelfth **Primary Dance Show** at the Cresset Theatre in February. After months of rehearsals, the children confidently danced, for two nights, in front of sell-out crowds of over 500 excited family and friends!

The theme for this show was 'Wild Wild West' and we danced to the theme from the animated film 'Rango'. The girls loved having their hair and make-up done and looked amazing in their cowgirl costumes. They lit up the stage with their amazing performance and made us all extremely proud.

Recently, Years 3 & 4 enjoyed a visit from **'The Raptor Foundation'**, linking to their current Imaginative Learning Project entitled 'Predator'. The children listened attentively to a detailed talk about birds of prey, before meeting 5 different types of owls and raptors. The children sat in silence and awe, as they watched the birds in flight around and across the school hall. They then made the most of getting hands on with the birds, holding, handling and stroking each in turn. The children loved being up close and personal with these incredible creatures – a truly incredible experience and an opportunity not to be missed!



In March, Year 5 were invited to dance for **Dame Darcey Bussell**! Braybrook was one of only 11 schools in the region to be part of a **'DD MIX'** showcase. Each school was given a different genre of dance to learn over 3 weeks. The performance was choreographed by Darcey and, after several rehearsals, Braybrook was ready to perform in front of over 300 people!

It was amazing to meet Darcey and perform for her. She gave the children great feedback and congratulated us on our hard work and enthusiasm.

## Glebelands

What a short but extremely busy term we have had! Here is a tiny sample of all the amazing experiences both in and out of school that have taken place. We have enjoyed seeing the learning of many classes in their class assemblies, taken a group of children to the 02 for Young Voices and enjoyed a brilliant World Book Day dressing up and sharing books across the school. We also have new revamped library areas in the school and have found a home for our beautiful reading chair. We now have – The Story Place. We cannot wait to see what the summer term will bring!



### Creative Arts

Year 3 have been working on their weaving skills. Between the two classes, they created a stunning piece of work which was carefully transported to Lionel Walden for an art exhibition celebrating Fenland art, and then to another showcase at Westwood Primary. Parents, local MPs, news reporters and many others were invited to attend.



### The Great Outdoors!

For EYFS playing in the mud, for Year 4 taking to the water at **Grafham**, and for Year 6 scaling new (and terrifyingly windy!) heights at **PGL**, our children have had enriching experiences in the outdoor environment this term. They have learned new skills, whilst needing to collaborate and negotiate, and push themselves. For our youngest children this connection to nature and the outdoors has helped them appreciate their environment and has enabled them to develop their gross and fine motor skills.



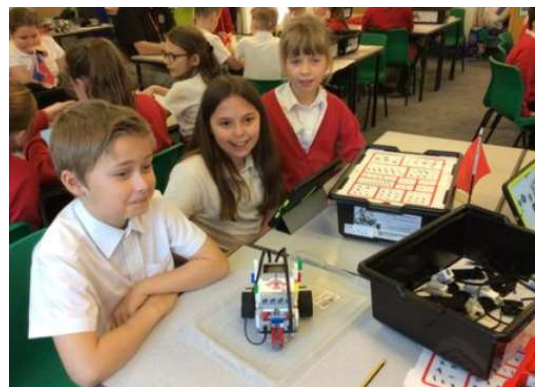
*'We love mud and it is really good for us to play in. It makes us feel happy!'*



For years 4 and 6, these residential trips were a fabulous opportunity to develop their teamwork and problem-solving skills, and strengthen their resilience and confidence. They were constantly on the go and pushing themselves to the limit.

### Year 5 Coding Project

Resilience and collaboration and have also been tested in Year 5 this term. The children are thoroughly enjoying the project offered to them through our school community. They love working in groups, building and programming their models, and are learning a huge amount about coding - including just how precise you have to be to make things work exactly as you want them to.





## Leverington



### Rock Star Maths Day

Leverington Primary Academy started the term with a whole school 'Rock Star Maths Day' to relaunch the use of Times Tables Rockstars. All children (and staff!) dressed in their best rock outfits and took part in various Maths and times table challenges throughout the day. This also launched the start of our weekly Times Tables assembly, helping children to become fluent in recall of number facts and times tables.

### Creative Assembly

Every month, our children enjoy completing a variety of creative homework tasks linked to their topics. We celebrated the fantastic things they had made at a creative assembly, organised and managed by our Key Stage 2 Arts Ambassadors with Mrs Pooley, our Arts Lead teacher. Homework was displayed and the doors were opened to parents to share everyone's achievements. The creative ideas included vegetable art, paper maché Easter eggs, pirate maps, Roman shields and a 'Great British Bake Off' competition.



### Down on the Farm

Our Reception children have thoroughly enjoyed their 'Down on the Farm' topic this term. They were very excited to have some eggs delivered to the class and watched them hatch. They found out about the life cycle of a chick and even got to hold the chicks too. To finish their topic, the children had a fantastic day out at Church Farm, where they got to feed the lambs and experience a ride on a tractor too!

### Year 4 'Bits and Bytes' Competition Success!

This term, our Year 4 children have been working with 20Twenty Productions on the 'Bits and Bytes' project. Children spent weeks working together developing interpersonal skills and basic robotic skills. They were lucky enough to attend the final at March Town Hall on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March, where they finished 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 47 schools – a fantastic achievement!

### Year 6: Prisoners and Punishment

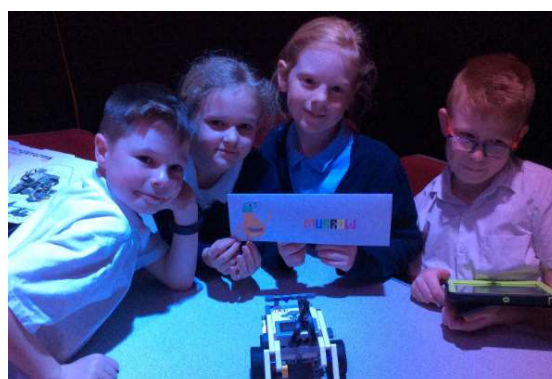
Year 6 have been enjoying the topic of 'Prisoners and Punishment' this term. As part of their topic, they were visited by the local PCSOs who staged a crime scene in our hall. Children had to give a description of the offender and collect evidence from the crime scene to help the officers convict the perpetrator.

They also made copies of their fingerprints and blew them up on to balloons to see them enlarged. They then visited Lincoln Castle, where they played an escape game in the prison cells, completed their chores including laundry, picking oakum and handwriting, before visiting the chapel for a sermon. The children enjoyed listening to some gruesome stories of hanging, escapes and poisonings before a windswept walk along the castle wall!





Our spring term at Murrow began with a WIN! Our Lego League challenge team entered a competition entitled “**Into Orbit**”. Preparations had gone on through the Autumn term: building the robot; programming the robot; investigating problems that astronauts may have in space; finding a solution and preparing their presentation. The team – Galactic Train – worked with a representative from Perkins Engines, they used some in house biochemists and their solution to provide a plant feeding space toilet was developed. Competition day came and the team were incredible. There were ten other schools, including secondary pupils taking part. They worked together to present their ideas to the judges, explained their ideas to other competitors, interviewed other competitors and finally took part in four rounds of Robot wars. The team came away victorious in two categories – Best Project Award and Winners of the Knock out Phase.



Following on from this - and again a project that involved team work and robots - Year 3 and 4 continued to work on their **Bits and Bytes** Project. The two year groups visited the Leicester Space centre, all funded by this project. They then came back to school and in teams took part in a competition. The winning team went on to represent the school in the regional final where they came second. Two of our children have been selected, due to their behaviour and sportsmanship, to go on a trip to Harry Potter Studios. Well done to all who took part.

Our classes have all been very fortunate to experience some amazing trips. These trips were designed to provide children with real life experiences - ones that can then inform their writing and creative work back at school. The visits have included: Cadbury World linking to their Charlie and the Chocolate Factory topic; Peterborough Museum to investigate Victorian medicine, and visits to two local farms. At one the children learned about cows and grain being grown, and at the other about vegetable cultivation - potatoes and leeks were picked and the children then ate the soup they made.



Where does chocolate come from?



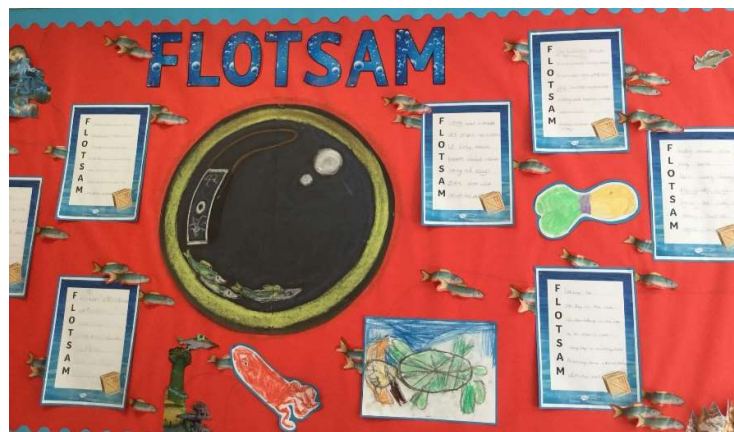
## Thomas Eaton

Curie class have been developing their printing skills this term which culminated in producing this beautiful patchwork of Fenland prints. This was displayed at two schools in Fenland to celebrate **Year Three Artwork**.



**One Plastic Bag**

Our Years 4/ 5 pupils have become young entrepreneurs this term. They have designed, pitched and produced their own chocolate bars and have studied the true story "One plastic bag" which resulted in them collaborating as a whole class to produce their own recycled bags.



We celebrated **World Book Day** on Thursday 7th March by looking at Flotsam by David Wiesner. The children's work was then shared in an Afternoon Assembly with the parents who were impressed by the standards of writing.



Our youngest children have enjoyed watching our newest arrivals hatch from their shells - in fact our oldest children enjoyed observing too!



Our year six pupils have written some beautifully touching poetry based on the story "The Journey" and illustrated their work.

## Great Staughton

We had a super start to our new school year at **Grafham Water Centre**. The whole school attended for two days. Key stage 2 children also stayed overnight – including some staff! Activities included archery, mountain biking, bush craft, pioneering, low ropes and the Tunnel of Doom. Everyone had a wonderful time and we learnt lots about working together in a team.



"It was the best school trip that I have ever had."

"My favourite activity was trying to balance my whole group on a seesaw, during problem solving."

"I did and experienced things that I never thought I ever would – I challenged myself."

"The food was delicious."

Our **Science Week** activities culminated in our Science Fair which was held on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March. Eleven families entered stalls based on the theme 'journeys'. We had a great turn out and the hall buzzed with activity. Everyone had a great time looking around the stalls and voting for their favourites. The winning stall was 3,2,1 Blast Off which was a fun experiment focusing on how rockets launch.

A highlight of the afternoon was the energy challenge, when everyone joined hands with two people holding an energy stick to see how far light and sound would travel.



Our lovely **school cook, Linda**, retired in February after almost 30 years at the school. Staff, parents, old pupils and previous staff all contributed to a memory book which was presented to Linda, along with a cake, flowers and gift vouchers. Linda was an excellent cook and a favourite with all the children, some of whom replicate her recipes at home. We all wish Linda a very long and happy retirement.



## Kimbolton

The start of term was spent at a two day residential trip to **Grafham Water Centre** where the children of Ash, Oak and Rowan had a wonderful time undertaking a variety of challenges, including: bush rafting, mountain biking, pioneering, archery, problem solving and lots of team games and fun! Later in the term our Year 4 children spent a fun packed three days at the Centre where they participated in canoeing, archery, cycling, orienteering, sailing, outdoor evening games, movie night and other fun activities!



On 27<sup>th</sup> February we had a visit from members of **St John Ambulance Young People**. They

demonstrated lifesaving techniques which they believe every child should know as first aid is a really important skill to have. They told us later how much they had enjoyed visiting us as our children were so well behaved, polite and engaged!



What a fantastic **Great Fire of London Day** Ash class had on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> February! Miss Bleakley and Mrs Hartness were so proud of how beautifully the children behaved, how polite they were and how well they coped with the change in routine.

The day started off with London ablaze with the houses burning down in the fire pit. They then collected some natural resources for their smelly bags. After break they had lots of time to choose their own activities. Some of the activities on offer

included painting portraits, making clay coins, making smelly bags, baking scones, weaving, building a house, ordering events on a timeline, researching in books and lots more! The children were so engaged and focused on their activities.

**Français!** Have you ever wondered what we do in French lessons at KPA? Wonder no more! There is a link in the Curriculum section on the school website to Modern Foreign Languages (MFL). This is updated weekly with what we have been up to in Rowan, Oak and Ash (Year 2) French classes.



## Middlefield

### Reading

Middlefield spent two weeks focused on Reading which included a Read-a-thon, World Book Day, and visits from a West End Actor and from children's author David Lucas.



Our "Read-A-thon" raised a fabulous £693.40 for our school which will be used to buy some individual reading books. Waterstones book vouchers went to the following children who read the most in their year group - well done! Prizes went to Mason in EYFS, Laila in Year 1, Leila in Year 2, Amelia in Year 3, Brendan in Year 4, Mia in Year 5 and Tilly in Year 6.

We were lucky enough to spend time with a West End actor (right). During the workshop session, the children looked at the story of the book 'Billionaire Boy' by David Walliams. The children used themselves and each other to create a number of scenes from the book. They also practised using their bodies to help them get in to character. Author David Lucas also spent a day at Middlefield working with the children on how to develop a character and how to plot a story.



### Egyptian Day

Years 3 and 4 had a wonderful Egyptian day, dancing, learning about a shadoof, treasure hunting and preparing food. The tardis became a tomb for the day as well. In the afternoon we all joined in the death march around school and enjoyed tasting the food. Well done for the wonderful costumes!

### Football

There were two football tournaments this month and it was wonderful to see so many children taking part in school competitions. Both events were held at Bushmead Primary school where our teams played against four other schools. As always, the children displayed superb teamwork coupled with fantastic football skills. There were numerous goals scored and brilliant saves made by all of our willing goalkeepers. Well done to all of the children involved! Our sporting calendar will be getting busier after Easter with lots of events coming up.



### Grafham Water Residential

Year 4 had a wonderful time at Grafham Water earlier this month. They participated in a wide range of activities including canoeing, fun boat sailing, climbing and archery. The children showed excellent communication and teamwork skills, supporting one another through the difficult challenges they faced. They really enjoyed every minute!



## The Round House

### Year 3 & 4 explore Ancient Egypt!

Years 3 and 4 had a fantastic opportunity to visit the British Museum in London. Setting off early on a train down to London, the children took in the sights along the way. After a walk through the hustle and bustle of London, the children reached The British Museum. They were privileged to view historic artefacts originating from Ancient Egypt. These included: sculptures, tomb doors, statues of Pharaohs, mummified animals and humans and much more. On both days, all the children behaved impeccably and gained invaluable knowledge from the whole experience.



Years 3 and 4 have spent the past few weeks practising for their performance, 'Glint of Gold', which was based on our topic, Ancient Egypt. During the performances, they performed amazingly by really putting their heart and soul into the play. It has been great to see the increase in confidence of some children by having the opportunity to perform, whether it be through acting, singing or dancing. As well as this it has deepened their knowledge about this era. Thank you for helping

with their fabulous costumes and the practising of their lines and songs.



### NSPCC Number Day

The whole school took part in an NSPCC Number Day in February. During the off-timetable day, the children took part in both PSHE and Maths activities, including estimation, measuring and number crunching. In the afternoon, the classes were mixed and the children learnt about different aspects of the PSHE curriculum and shared their findings in a whole school assembly. The children thoroughly enjoyed the day and, most importantly, we raised valuable funds for the NSPCC.

### St Mary's Church Visit

Years 1 and 2 visited St Mary's church in St Neots: they have been learning all about the different features of a church in the ICE Zone and were excited to see them in real life.



### Parliament Day

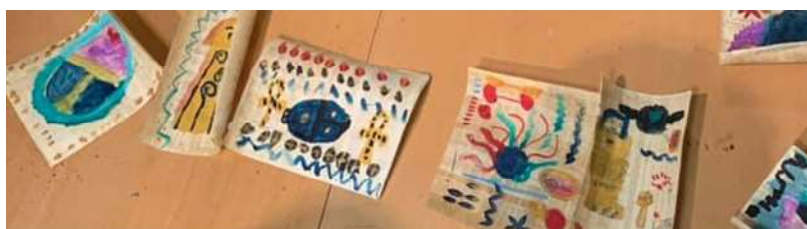
Years 5 and 6 were lucky enough to be visited by a lady called Sky who came to talk to the children about parliament, the way in which it is run and the job that they do. The visit culminated in a discussion about the legal age to vote, with the children setting up their own parliament, debating the issue and putting their views across.





### Year 1 and 2 Bosch Workshop

On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March, pupils from Winhills Primary Academy were visited by members of Bosch Rexroth for a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) morning. Jim Marlin and Dave Webb spent time with children from Years 1 and 2, where they looked at how the children can use forces to move objects. The focus of their session was using air as a force to push objects (linking to pneumatics) and the children were able to fire air propelled rockets at targets. Children in Key Stage 2 will be getting the opportunity to work with Bosch over the next term.



### Year 3 and 4 Fitzwilliam Museum Visit

A couple of weeks ago, Year 3 and 4 visited the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge as part of their learning all about Ancient Egypt. They had a wonderful learning experience with the members of staff at the museum. They were able to look at some amazing artefacts, learned about the practice of mummification, and even had the chance to design and paint their own hieroglyphs on papyrus paper.



### Year 4 Residential Trip to Grafham Water

Earlier this half term, Year 4 had their residential to Grafham Water. The children had a wonderful time and really developed their team building skills. They took part in a range of activities such as rock climbing, orienteering, sailing and biking. They all gave every activity a go and pushed themselves, even if they felt nervous. We are very proud of them.



### Tournaments: Quick sticks and football

The children at Winhills have competed in a number of sports tournaments over this term. They have all thoroughly enjoyed themselves, played to the best of their abilities, and displayed excellent sportsmanship.

### Young Voices

Year 6 travelled to London to take part in Young Voices at the O2 arena, and were very excited to be among the 5000 children who came together to sing in front of a crowd of 15000 people. The children had an amazing time singing along to a variety of songs, both old and new. They behaved beautifully and certainly loved the opportunity to travel to London for this event.

# Wintringham

## New Building

The Reception children in Wintringham Primary Academy have now moved into their new classroom and have settled in really well. The classroom is lovely and bright and filled with brand new resources and equipment. The children do however still join The Round House for some of their work, assemblies and playtimes.



## Outdoor Learning

The children have really enjoyed their outdoor learning this term. They have sat on the logs surrounding the fire pit and Miss Abbott went through the rules that the children will need to follow when the fire has been lit. The children then learnt about how a fire is made and that it needs oxygen, a heat source and fuel for it to light. They then watched Miss Abbott use a flint to start the fire. Once the flames had gone down, the children toasted marshmallows over the fire. The children also learnt which part of the fire was best to toast their marshmallows. Once they had been toasted, the children blew on them to cool them down before they ate them up, they were a bit sticky but very yummy! At the end, the children used the charcoal from the fire to draw pictures on the trees in the field.



## Dance

All the children have enjoyed their dance lessons this term with Miss Jones. They had to

follow a series of instructions in order to learn a short routine. In small groups, the children performed their routine to the rest of the class and then gave each other feedback. At the end of the lesson, the children enjoyed playing a game of musical statues. The children really enjoyed it and are already looking forward to their next dance lesson.



## Pancake Day

The children really enjoyed their first Wintringham pancake race on Shrove Tuesday. They also learnt how to toss their pancakes and then enjoyed eating some pancakes that had not fallen on the floor!



- ◇ Continuous Professional and Leadership Development
- ◇ School to School Support
- ◇ Initial Teacher Training

Our full programme of courses has continued to run this term, with 558 participants attending so far this academic year. We have developed and started to deliver two new training programmes: 'New to the LGB' which explains the roles and responsibilities of members of the Local Governing Body (LGB), and 'Early Career Development' for teachers in their second to fifth year of teaching, focusing on pedagogy and career pathways.



We continue to be a partner with Best Practice Network, who delivers Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) preparation and assessment training. The next training will be taking place in May and June. Following the success of Teaching Assistant development meetings last year, we have re-launched these in each hub enabling Teaching Assistants to share good practice and develop their knowledge further.

#### Testimonials:

*'It got everyone thinking about our daily teaching and how we impact on children's learning' (Early Career Development Programme)*

*'Really liked the professional dialogue opportunities and the bank of ideas of how to implement strategies' (Year 4 teacher – Improving Writing in KS2)*

*'Most useful were the challenging 'games' and areas where governors worked together to brainstorm ideas and questions' (Member of the LGB- New to the LGB Programme)*

*'Friendly, supportive and knowledgeable trainers' (SLE Core training)*



The Teaching School continues to provide bespoke SLE support to primary schools in the local area and in our Trust schools. This support is wide ranging and includes work with senior and middle leaders and class teachers with the purpose of impacting teaching and learning.

Our 2018-19 cohort of School Direct trainee teachers have continued to develop their knowledge and skills on their second placement. The Diamond Teaching School would like to thank all mentors for supporting and coaching our trainees so well.

Applications for School Direct trainees for the 2019-20 academic year are now being accepted, and interviews have started to take place.

The Diamond Teaching School promotes all elements of its work in the local area and has increased its presence on social media to reach more teachers, school leaders and potential trainee teachers. You can find us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).