

OUR TOWN

Celebrating the diverse and vibrant
communities of Creative Education Trust



CREATIVE EDUCATION TRUST
Knowledge Connected





CELEBRATING COMMUNITIES

Dr William Richardson, Vice-chair of Board of Directors and Chair of Education Standards Committee.

Soon after the first lockdown, Creative Education Trust's Board of Directors set aside funding to kickstart projects which supported student-led social action in each of our schools. Designed to help communities reopen following the disruption of the global pandemic, the project aided the Trust's strategic aim for schools and their pupils to be active and valued participants in their localities. The fund has stimulated some of the great work described in this publication.

The opportunity to explore and tackle local needs and priorities has allowed each of our schools to rethink its nature and place: its own identity as a community of learning (encompassing all staff and students) and its place in, and potential contribution to, the wider setting of "Our Town". In this light, it's particularly interesting to see how the schools' selected projects have surprised and encouraged community leaders and activists beyond the school gate.

In the following pages, we read about activities focused on care, support, and produce for local people in need, environmental improvement through campaigning and recycling, and supporting new residents to feel at home in their local area. Also on show are the use of books to animate local communities, the staging of music, dance, and cuisine events to celebrate local diversity, and how contact between the generations can combat loneliness.

Along the way, students have discovered the role they can play in their community and felt the nervousness, followed by excitement and pride, in planning events and experiences which proved far more popular than they could have first imagined.

It's exciting to realise that these projects will continue to run over the next two years and beyond. More bridges will be built. Isolated citizens in Creative Education Trust communities will be cheered by contact with students. Community leaders will see new possibilities and imagine strengthened partnerships with our schools. And our students will learn about themselves: about the challenges and unexpected rewards of carrying out a community project, as well as how to think in new and more connected ways about curriculum topics, from science to geography and from languages to social studies.

Our Town shows just how well-placed our schools are to engage with the wider community of which they are a part, to identify neighbourhood priorities where they can make a difference and, as a result, to play an innovative role in a community which enriches itself.

Our Town has got off to a great start. The following years promise even more!

THE OUR TOWN COMMUNITY FUND

Creative Education Trust is delighted to share this testament to school and community partnerships. Across our schools, our staff and students have been working hard to support their local communities, in the knowledge that this is also enriching their own experience.

The majority of projects in this publication were facilitated by Creative Education Trust's Our Town Community Fund – an allowance of up to £7,000 per school to help encourage students to be active participants in their local communities.

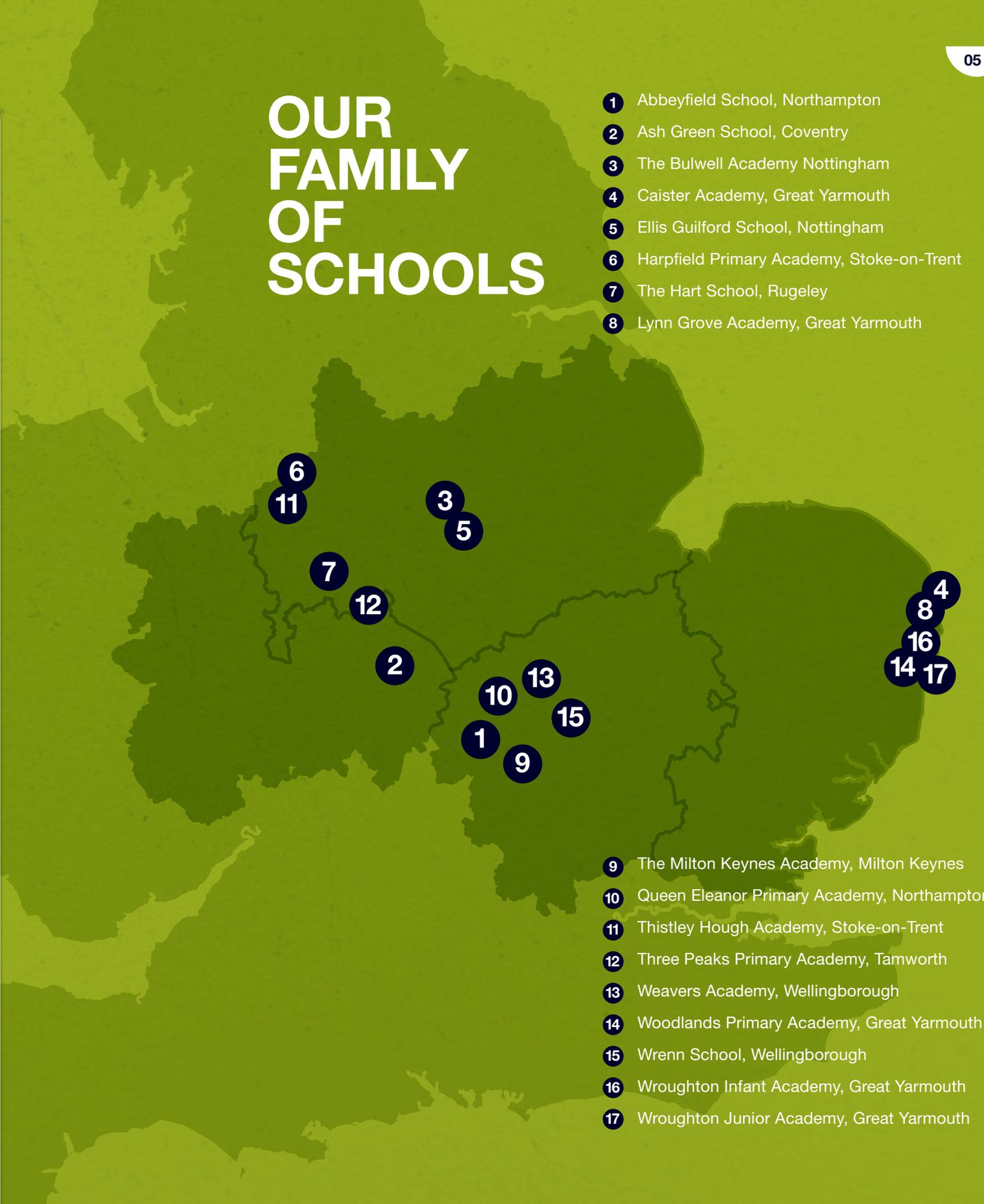
Bids to the fund were required to meet criteria around learning, creative skills, inclusiveness, employability, and sustainability. Project ideas were also to be strongly student-led, requiring them to carry out research to find out more about their community and what matters most to them.

To support staff, we joined forces with Edge Foundation, experts in Community Connected Learning, who provided project leads with excellent training. Sharing their tips and experience, they imparted their knowledge on how to support student-led project groups, design a project to address an issue, engage the wider community, and embed community-connected teaching and learning into school culture. Taking what they'd learned back to the classroom, students participated in activities developed by Creative Education Trust and Edge Foundation to help students consider what issues they care about, the causes of the problems they see in their community, and the impact they wanted to have. Once they had identified the root causes, they could come up with innovative solutions that could have a long-lasting impact.

Olly Newton, Executive Director at Edge Foundation, is emphatic about the value of this project: "How often do we hear pupils quite rightly ask 'Why do I need to learn this?' How often is the answer 'Because it'll be in an exam'. Working with local communities on real-life projects helps to bring the curriculum to life, giving pupils examples of where the knowledge, skills, and behaviours they are learning can make a difference in the real world, as well as helping them to develop compassion, resilience, and all the other skills we want to see in our communities."

Read on to find out about the Our Town projects, and some of the other community partnerships that Creative Education Trust schools have forged.

OUR FAMILY OF SCHOOLS



- 1 Abbeyfield School, Northampton
- 2 Ash Green School, Coventry
- 3 The Bulwell Academy Nottingham
- 4 Caister Academy, Great Yarmouth
- 5 Ellis Guilford School, Nottingham
- 6 Harpfield Primary Academy, Stoke-on-Trent
- 7 The Hart School, Rugeley
- 8 Lynn Grove Academy, Great Yarmouth

- 9 The Milton Keynes Academy, Milton Keynes
- 10 Queen Eleanor Primary Academy, Northampton
- 11 Thistley Hough Academy, Stoke-on-Trent
- 12 Three Peaks Primary Academy, Tamworth
- 13 Weavers Academy, Wellingborough
- 14 Woodlands Primary Academy, Great Yarmouth
- 15 Wrenn School, Wellingborough
- 16 Wroughton Infant Academy, Great Yarmouth
- 17 Wroughton Junior Academy, Great Yarmouth



The Caister Kids Care group outside the Rabbit Hutch.



Archie, year 9, who's been involved in the project since the start.



Russell Ray, Chair of Caister Youth and Community Centre.



Rio, Emma, Deima, and Alisha, serving cakes.



Caister Kids Care with members of the Knit and Natter group.



CAISTER ACADEMY

What can we do to promote intergenerational relationships in the community whilst tackling loneliness in the over 60s?

Caister Kids Care is Caister's student social action group. They regularly host community events – from Easter eggs hunts to jubilee parties and summer celebrations – each run with the aim of bringing together students and older people in the local area.

The project focus was heavily influenced by new community partnerships. Caister students sought advice from Caister Cares, a network of groups aiming to understand the most urgent needs of the community and identify useful resources and support. **Archie** in year 9, who has been involved since the start, explained what he had learnt: "I didn't know how big Caister was. I realised we had a good community, and ways we can make Caister a better place." Meetings with members of the group, including **Kevin Wood**, Chair of the Parish Council, Reverend **David Wells**, and **Russell Ray**, Chair of Caister Youth and Community Centre, helped the students to understand the history of Caister, what's already happening in the community, and where they might be able to help. They learnt about how much Covid-19 has impacted the mental health of older generations, making loneliness and isolation more apparent. Reverend David shared how local churches have supported the elderly population, helping with gardening, shopping, and companionship.

Determined to make a difference, Caister Kids Care created surveys for local residents and the student community to see what they could do. Their research revealed a demand for events to take part in. The group now host an event every half term at the Rabbit Hutch, a community venue which is home to a range of groups, including those for parents, carers, knitters, sports teams, church groups, and many more. Russell, who has been key in the growth of the Rabbit Hutch, from a meeting room to an active community hub, talked about the impact of Caister Kids Care: "The group have been absolutely fabulous. Older people in the community love being around the kids."

The events are a chance for everyone to get together and to take part in a range of activities, including arts and crafts, bingo, board games, raffles, and more. Archie explained the group's process for planning: "We get together and look ahead to the closest big event, like Easter, Halloween, and Christmas." He explained that the group had been surprised by the popularity of their events, including having a "packed marquee at the jubilee event, even when the weather was bad". The cold and windy weather didn't stop Caister Kids Care from playing games and serving tea, picnic bags, and jelly and ice cream to all the residents who turned up for their jubilee celebration in May 2022. As well as planning and budgeting for each event, roles for the students include welcoming members of the community, offering drinks, playing games, and having positive conversations.

"The group have been absolutely fabulous. Older people in the community love being around the kids."

Charlie Emmett, staff project lead and Senior Head of Inclusion, has been so impressed by the group and their dedication to the project. Most of the group hadn't met before the project started and seemed shy at first, but "they all want to get involved and never miss a meeting". **Charlotte**, year 9, explained that she initially felt nervous in her role, but that the events have helped her to "speak up more and talk to older people in the community". Caister Kids Care have received lovely feedback on their project, with residents sharing how much they enjoyed the events and the opportunity to spend time with the Caister students.

Caister Kids Care has a brilliant future ahead. New ideas being worked on include an exciting *Alice in Wonderland* themed event and the start of visits to local residential homes.

HARPFIELD PRIMARY ACADEMY

How can we make reading more fun and accessible?

Harpfield believes that the key to making reading more fun and accessible is ensuring that children see themselves in the literature they read. With their diverse school community, they were concerned by research, published in *The Guardian*, indicating that children were far more likely to read a book that features an animal as the main character than a protagonist from a black, Asian, or minority ethnic background. Harpfield are determined to ensure stories are representative, whilst inspiring excitement, compassion, and understanding.

Uzma Ahmed, project lead and Early Years Leader, explained the desire to “get books in the hands of

children and their families”. They aim to “give families stories they can love and share together, encouraging reading outside of school”. As well as purchasing books and creating a reading space in Harpfield, the school plan to reach the wider community through stay-and-play storytelling sessions with nursery groups, and through a campaign to get children and their parents reading. Newcastle Library has also been involved, making pupils aware of how they can use their facilities and of future careers the library can offer.

Harpfield children have led the way on their reading project. They’ve chosen books and stamped them, developed ideas of what their reading space could look like, and created artwork to fill the space.

Olivia, year 6, and **Elijah**, year 5, talked about some of the new books that have been ordered. *The Boy at the Back of the Class* by Onjali Q. Raúf is a story written from the perspective of a refugee who has been separated from his family. For Elijah, having books which demonstrate a range of perspectives and experiences is important “so people can show more respect to others”. Olivia agreed, talking about the reason

“Pupils have learnt that their voice can make a difference.”

why *The Girl with Two Dads* by Mel Elliott is one of her favourite books: “I liked how it has a lot of representation of different families. It’s important as some people don’t support this and that’s not fair.”

Harpfield have signed up for the “Decade of Diversity” campaign with Inclusion Labs, which strives to have “25% diverse literature in our school by 2030”. The pledge states that “Every young person deserves to experience literature that reflects their realities but also broadens their world to experience realities beyond their own”, talking about how literature plays a role in creating “a sense of belonging and inclusivity”. Harpfield are making great strides on the pledge. On Martin Luther King Day, children in years 3 to 6 read *Martin Luther King Jnr* by Maria Isabel Sanchez Vegara, which is part of the “Little People, Big Dreams” series. Across the day, pupils learnt about the power of kindness and protest, creating a wall to celebrate kindness.

This project has been an opportunity for children to cover an impressive range of themes. Olivia and Elijah have explored topics such as mental health, racism, and care for others and the environment through the books that they have read. Elijah’s chosen book *Somebody Swallowed Stanley* by Sarah Roberts, tells the story of a plastic bag called Stanley making a journey through the ocean. “It makes you realise how important it is to save the ocean.”

The school’s celebration of diversity and important social themes is clearly having an impact. Letters by Harpfield pupils speaking against racism at the Euro 2020 finals were re-shared on the official England football Twitter account, whilst younger pupils gained a positive response from **Dapo Adeola**, illustrator of *Look Up!*, for their engagement in science and space. As Uzma says, “Pupils have learnt that their voice can make a difference.”



Harpfield students enjoying some of the new books that have been purchased through the project.



The start of Harpfield’s new reading space.



Harpfield students choosing books from the reading space.

Elijah, year 5, with Somebody Swallowed Stanley.



WROUGHTON ACADEMIES

How can we stop people going without healthy food?

Through research, pupils at **Wroughton** have become more aware of poverty in the local community. They found out about increasing reliance on food banks and a growing demand for food parcels in the region. A survey across Wroughton staff reinforced this, with most respondents stating that poverty is a key issue in the community. For staff and pupils, this posed the question "How can we stop people going without healthy food?" They chose to work on a community garden which helps to address food poverty and promote healthy eating. This growing initiative has got children throughout the school involved.

Each year group at Wroughton has a different responsibility, with a growing area and particular fruits and vegetables to look after. **Nicola Walker**, project lead and class teacher, shared how "students have really loved it. They are so excited talking about gardening. They like seeing everything grow." Whole school assemblies for the infant and junior academies ensure that all children and staff are aware of the project.

"They are so excited talking about gardening. They like seeing everything grow."

A core group of pupils in years 4 and 5 lead the way. **Chloe**, year 4, was part of the first lead group: "I love gardening with my friends and helping people who don't have enough food." Chloe explained that typical activities for the group include weeding, watering, and planting. Every Wednesday, they go out to look around the gardens, check on the produce, and see if there are any issues they can support with. The Great Yarmouth Allotment Association has been crucial in advising the group at the start of the project,

walking around the gardens with them and offering their tips on growing. There will be a new core group each year to ensure that more pupils can take on the responsibility.

Geraldine Deacon, a Teaching Assistant with a passion for gardening and outdoor learning, explains how helpful the project can be for the pupils who perhaps don't engage well in their lessons: "They really light up when they go outside." The project has been an opportunity for students to learn in different ways, with links to the school curriculum. Caring for the gardens supports pupils' learning in science, as they find out about photosynthesis, composting, and why certain fruit or vegetables don't grow well. Discussions around healthy eating also complement topics covered in PSHE. One of the next steps for the project will be a composting system, enabling students to create their own compost.

Looking after the community garden doesn't stop with Wroughton staff and pupils. Parents have been involved, helping to prepare the growing areas and donating excess plants. One of the parents involved leads a local scout group and saw the project as an ideal opportunity for each group to support the other. The scouts helped with the gardens over the summer, and in return, they are able to gain experience which contributes to earning their badges.

In July 2021, the school harvested their first produce, including potatoes, cauliflowers, courgettes, radishes, and plums. Chloe shared that she was "amazed" by what they'd been able to produce: "I didn't know we'd grown so much." The school donated their produce to Shrublands Community Foodclub, which provides affordable food to residents in Gorleston. Wroughton has been in touch with a local charity who are willing to take some of the future produce for their soup kitchen, and Wroughton's school kitchens will be investigating what they can create too.

The growing project has been an exciting initiative for Wroughton, enabling the school to build new links in the wider community and to get students enthusiastic about gardening and growing healthy food. The pupils are looking forward to seeing what they can produce next!

Year 4 project leads looking after the garden.



Lewis, year 4, with a freshly picked tomato!



From left to right: Ethan, Spikey, Jayden, Chloe, Ava, and Lewis with Geraldine Deacon and Nicola Walker.



Mural coloured in by members of the community.



THE HART SCHOOL

How can Rugeley benefit from greater diversity?

On Saturday 4 June 2022, Anson Street in Rugeley was transformed into "Equality Street". **Hart School's** street party, which formed part of Rugeley's Platinum Jubilee festivities, focused on the goals of Hart's student social action group – tackling inequalities, promoting tolerance, and celebrating difference. The group aims to do this by improving understanding and awareness of the experience of minority groups, including those with different faiths, ethnicities, sexualities, and disabilities. **Charlie**, year 8, wanted to ensure that the project "makes people feel more welcome and more involved in the community".

"Everyone smiled, danced together, and tried new things. It showed us that it was all worth doing."

The Hart School changemakers.



Freya, year 9.



Celebrating differences were amongst the project proposals shortlisted by Hart's team of Key Stage 3 students. **Freya**, year 9, explained the group's process. "We came together and developed loads of ideas, carried out surveys, and came up with the shortlist of food waste, wellbeing, and equality. We presented our ideas through a school assembly and a social media poll." A focus group, including representatives from the group's project partners, Rugeley Town Council, helped to decide on the final idea. A "celebration of difference" was chosen as everyone felt it would be a powerful way to bring people together and address the root causes of the intolerance that minority groups face, including misinformation and a lack of understanding.

The first in Hart's series of events included live music, Caribbean steel pans, Bhangra dancing, and student performances, as well as opportunities to taste food from around the world. Attendees also had the opportunity to contribute to a mural, sign up to a community pledge, and hear about others' experience over a cup of tea. A member of the student team shared their personal experience of having autism and a hidden disability at one of the stalls, finding that people were "interested in finding out more". Other roles taken on by students included being a compère introducing different acts, handing out food and balloons, and collecting donations. The whole team divided responsibilities, including researching and planning before the event, and ensuring its success on the day.

Although unsure what the response would be like, **Charlie** shared how the group was "so happy that loads of people turned up". Looking back on her highlight, **Freya** was pleased to see "everything come together. Everyone smiled, danced together, and tried new things. It showed us that it was all worth doing." **Sam Bird**, Rugeley Development Manager, reflected on the impact of the event: "The young people brought a completely fresh and exciting element which we haven't seen before in Rugeley. Our small town is quite traditional in its values and being able to bring new perspectives and an insight into different cultures and lifestyles was not just educational but entirely welcomed." The school received many emails with positive comments and praise for the event and the school's celebration of diversity. **Sandip Dosanjh**, Assistant Principal and project lead, shared how the project "reached not only the local community but the old school community who have contacted the school to say how important this theme was due to their experiences in the town over 10 years ago."

Equality Street is the first of a series of events and activities that will be organised by Hart's social action group who will continue to raise awareness in school and in the wider community. **Sam Bird** expressed that the council are "looking forward to working with this young group of visionaries on our next community project". The plan for next year is a Notting Hill style carnival in Rugeley, providing another opportunity to bring everyone together and address inequality.



Performances from Bhangra dancers and Hart School's dance club.



Charlie, year 8, event compère and dance-off competition winner.





Reverend Matthew Price.



Making birdboxes in the DT workshop.



Hand-painted pots ready to give out.



Shaun, year 8, serves dessert at one of the Mary Magdalen community groups.

LYNN GROVE ACADEMY

How can we support positive mental health within our school, and wider community?

It all started with grand ambition: project lead and teacher of health and social care, **Michelle Sims**, invited all students in years 7 to 10 to participate in a community project. She first drummed up interest by explaining what social change is and what changemakers are and shared examples of projects in other schools in the UK, such as community gardens, racism awareness campaigns, and community magazines. Michelle then asked the students to think of ideas which might make a positive change in their own community. An incredible total of 167 ideas were submitted for the initial stage by nearly 800 students which were narrowed down to themes. Thus, the "Spread a Little Happiness Project" was born.

Working with Reverend **Matthew Price** and **Anna Price** at Mary Magdalen Church, two groups were identified, both aimed at reducing isolation and providing support for those who can't find support elsewhere.

Matthew is delighted that the students want to support their community. "Gorleston is quite a mixed area. Our church is in the heart of a big council estate, one of the most deprived communities in Norfolk. [The students] really are helping people who don't have very much."

"Some of those older people won't see people your age very often at all, and that really meant a lot to them."

A creative group, the students were keen to make gifts to raise a smile: hand-painted pots planted with strawberries and tomatoes, care packages with pretty homemade sweets, and birdboxes made from wood offcuts from the school's Design & Technology room. Reverend Matthew was "really pleased, because they had made things to give to the people we were already working to serve".

Anna remembers the students' outing, to support a group of vulnerable adults: people who are struggling for a whole variety of reasons. "There were about 40 or 50 people sat at tables – quite a daunting prospect to go and serve them. Suddenly [the students] put their aprons on and turned into waiters and waitresses! I could see that some of them were scared and nervous, but they were amazing at overcoming their nerves."

A second visit, this time to meet a smaller group of isolated older people, allowed time for students to talk to the people they were serving. "It was really lovely to see you chatting with the older people," remembers Reverend Matthew. "Some of those older people won't see people your age very often at all, and that really meant a lot to them – to chat to you and hear your experience."

The feedback from members of the community who had received the gifts was equally impressive. One member of the second group the students visited, in her eighties and living on her own, reported back excitedly that she'd already had 87 tomatoes from her tomato plant! Others have written letters to the school praising "charming and well-mannered" students and expressing thanks to "the lad who made me the best cup of coffee ever".

Phoebe, a year 8 student and enthusiastically involved in the project since its inception, is proud of their early achievements: "We're very pleased with what we've done. We do this to make people happy and we're glad to have achieved that goal."

Offering the generous gift of both time and crafting skills, Michelle and the student team have aspirations to continue to support the communities they've met. "We are hoping to go back in nearer to Christmas. Phoebe loves to paint and draw so she's going to lead a project to make hand-painted Christmas cards, and we're thinking about Christmas presents for families and children – there are so many families that would really benefit."



Michelle Sims (centre) with year 8 students Molly (left) and Phoebe.



Weavers were among 50 schools selected to join a "Superbloom" project, celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

"It definitely makes them think more about their community."



A team of litter pickers from Weavers.



Georgina and Freddie of Wellie Wombles, with one of the 1,900 bags of litter they've picked up so far this year.



WEAVERS ACADEMY

How can we promote wellbeing through a greener community?

In a recent school survey, 64 per cent of students at **Weavers** reported a greater appreciation for the outdoors following lockdown. Knowing about the opportunity of a social action project, 72 per cent of students identified a wish to improve the natural environment, whilst 86 per cent identified supporting disadvantaged families within the local community as a priority for school support.

One priority for Weavers' Our Town project is to support the development, resourcing, and cultivation of their own school vegetable and herb garden. Some of the funds have been spent on polytunnels, installed on the school grounds. The garden will provide opportunities for wider curriculum experiences for students, as well as generating produce that will be used to support the local community and be shared with families. Weavers are also hoping to run parent and student cooking classes.

But with a student population firmly fixed on improving their local environment, this is a multilayered project with a number of different interwoven opportunities. One of these opportunities came in the form of participation in the "Tower Superbloom" project. One of 50 schools selected nationally, Weavers planted wildflower seeds in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Freddie and Georgina Harris, founders of Wellie Wombles, presented the school with another opportunity when they contacted Weavers looking for litter-picking volunteers. "It started at the beginning of lockdown when we had to walk to our nearest shop along the walkway, to get a bit of exercise and get our shopping," explains Freddie, "and we thought 'Bloody hell!' [about the litter]." Taking a litter picker out with them on their next walk, they later created a group on Facebook, intending to encourage a few others to take up the initiative. "Now we've got 804 members in our group!"

Jon Hunt, Interim Principal, has founded the "Queensway Group" (named after the ward in which the school is situated) that aims to improve links within the community, improve the area in which the majority of pupils live, and provide high-quality opportunities for young people locally. As part of this commitment, Weavers intends to take every year 8 student out on a litter-picking trip in the local area. Some are shocked by how bad the situation is. **James**, reflecting on the

success of his last outing was dismayed: "Two weeks ago, it was clean, but today, I was absolutely disgusted to see what's happened." **Rheya** can't understand how people let this happen: "They see hundreds of bins, but they still don't have the courtesy to put [the rubbish] in the bin. They just leave it in bushes."

Out on the litter pick, competition is fierce, with students keen to share exactly how many bags they've collected, trying to outdo those who have been out previously. **Scott**, another enthusiastic year 8, admitted that "to be honest, this all feels like a fun activity rather than a chore!"

Freddie notes that there's a nice little incentive for participation: "They all receive goody bags at the end, given to us by a local manufacturer, and that spreads the word to the other kids." **Emma Huett**, Assistant Principal, also sees many students naturally motivated to make their local area better: "These are places close to them [that need improving], which they want to do more about." **Dawn Ferguson**, science teacher and Community project lead, agrees: "It definitely makes them think more about their community."

Bianca, Connor, Sophia, and Jodie, year 11.



Thistley Hough's project group.

"We want to make the school and our community a space where people feel safe, without discrimination and prejudice."



Year 10s work with Lawrence Davis Creative Agency, developing a media campaign to create safe spaces for girls.



Planning the allyship manifesto.



THISTLEY HOUGH ACADEMY

What impactful actions can we do to promote and foster allyship?

Thistley Hough's Our Town project is founded on the honesty of its students. It all started when the school created a space for students to raise their concerns. These included discrimination, xenophobia, harassment, problematic language, and a call for more safe spaces. Despite the different priorities, the group saw a way to unite their ideas. **Sophia**, year 11, explained: "We all had these separate issues that we put forward, but we realised that everything connected." They decided to focus on allyship – ensuring that students and the wider community felt empowered to act with and for others to promote inclusion and social justice. **Charlie**, year 10, summarised their overall goal: "to make the school and our community a space where people feel safe, without discrimination and prejudice".

Nearly 30 students are part of the core project group, and each has a different motive for joining and a different story to tell. Some were concerned by the discrimination their parents faced as immigrants, even after living in the UK for over 20 years and having gained British citizenship. Others wanted to help change the narrative and perception of people of colour, based on the prejudice they'd personally experienced. Members of the group also wanted to challenge inappropriate use of language, such as the casual use of racist and homophobic slurs and catcalling. As **Jodie**, year 11, emphasised, "We wanted people to be more educated. The number one priority was to share information and knowledge." **Kirstie Hicks**, staff project lead and Assistant Principal, talked about her pride in the group and how they "were brave enough to acknowledge that something was wrong, but with a solution to change it".

The solutions put forward by the group have come in many forms, with plenty of exciting plans ahead. A student-led strategy day at Spode potteries enabled ideas to emerge and sub-groups to develop.

Amongst the outputs for the project are an allyship manifesto in the form of a zine, a guerrilla campaign to distribute the manifesto across the community, a podcast featuring special guest activists in the community, and a campaign to provide safe spaces for women.

The students aspire to have a far-reaching impact. With their drive and a host of project partners on side, there's huge scope in what they can achieve. Many new partners have been excited to contribute. Students are working alongside staff from Staffordshire University on their manifesto, who have helped them find creative ways of getting their message across. Through this partnership, students will deliver training to PGCE teachers, ensuring allyship is high on the agenda for new teachers. **Katie Leonard**, Lecturer of Initial Teacher Education at Staffordshire University, shared how it had been "a pleasure to work alongside young people, whose collective endeavour is to explore art as activism to ensure social justice... I personally learned so much from the group discussions and was empowered by their aspirations." Through their campaign, the group plan to reach local businesses, schools, faith and community groups, and local radio stations.

The group are also joining existing community alliances, such as the Violence Reduction Alliance who work across the public and private sector, charities, and community groups to better understand and support individuals and communities throughout Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. In partnership with local police and councillors, students are also helping to inform an approach where venues and local business can create sanctuary spaces for individuals to access safety and support when needed. The project group have been invited to speak on this at a conference with the Institute for Education.

The work of the project group is already having an impact. Kirstie Hicks shared how the discussions on allyship have "united people who would never have spoken before, and started a dialogue giving teachers and students the courage to challenge inappropriate language and behaviours". Members of the school community feel more empowered, with the tools to question and take action when something doesn't feel right – something they're excited to promote in the wider community through their manifesto and events next year.

Students plan ahead for their first cooking classes.



The project group identify a patch for their allotment.



ASH GREEN SCHOOL

How can we tackle food poverty and promote healthy eating?

Gurj Cheema, project lead and PE teacher, sent out a form to parents to find out what they thought the community needed: “We looked at what the community had, and what the community could benefit from.” From this, the student team, formed of enthusiastic year 8 and 9s, ran with their ideas, which ranged from litter picking to road safety campaigns to lessons for adults to be taught the things they hadn’t previously learned. “We had a vote on what everyone would want to do and what would work best,” reports Gurj. **Ash Green** wanted to tackle food poverty and promote healthy eating, which they’ll address through an allotment and by providing cooking classes for all.

The students’ intention is to develop a small allotment plot on the school grounds and use the fruit and vegetables they grow as the ingredients in cooking lessons for the local community. Gurj is keen on “getting people in [to Ash Green]: parents and children who are unsure how to cook from

scratch”. Intergenerational learning is key to this project’s success. There have been discussions about bringing in family members to teach key gardening skills or to cook their favourite recipes for others.

The project is in its infancy but the students have big aspirations. A space has been identified for the allotment, and there are plans in place for future cooking lessons for more people to benefit from the project.

Within the project team are students who enjoy gardening, cooking, and baking but all are driven by giving food to people who need it, something that they plan to do with their excess produce. One year 8 noted astutely that “things are getting more expensive”. “I feel good about this project,” continued one year 9 student. “People are in a position where they can’t afford to put their heating on. It’s a nice feeling to help someone who might really need it.”

QUEEN ELEANOR PRIMARY ACADEMY

How can the school choir support our fundraising activities?

The pupil choir plays an essential role in school fundraising activities at **Queen Eleanor**. **Isaac Howarth**, Headteacher, explained that the choir was an effective way of engaging the local community, and “really gets parents involved”, which helps with the school’s fundraising efforts.

The choir have been rehearsing for their first performance of the academic year – singing at a coffee morning to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support. As well as hearing from the choir, attendees of the fundraising event have a staff Bake Off to look forward to, with the Head Boy and Girl acting as the judges.

There are 12 members of the choir from years 4 to 6, led by year 2 teacher **Elliot Aldridge**. Elliot is the ideal leader, with a personal interest in the performing arts and even writing his own musicals. When it came to selecting students, staff focused on finding those who might not otherwise have access to the arts. Whilst some students continued their role from a previous year, most are new to the choir to ensure that more students have access to this opportunity. **Oscar**, year 4, who recently joined, explained that his parents were “very happy when I got into choir”. He was motivated to join as “I wanted to do something different, and I like to sing.”

Friday lunchtime rehearsals typically involve playing games together to warm up, before rehearsing songs for their upcoming performances. Members of the choir enjoy being able to choose some of their own songs. Each student can put forward their suggestions, with a vote to determine the winning song. “Rewrite the Stars” from *The Greatest Showman* was a popular choice for the upcoming performance.

Ocean, year 6, is in her second year of choir. Talking about her previous performances, she shared that it can be “quite scary as there are lots of people”, but that she’s excited for the upcoming event. Ocean has really enjoyed being part of the choir: “I love singing, it makes me really happy.” She feels it’s important to help fundraising efforts through the choir at school: “Some people don’t have what they need, and it’s not fair.”

The choir have a range of performances ahead of them which will tie in with Queen Eleanor’s calendar of fundraising activities including those for Save the Children around Christmas, Children in Need, and food drives to support families of Far Cotton, Northampton. The school’s fundraising events are an opportunity to bring together people from the local area. Thinking about the school community as he enters his fourth year at the school, Elliot discussed how “the children and their families are a big part of why I’m here. There’s something really special about this area.”



Ocean, year 6.

Members of the choir rehearsing together.



Year 6 volunteers prepare the soil of the raised beds and reception pupils discover the pear tree.



Gemma Askew helps a Reception pupil plant onions.

THREE PEAKS PRIMARY ACADEMY

How can we support members of our local community by learning about how fruit and vegetables grow and by promoting healthy eating?

Driven by a wish to encourage the community to eat more fresh fruit and vegetables and understand where their food comes from, **Three Peaks** staff and pupils have started their very own school market garden.

Gemma Askew, lunchtime supervisor at Three Peaks and keen amateur gardener, is concerned that “a lot of children don’t realise that food doesn’t come from a supermarket – a lot of it comes from the ground. Once they’ve learned this, they can take this home with them.” With raised beds installed by local firm A & N Joinery and ground prepared by a group of year 6 volunteers, the first crops are now being planted. Reception pupils are carefully placing onion bulbs into the soil, the older pupils helping them with the more delicate strawberry plants. Many of the year 6 pupils are delighted to be outside: “Gardening is really fun and really relaxing,” reflects one, whilst one four-year-old has her eyes keenly on the results: “I want to grow strawberries because I love strawberries!”

Gemma has ambition too and would love to see the school develop a sensory garden “especially for some of the younger ones. Lamb’s ear, lemon verbena, thyme, oregano – I’m happy to bring in my cuttings to share with the kids.”

Community partnerships built around a common aim are key, explains Headteacher **Richard Penn-Bourton**: “We’ve donated our scrap metal to Tameside Wildlife Conservation Group for upkeep of their tools, and in return, they want to build a bug tower for us.” But it’s also about finding individuals who just want to help, Richard continues: “The person who installed our raised beds lives around the corner [from school] and has volunteered to water the garden at weekends.”

Three Peaks has also built strong links with Tamworth Round Table, a social group for young men keen to try new activities and support their local community. Started in lockdown, members of Tamworth Round Table supported the school in delivering weekly food packs to families in need of support and also provided reconditioned laptops to families struggling to access online learning. Several of the school’s families supported their work by donating unused old devices in return.

There are Round Table groups all around the world. “The link with Round Table is something we value enormously,” says Richard. “Following all the support Round Table give to the school, we recently hosted both Tamworth and Lichfield Round Tables so that they could play dodgeball. And in the summer they will hopefully be returning to use our 18-hole FootGolf course!”

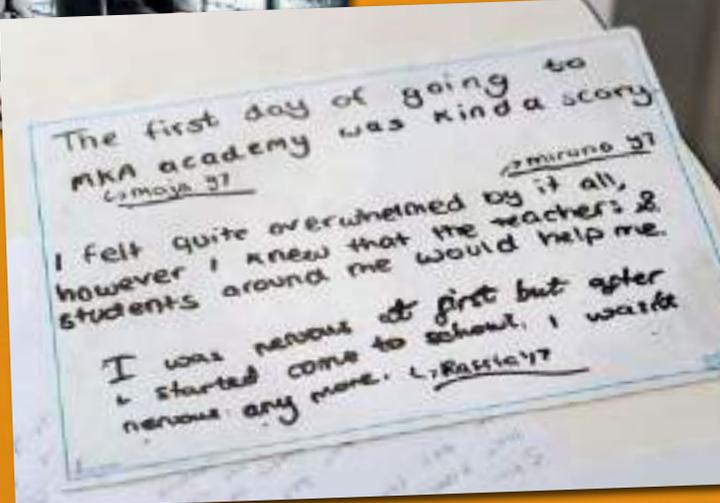
Sport is a key interest of many pupils at Three Peaks. Capitalising on a relationship started during lockdown, Wasps RFC have been into school to deliver a number of Rugby Football Union (RFU)-backed programmes and support the running of after-school touch rugby sessions. Whilst working with the school, the Wasps have donated over 500 free tickets to watch the club in the Gallagher Premiership – thereby recruiting a number of new junior Wasps fans. The school has also forged a community connection for those who prefer football. Premier League and FA Cup winner **Marc Albrighton** grew up close to Three Peaks and has supported the school in launching a number of opportunities and opening events for them. There are also initiatives whereby the families of professional footballers have provided spare boots and kit to families at Three Peaks. As a result of this work and support, several Three Peaks children have successfully trialled for local football clubs.

Three Peaks are making it clear that creating and maintaining links within the local community has benefits for schools, businesses, and individuals alike.

The year 8 project team. From left to right, Aniyah, Manuella, Nabihah and Nicole.



Year 11 students support the core year 8 team. Back row (left to right): Abdul, Fareed, Laszlo, Aniyah, and Nabihah. Front row (left to right): Aiden, Milena, Nicole, and Manuella.



Year 7 students reflect on their first day of secondary school.



“We want to include as many people as we can from all around Milton Keynes – to see if there are things they need help with.”

THE MILTON KEYNES ACADEMY

How can we help new arrivals in our community feel more welcomed and supported?

This is the driving question formed in part by a project group of new starters at **Milton Keynes** and other students identified as speaking English as an additional language (EAL).

A core project team has been formed of four year 8s – **Manuella, Nabihah, Aniyah and Nicole** – matched with a support team of year 11 students. The team have been smartly collecting current year 7s’ experiences of joining the school and, in many cases, moving to Milton Keynes for the first time. They also all have personal experience to draw on. “I joined the school in year 8, and I was kind of new to Milton Keynes as well,” remembers **Milena**, now in year 11. “I know all the problems they talk about – I experienced them myself. Knowing what that feels like, I wanted to be a part of the project to help people who are struggling now.”

At the first event, the core team gave a presentation about the project to an assembled group of year 7 students and invited them to share their own experiences of being new at school. Nabihah noted that the experiences of many students gathered there echoed her own. “Someone was nervous and scared, speaking a different language they didn’t understand. No one understood them. I know how I felt at that time as well.”

The students at the event then participated in a quiz on Milton Keynes and the surrounding area, with the winners presented with goody bags. All came away knowing a little more about the city they live in.

The presentation was not entirely in the comfort zone of every student leading it, but you’d never have known. “They were all so nervous to do this presentation,” said **Sayema Ahmed**, project lead and science teacher, “[but] seeing them up there today, they all looked super confident.”

Now the project team’s attention is turning to producing practical support for new students. “We are going to film a [school] tour and we’re writing a script at the moment,” reports Milena. “[We’ll be] going between the villages [sections in the school] showing how to get from one to another.”

The team will also develop a “welcome pack” to help students explore Milton Keynes before they arrive. This will include a comprehensive map of the school site and a “get to know your teacher” section to introduce teachers within departments, as well as general information and expectations. The intention is to have this pack translated into the first languages most often spoken by new families, and other languages as and when needed.

There are plans to create events welcoming year 7s and their families to Milton Keynes. Sayema and the team are keen to “help students and families to integrate more into the Milton Keynes society and community, hosting these events and showing them what Milton Keynes is all about.” **Laszlo**, year 11, is keen “to include as many people as we can – parents and students from all around Milton Keynes – to see if there are things they need help with so that we can start to support with answers.”

Further down the line, the project group hope to talk openly about bullying and racism, sadly experiences that some EAL families moving to Milton Keynes share: “We’d like to bring in our local MP to talk to our students and families, and to listen to them.”

Big plans indeed. But for now, reflecting on successes so far and looking forward to what’s coming, Sayema expresses pride in the student team: “I am super proud of what [the students] have achieved, and what they are going to achieve in the future.”

“I want people to be proud of being from Northampton and to see what we can do.”

Year 8 students with litter pickers and models of Northampton's buildings created from recycling.



Ellie (bottom right) working on her presentation with her team.

Year 8 team with Carol Scrivener-Wallace, working on their model.



Model of Delapré Abbey.

Madison (left) working on the Queen Eleanor Cross with her team.



ABBEYFIELD SCHOOL

How can our town improve its environment?

When a whole school survey was shared for students to input their ideas on the main issues impacting their town, an overwhelming majority felt that more needed to be done to clean up the local environment. A social action group was formed, acting as changemakers to tackle litter and single-use plastics.

Madison, year 8, talked about the extent of littering in the area. “I noticed litter in the parks and the lakes when I take my dog for a walk. I wanted to get involved to help the local community.” **Ellie**, year 8, shared similar motivations. She enjoys caring for the environment and has planted trees and flowers with her grandparents. “I wanted to make people more aware, and help Northampton be a better place to live. The area can be beautiful, and then you realise it’s a great place to be.”

Actions already taken by **Abbeyfield’s** group include litter picks, letter writing, and meeting with the mayor of Northampton. Determined to tackle the root causes of littering, the group will be running a campaign to encourage behaviour change. They plan to deliver assemblies in local primaries, promote awareness throughout the school, and lead on re-use initiatives to encourage recycling. **Carol Scrivener-Wallace**, staff lead and Assistant Principal, talked about how the students have “engaged really well with the project. They’ve been really positive, and love wearing the high-vis jackets for litter picks!”

Caleb, year 8, has been involved in the project since the start. He’s enjoyed taking part in the litter picking and meeting the mayor last year who “listened to our concerns and the change we wanted to see”. Common things he’s found include bottles, crisp packets, and plastic containers.

He’s keen to lead on more clean-up projects across the community. Reflecting on what he’s learnt, he shared how he’s discovered “that you can use rubbish to build so many different things”.

In September 2022, year 8s in the group took on the challenge of repurposing rubbish to create a piece of artwork linked to Northampton’s heritage. Thirty year 8 students researched Northampton’s history and monuments, before working in groups to develop a plan to replicate one of the town’s famous buildings using resources from a recent litter pick. Replicas of the Guildhall, the Queen Eleanor Cross, Delapré Abbey, the National Lift Tower, All Saints’ Church, and Sixfields Stadium were created. At the end of the day, each team delivered a presentation, talking about the history of their chosen building and their motivations for selecting it. Reasons included the monument being “iconic to Northampton”, wanting to find out more about a place that they walked past every day, or wanting to celebrate the home of Northampton Town FC as “we have all been and never miss a match!”

“The area can be beautiful, and then you realise it’s a great place to be.”

Abbeyfield’s event focused on repurposing rubbish and highlighting the extent of plastic use, whilst celebrating the rich history of Northampton. **Tina Casey**, teacher of humanities and drama, discussed how the history curriculum includes links to Northampton’s heritage and how the school plans to arrange talks from local historians and visits to the Northampton Battlefields and Delapré Abbey. Tina looks forward to starting a local history club in school. “I want people to be proud of being from Northampton and to see what we can do as a school.” After hearing the student presentations, Tina invited discussions from the group on how they could reduce plastic and encourage others to repurpose plastic on a more regular basis, leading to a host of innovative ideas to create change at Abbeyfield.

WRENN SCHOOL

How can we encourage our students to become role models for other young people in the community?

Wrenn are on a mission to increase the confidence of young people in Wellingborough, and to give them access to experiences that they might not otherwise have had. This has manifested in both residential trips out, community partners bringing activities in, and students acting as role models in the wider community.

For most secondary school pupils, PE lessons do not include archery as a core activity. But that is the aim of Wrenn who, thanks to a partnership with Wellingborough Open Archery Club (WOAC), are planning to bring bows and arrows into the curriculum.

It all started as an afterschool activity, then a club that ran in the summer of 2022 which students who have caring responsibilities at home were invited to attend.

Helen Sharpe of WOAC, brings in professional coaches to teach students the skills of archery. For Helen, coming into school is a valuable way of introducing a sport that she loves to a new audience and perhaps even finding some WOAC members of the future: "Football and cricket clubs are easily found, but we're not all team sport players." She is certain that finding the sport that fits the student encourages confidence and independence.

Archery is just one of a number of activities offered to Wrenn students as part of their enrichment programme. Included in the options available to pupils are indoor BMX, sailing at Thrapston Sailing Club, rock climbing, and swimming and lifesaving lessons. The range available exposes students to different experiences and influences, enabling them to find build resilience and find out more about themselves. However, the school want to ensure that the benefits of a rich extracurricular offer are not felt by the students alone. They are creating ambassadors from their programme, who can act as role models for other young people in their local community. Through their ambassador network, they aim to reach other schools and local primaries. In an area impacted by the increasing cost of living crisis and limited opportunities for youth groups and youth organisations, they want to ensure that young people can speak to relatable role models.

Aaron, year 10, is one of Wrenn's first ambassadors. In the summer of 2022, Aaron was part of an expedition to Longtown Outdoor Learning Centre, where he took part in walking, climbing, caving, and other thrilling challenges in the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains. The learning centre offered the chance for young people to be away from home, participating in something they'd never done before.

Thinking back to the impact of the trip, Aaron discussed how "the main idea [of the trip] was to build relationships. It gave me the opportunity to make friends with other people. I'm best friends with some of them now." He went out of his comfort zone, including overcoming claustrophobia through caving: "I was afraid I'd get stuck! But we had teachers there helping us get through it." The physical challenges also offered the opportunity to make links back to the classroom. For example, caving was an opportunity to learn about rock formations. Aaron recalls realising that he was learning about geography as he climbed a mountain: "It was a hands-on experience, seeing things that we've been learning about. It strengthened my understanding [of the subject]."

As an ambassador, Aaron is sharing his experience to help others engage with the opportunities available. Back at school, Aaron was selected to present his experience back to his year group and to the governors of the school. A daunting prospect, but one which he has grabbed with both hands – understanding what the opportunity would bring to him: "I was really outgoing, but not an eloquent speaker. But doing more, I'm getting better."

Aaron wants to use his experiences and his voice to be an advocate for others: "I want to be a representative for disadvantaged groups – I want to speak up for them." Assistant Principal, **Hannah Jones**, has no doubt he has much talent in this field already and calls Aaron "a fabulous role model for our community." We look forward to hearing more about the impact Aaron and other ambassadors can have.



Aaron, year 10.



On the water with Middle Nene Sailing Club.



Wrenn's archery club with Helen Sharpe of WOAC and coach Maggie Squires.



Adventuring with Longtown Outdoor Learning Centre.



Members of the Our Town project group from years 8 and 9 discussing plans for the cultural week.



ELLIS GUILFORD SCHOOL

How can we promote and celebrate diversity within the community?

Ellis Guilford's Diversity Together initiative focuses on promoting tolerance and acceptance, creating allies, and celebrating diversity in the school and wider community. Their Our Town project builds on this, working with established student groups to create an annual "cultural week".

At Ellis Guilford, representation matters, and groups have been created to ensure that all students feel represented. The groups include those for students with disabilities, students from different cultural backgrounds, and students who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community. The groups are a forum to voice concerns, connect with others, and create positive change. Each of these groups have representatives who feed into the school's Diversity Council, made up of staff and students, to influence change. The council has been a space for progress, being a driving force behind setting up private gender-neutral toilets in the school, as well as ensuring that there is a more diverse selection of food in the cafeteria to represent other cultures. Students can also voice ideas as to how to embed diversity further into the teaching curriculum. The work happening in school is supported by community partners such as Base 51, a charity which provides counselling and group work for students, to help them with whatever they might be going through.

The planned cultural week will be a time for all groups and for all students to celebrate. The idea was initially developed by two students in year 10, **Meredith** and **Gabriella**, who were inspired to take action following the Black Lives Matter protests. Gabriella discussed how they wanted to "bring joy into the school, as well as education and understanding". Their ideas for the cultural week include opportunities for students to wear traditional clothing and to arrange performances

of cultural dances and teach routines to other students. Meredith shared her excitement for the project: "I really liked how much the teachers fully listened and took on our ideas. It's unbelievable that this is actually happening!"

The Our Town project group will be bringing in ideas from across the school, making everyone feel heard ahead of the upcoming cultural week. The LGBTQIA+ club will have all the Pride flags represented and will help others to understand their meaning and importance to the LGBTQIA+ community. Other students are keen to share more about their culture and heritage through food, sport, and music. The students hope to create a festival feeling and celebratory atmosphere throughout the school.

The students plan to take the celebrations beyond Ellis Guilford's school gates to involve the wider community and share their values and learning. Each school group has already created their own video for the school website and YouTube channel, helping to promote understanding. **Jay**, year 9, has made a video explaining the letters LGBTQIA+, and letting viewers know that "whichever group you belong to, we want you to know that you are safe here with us". The video also acknowledges queer history as a "history of struggle around the world", talking about the impacts of homophobia that the community still faces.

Through the groups and the cultural week, the students will champion diversity and make sure everyone feels like they belong. For Meredith, working as a team with all students is essential: "We're all bringing our own ideas and it's so nice to see everyone come together. It will make us even stronger."



Members of the Our Town project team, including the staff leads Emily Hardstaff and Kirsty Latimer, and Adam Mufazal Yusufali from Base 51.

"We want to bring joy, as well as education and understanding."

Ellis Guilford's Our Town project group.



Meredith and Gabriella, year 10, who came up with the idea for Ellis Guildford's culture week.

THE BULWELL ACADEMY

How can we promote healthy lifestyles and address food deprivation?

When **Bulwell** launched their Our Town project, they invited students to sign up to be a changemaker, defined as “someone – anyone – who sees a problem, steps up, and takes creative action to solve it for the good of all”. The Bulwell Changemakers learnt about active citizenship and how they could play a role in addressing the issues affecting their local community. As a result of the pandemic, they became more aware of food poverty and how many people relied on local food banks and deliveries of food parcels. The group decided to set up a garden space to grow fruit and vegetables to donate their produce, helping to tackle food deprivation. The Changemakers also hoped to put their new horticulture skills to further use, making others aware of sustainable food production and how to grow things on their own.

Students took on different roles as they approached their project. Setting up a new garden space involved a lot of preparation, including researching potential plants to grow, investigating resources and budget required, and creating designs for the garden. **Kane**, year 8, enjoys designing and drawing and was glad to put his skills to use through the gardening project: “It was a chance to do something different.” An idea for a bug hotel was developed to create a habitat for insects and to help biodiversity.

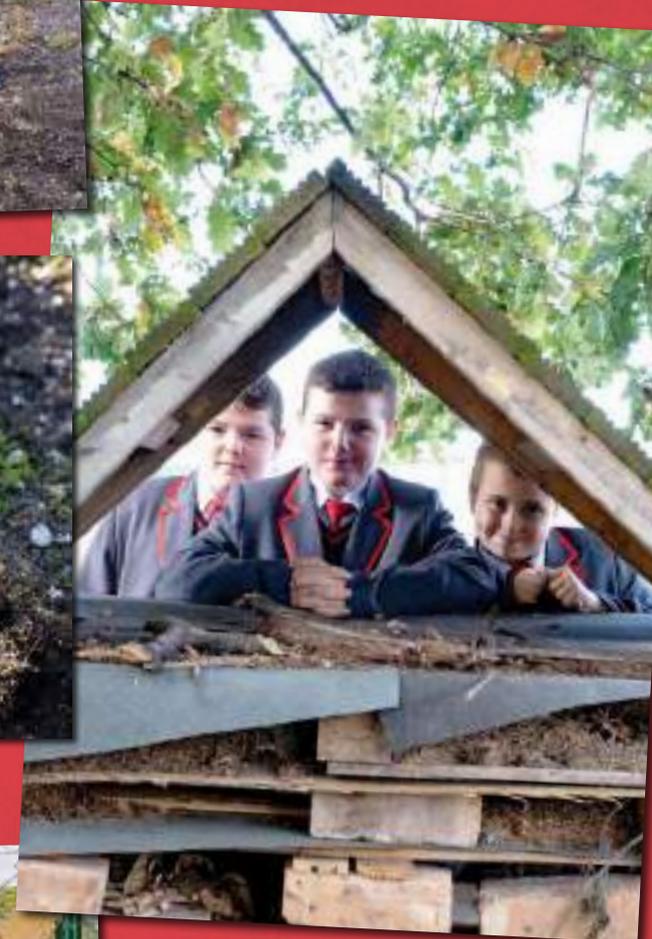
For **Lucas**, year 8, the focus was more on growing and tending to the produce. He was involved at the start of the process, planting seeds in pots indoors and “creating protected areas so bugs don’t get to it!” Lucas explained his motive for this role: “I like watching things grow. I want to be a gardener when I’m older, helping people to have enough food.” Although the project seemed daunting at first, the group was excited to see the results. The first produce included beetroot, potatoes, apples, squash, and cabbages. Looking ahead to future developments, Lucas hopes to grow strawberries and blackberries.

The Bulwell Changemakers wanted the project to be a chance for students to learn about gardening and develop new skills. For **Kayla**, former year 11 student, the project enabled her to work on budget management skills as she planned resources for the garden, whilst helping her to build on her leadership skills. “Being a leader in Changemakers taught me how to talk in front of groups of people and lead activities. I also now know the fundamentals of taking care of a garden and growing produce.” The learning can be extended beyond the core group, as a new summer house will provide an alternative space for science lessons. As well as being a space for learning and development, the group aims for the garden to be an environment to support student mental health and wellbeing – creating somewhere to switch off in and relax.

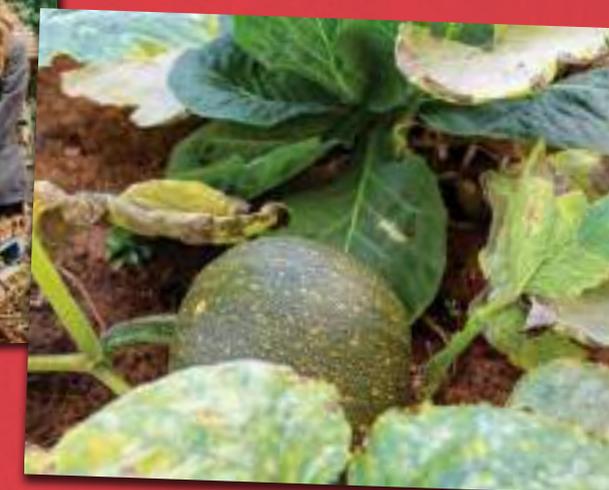
“Changemakers taught me how to talk in front of groups of people and lead activities.”

Lucas, Kane, and **Kieran** are now spreading the word about the project. They plan to create posters, encouraging others to get involved. Kane shared how “even if they don’t know how to grow plants, we can teach them”, ensuring everyone has a chance to take part and make a difference. This learning is not limited to Bulwell students alone. Last year, students set up a community podcast to talk about “real-world issues in our community and beyond”. One of their first guests was **Alex Norris**, MP for Nottingham North, who visited the school in March 2022 to have a tour of the garden, hear about Bulwell’s plans, and be interviewed for the podcast. Through the podcast, Alex talked about his role as an MP and his priorities for the community, sharing his advice for young people: “Taking part is the main thing. It’s your community just as much as it’s mine... you have a stake in this and should be listened to and heard, but you need to speak up.” He certainly felt that the Bulwell Changemakers were making great steps towards this. The new project leads hope to revive the podcast, enabling more people in the community to find out about the project and the impact they can have.

Kieran, Kane, and Lucas, year 8, clearing the garden patch and exploring Bulwell’s bug hotel.



The Bulwell Changemakers welcomed Alex Norris MP to the allotment last year.



Produce from Bulwell’s gardening project.

WOODLANDS PRIMARY ACADEMY

How can we protect the environment from the dangers of litter?

A whole school survey led to a discovery of what the most important issues were for the children at **Woodlands**: litter and wildlife.

Once the whole school had been consulted and enthused about the activity, it was time to form a pupil steering group. Class teachers of years 2 to 6 were asked to select one child from each of their classes that they felt would be passionate about the project, or who would benefit from developing the skills that this opportunity would bring. The resulting group, a mix of ages from 6 to 11, are known around school as the 'Eco Council' and wear the shiny badges they've been awarded with pride.

Engaging the whole school is an important factor in this project. Led by Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) **Madison Mckeever**, the most recent action has been to provide thought-provoking information through class presentations written and delivered by the Eco Council themselves. Armed with shocking facts about the length of time it takes a plastic bottle to decompose (about 450 years) and that, terrifyingly, chewing gum never biodegrades, the Council stepped into classrooms of pupils eager to hear what they had to say. Each presentation finished with a call to action and a request for ideas from classmates to approach the Eco Council if they have any ideas on how to stop littering.

Phoebe, year 3 member of the Eco Council, was proud of her involvement in the presentations: "It was a really good experience. I've never done anything like that before. I'm really quite shy!"

With pupils already inspired to litter pick on the school field, it's hoped that the next step will be to spread the word to the local community. Plans are afoot for the winning entries of a school-wide poster competition, producing artwork to encourage the local community to use bins for their litter, which will be professionally printed and installed by Bradwell Parish Council.

There are also grand ideas beyond stopping littering. **Luca**, year 6, is keen to encourage the younger years at school to look after the natural environment by starting up a small garden. He has aspirations to support them in growing fruit and vegetables and building a bug hotel, helping them to understand their part in caring for nature. "I feel really good about this," enthused Luca.

Madison is delighted by the pupils' enthusiasm and explains her pride in "their willingness to throw themselves into the project. They're wanting to tell people about the issues surrounding littering and find a way to fight it. I'm excited to see what they can do."

Currently meeting fortnightly as a lunch club, Madison has plans for the Eco Council beyond its current form: "There's enthusiasm in the younger years, and if we expand [our council], we can get more done!"

"They're wanting to tell people about the issues surrounding littering and find a way to fight it."

"It was a really good experience. I've never done anything like that before."



The Eco Council delivering their presentations.



The Eco Council with their posters for the local community.



Eco Council members Phoebe, year 3 and Luca, year 6.



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