

The magazine of Creative Education Academies Issue no.1 November 2014

Connected



Group think

New collaborative energy
and ideas from the first
joint CEAT staff awayday



Getting connected



The inaugural issue of *Connected* is a rite of passage for a family of schools whose expansion from two to twelve in four years puts it in a great position to share knowledge and experience. The last academic

year saw a suite of three inter-academy events: days of performance, service and sports that brought students from far and wide in the Midlands to test their mettle against their peers. And our first cross-Trust photography competition. A calendar of subject meetings is growing in range and regularity: while design faculty teachers have met regularly since 2012, other collaborative groups have become established in maths, in post-16 education and in modern foreign languages. Finally, we are pleased to report in these pages on our first CEAT staff awayday: the benefits of belonging to a group are no longer theoretical.

We are especially grateful to the Garfield Weston and Conran Foundations and to the Happold Trust for their generous support of our programme activities.

It has been a pleasure to edit and organise this first magazine; to survey the range of achievement, ideas and sheer forward momentum that we witness on a daily basis in CEAT schools. Thank you to all the contributors, and to Holly Hartley, Principal of Thistley Hough Academy, for agreeing to appear on the cover. Please let us know what you think so the next issue can be even better.

Emily Campbell
Director of Programmes

HOT-A-TWEET

140 characters from the Chief Executive

Invited to an academy sponsors' reception at No. 10 Downing Street in May, I did not squander my opportunity to tell the Prime Minister about our terrific schools



Cross-Trust events

5 December 2014:

Day of Performance

SHAKESPEARE 5 x 5

Ash Green School, Coventry

Please see details on page 15

26 March 2015: Day of Service

Please see Rugeley Academies on page 14

1 July 2015: Staff Awayday

Please see cover feature on page 4

2 July 2015: Day of Sports

Weavers Academy, Wellingborough

Please see opposite page

Principals' meetings

21 January 2015

19 March 2015

25 June 2015

CEAT, 35 Old Queen Street, London

Design Faculty meetings

10 February 2015

21 April 2015

Heads of Sixth Form meetings

4 November 2014 Abbeyfield School

24 February 2015 Ash Green School

30 June 2015 Rugeley Sixth Form

Academy

Mathematics subject meetings

To be confirmed

MFL subject meetings

To be confirmed

All Stars on the Hough



On a perfect July day, 240 Year 8 and 9 students from our six secondary academies came together to compete in the second annual CEAT Day of Sports. On Thistley Hough's spectacular new playing fields, with resplendent views across the valley and hills of north Staffordshire, 40 athletes from each school fought fiercely for 11 team and individual sporting titles.

A packed morning of football, rounders and netball led into an afternoon of individual track and field events culminating in the 800m relay.

Our special guest, former heavyweight boxer Dermot Gascoyne, engaged students in a series of reaction-sharpening exercises as he told his own moving story of hard work and achievement in sport. He handed out this year's prizes, with Abbeyfield taking medals in badminton and rounders, Ash Green and Fair Oak winning Y8 and Y9 football respectively and Weavers putting in an astonishing performance to win both Y8 and Y9 netball.

An exciting afternoon session of athletics saw strong performances from Hagley Park in the Girls' throws, and from Thistley Hough in the Boys' and Girls' runs and the Boys' throws. In the end it was Ash Green School that took the CEAT Day of Sports athletics cup for 2014. Trophies were also awarded to Amy Grant of Weavers Academy and Brandon Hitchin of Fair Oak Academy for their outstanding performances during the day.



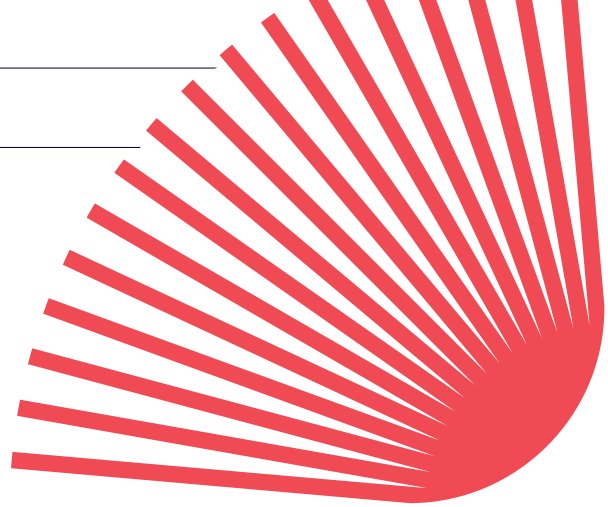
CONGRATULATIONS

- **Fair Oak** on their record GCSE results, up another 6% on last year
- **Harpfield** for their sustained academic excellence
- **Ash Green** for sustained academic excellence and for narrowing the Pupil Premium gap to an astonishing 4%

The first annual CEAT staff awayday in July drew 35 staff from six schools together to consider how, as an engine of educational excellence and social change, we can be more than the sum of our parts.

Staff gathered at the Warwick University conference centre and mingled, many for the first time, with their counterparts from other schools. Each delegate was assigned to one of four groups – Staff and Structures, Curriculum, Students and Community – facilitated by professionals from the worlds of education and beyond. These groups were challenged to conceive ten sketch ideas – at any scale – for how CEAT schools could benefit from being part of a group. In a room wallpapered with flip-chart sheets bearing testament to fertile group thinking, our guest facilitators fed back ideas ranging from the simple and achievable – a shared calendar – to the complex and ambitious notion of a school as a self-supporting economy with its own savings and loans mutual.

In the next session delegates were invited by Emily Campbell, Director of Programmes, to write a 'rule' or a motto for learning in response to one of the six CEAT Key Concepts. While Jos Astley (Rugeley Sixth Form) proposed "Knowledge isn't fixed", Holly Hartley (Thistle Hough) counselled "If you want to walk on water, get out of the boat". This exercise introduced our keynote speaker Tom Harrison from the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham, who led the room thoughtfully through the latest policy perspectives on character education and gave everyone food for thought and discussion over lunch.



Group think



“A sense of common purpose and value will give students a community of which they can be proud”

Dr William Richardson

More than the sum of our parts: a to-do list:

- A central shared database of staff, subjects, responsibilities, exam boards and courses
- A central resource bank of action research, case studies and opportunities for mentoring and development
- A shared calendar for the year ahead, integrating Trust-wide events with key local ones
- A clear vision that everyone can understand, simple and jargon-free
- Coordinated support for the new curriculum
- Centralised recruitment and career development opportunities
- CEAT training schools, linked to universities
- Student taskforces for buildings, grounds and maintenance to develop practical skills
- A database of parent professions, businesses and expertise
- An extended range of inter-academy days and events
- More creative use of school facilities by the community
- Students more visible, representing their school at community events
- More frequent and regular use of social media

A taster session of the Design Programme gave everyone present an opportunity to be creative; a chunked and scaffolded 45-minute lesson with lots of tracing paper to ease the fear of drawing, led by design faculty and the head office Programme team.

The morning's groups reconvened to refine their long lists down to three practical proposals, and presented them to the CEAT Directors and Deputy Chair of Trustees, Dr William Richardson. Summing up, William commented on the real sense of belonging that he had observed during the day, and the absence of any clash in values. “A sense of common purpose and value is what will give students a community they can be proud of,” he said.

1 July is the date marked in the 2015 diary for next year's bigger and even better event: a real opportunity for Creative Education Academies to define 'outstanding' for themselves.



Successes and special commendations

Students



To **Alonso Everest** (Thistley Hough Year 9) for having memory skills ranked seventh in the country at the UK Schools Memory Championships.



To **Emily Knight** and **Sarah Taylor** for leading the **Rugeley Academies** to triumph in the social enterprise category of Giving Nation (see page 12).



The Green Car team at the **Rugeley Academies**, led by **Rachael Sandham**, for their awards at Bedford and Aintree.



To **Amy Grant** and **David Piggott** (Weavers Year 10) for being selected in a national essay competition to join a WWI battlefields trip to Ypres and the Somme.

To **Karena Swarn** and **Navleen Darhi** for the incredible progress they made at **Ash Green**, and for the excellent Level 3 qualifications that earned them honours degree places in Journalism, Media and Communication.



To **Maksymilian Darocha**, a Year 3 pupil at **Queen Eleanor Primary Academy**, for his virtuosic mark-making with a quill pen.

To **Niamh Roberts** (Weavers Year 10) for winning the regional Sound Access Training Award 2014 by increasing her reading age from 8.9 to 18.7 in ten weeks.





To **Gemma Jackson**, PE teacher at **Queen Eleanor** for the Youth Sport Trust Silver Quality Mark.

and staff



To **Ian Brailsford**, Head of PE at **Thistley Hough**, for being accepted onto the Teaching Leaders two-year Fellowship programme.



To **Katie Dagnall** and the English team at **Ash Green** for astronomical results: 94% C+.



To **Janette Swainston** and the Weavers MFL team for their The Prince's Teaching Institute 2014 Mark.



To **Lucy Hayley** for developing the Duke of Edinburgh scheme at **Ash Green** into a programme with 12% student subscription and robust volunteer support from staff.



To **Deb Ling** for making a difference to the lives of **Abbeyfield's** most vulnerable students and families.



To **Emma Knights**, Weavers Learning Leader for Science, for taking a Y9-13 G&T team to the British Science Festival – one of the few state-school teams present, with a very respectable performance in the Y11 Big Quiz on the final day.



To **Ross Parker** for the enthusiasm and dedication with which he runs **Ash Green's** collection of old buildings, grounds and infrastructure.

CEAT Young Photographer

Congratulations to our winner
Sarah Mahoney, and our
Two runners-up, **Amy Grant**
and **Aaron Bagnall**

Earlier this year the Creative Education Academies Trust launched a photographic competition. Secondary school students were invited to use the medium of photography to contribute their insights to a strategy for the improvement and development of the group's buildings, landscapes and estates.

Steve Macleod, Director of Metro Imaging Ltd, launched the project at Ash Green in Coventry and worked with the participating students, along with guest photographers Luke Hayes, Leon Chew and Nadia Bettega at the other schools. The competition judges were Steve Macleod, architect Matthew Lloyd, CEAT Chief Executive Marc Jordan and CEAT Director of Programmes Emily Campbell.

The work of 18 finalists was exhibited at the central London premises of BuroHappold Engineering in July. At a reception for the finalists and their teachers, Trustee, Michael Dickson CBE, former Chairman of the Happold Trust and of BuroHappold Engineering, presented prizes to the CEAT Young Photographers.





Above: One of six images submitted as a series by CEAT Young Photographer, **Sarah Mahoney** of Ash Green School. Judges commented "Exceptional maturity. Real resolve to explore the potential of the camera and your relationship with the environment. Great editorial skills and consistency."

Top: Single image submitted by runner-up **Aaron Bagnall**, Thistley Hough. The judges complimented Aaron on having transformed a mundane subject into a seductive image that seems intuitively to fit into the New Topographical style of photography.

Main image: One of two images submitted by runner-up **Amy Grant** of Weavers Academy. The judges commended Amy's mature and thoughtful use of documentary style and her sensitive use of technology.



Governance spotlight

Alan Murphy, Managing Director of Premier Nutrition, Rugeley, and Chair of Governors of the Rugeley Academies, pauses his globetrotting surveillance of animal nutrition to draw parallels with the world of education.

What brought you to Rugeley?

In 1984 I left Scotland with a degree in chemical engineering from Strathclyde University. After moving house nine times in the first 12 years of my career, and a year in Australia, I came to Rugeley in 2011 to develop a local business called Premier Nutrition. It had been acquired by Associated British Foods (ABF), the big international food and retail group that's been my employer for over 30 years – in sugar, yeast, bread and baking products and agriculture.

What drives the business you're in today?

We operate across the agricultural supply chain, 'from plough to plate', in a global industry that has many challenges. With population growth and pressure on natural resources it's crucial that we're more efficient in what we produce, generate less waste and are sustainable for the long-term future. This means pushing the boundaries of science and being comfortable with new products, services and ideas. Because we need to constantly evolve and sometimes even be revolutionary, we're always looking for great people who are experts in their fields, creative in their thinking and happy to operate in changing environments – here and across the world. They're scientists, engineers, marketers or sales professionals, as well as the best business brains we can find. ABF has the scale and appetite to invest, but we need to supply the ideas and leadership.

What drew you to the Chair of Governors position at the Rugeley Academies?

I come from an area of the west coast of Scotland that changed beyond recognition in the 1980s because of the global competition that entered most of the traditional heavy industries – coalmining, steel-working, shipbuilding, chemical

and petrochemicals. I've never forgotten the devastation this brought to the communities and lives of people around me. CEAT was formed with the ideal of improving the educational standards of our young people in similar areas and economic conditions. Even more importantly, through the Design Programme, it aims to get students thinking about how concepts they're taught in school can be applied creatively in everyday life. I always developed my understanding fastest when I understood the practical uses for the principles and theories I had been taught – seeing the theories in action. The world requires this sort of creative, practical thinking today because changing needs will always lead to new business areas.

What's been happening at the Rugeley Academies since you took up the Chair position?

At the Rugeley Academies we've been going through tremendous change at every level. CEAT is a young and evolving organisation. At the same time the government is driving changes that impact greatly on the schools from year to year. Locally we've seen changes in leadership, the Sixth Form move to Hagley Park, investment in facilities and a management team working in new ways across both schools. Change is difficult, but it's crucial to achieving the goals we've set out to achieve. We want the Rugeley Academies to be the schools of choice in the area, and this means not only achieving great things, but also letting the local people know all about them.

Did your own education prepare you well for the career you chose?

I went to a local comprehensive in a working-class area of the west coast of Scotland, with kids from all sorts of backgrounds. Like many, I was brought up on a council estate. My father was a welder and always wanted the best for me. He was a real driver in my early life before passing away when I was ten. My mother encouraged me always to do my best. She used to say "only you will know if you haven't", and it's so true. At school some great teachers taught me about ambition and drive and having a competitive spirit. They were often subject teachers who also ran school teams – that helped me think about leadership, teamwork and being an example to

others. I still play golf with one of my old maths teachers when I go back home. I always enjoyed the sciences, particularly chemistry, and was brought up in a place where I could appreciate what the processing industries meant in everyday life. This gave me interest in chemical engineering – so really my early life and school led me directly to the career I wanted. My professional career as a Chartered Engineer, and other aspects of my life beyond it, have demonstrated to me that you never stop learning.

What can schools learn from businessmen like you?

The most important thing I can bring to the Rugeley Academies is an outside perspective. An employer's view of the academic and interpersonal skills we need for the future helps to make education current and real. I can translate what it means to operate in an increasingly global environment. And I can also bring knowledge of a 'performance' culture of continuous improvement in everything you do and the openness to new concepts. This fits well with governance, because challenging the status quo is as important as addressing recognised areas for improvement. I am also somebody who recognises when people are on the right track, trying to do the right things and need support. The goals for education are long term, so once strategy is decided it's important that people are aligned and have the energy to keep going, particularly through difficult times.

And vice versa?

There are fantastic, professional and caring people in the educational arena who give their all to better the lives of the people they teach. But they often face targets that align more directly with political goals and measures than with the life chances of children, and I've seen how this can make the job of a Principal or Head Teacher difficult and conflicted. On top of this, the needs of every child are different depending on ability, life background and economic environment. It's incredible to witness people who can operate across the spectrum and improve the chances for everyone.

Alan Murphy's top tips for school governance

- Get involved because you believe doing so will make a difference, not for status
- A broad cross section of skills around the table adds value. Different challenges require different skills
- Challenge the status quo, be prepared to ask the silly question and champion continuous improvement
- Once actions are decided be prepared to support the Trust and the school with your time, presence, experience and expertise



Partnerships in focus

Under the UK-wide Business in the Community programme, Thistley Hough Academy has entered a partnership with the property refurbishment and maintenance company Novus. The goal is a model public/private sector partnership that supports the school's careers programme and aims to nurture in students the seven skills of employability as determined by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI).

Thistley Hough and Novus have collaborated on a competition to design a school farm (with a £5000 donation from Novus towards the realisation of the project), a school allotment run by volunteers, a careers fair and a day for students at the Novus national training centre. The Novus marketing team is supporting Thistley Hough and a range of public relations and communications initiatives to build the school's reputation in the community.

Kevin Rhone, Novus's Corporate Social Responsibility Manager, reflected on the scheme:

“When you work with students over a sustained period, it really does open your mind to the impact you can have on individual lives.”

Design Programme



“We’re really starting to take the Key Concepts of design out into other subject areas.”

John Simpson,
Hagley Park Academy

“I trained as a product designer making things in metal and plastic; now data is my material.”

Chris Downs, designer

“It was jaw-dropping to see the personal data collected by Chris Downs – all those actual pieces of paper in a pile. As a visual representation, that would have a massive impact on how a student thinks about the information they give away all the time on phones and computers.”

Tracy Warrener, Thistley Hough Academy

“I’m really excited to work with the ArtScience project – working with the mentors and getting the science and the art to fuse together into innovative solutions for the world around us.”

Julia Rogers,
Thistley Hough Academy

“Data as Creator is a very interesting and inspiring project – the design challenge is about how we can use data to track and record the world around us, but more importantly it can teach students how the world uses data to track and record us.”

Gareth Townshend,
Hagley Park Academy

“Engaging everyone in the schools in the Design Programme is now a real possibility through the partnerships we’re creating.”

Tony Dix,
Ash Green School

“Our students had two amazing trips here and it really helped them to understand and recognise design.”

Lisa Berry,
Weavers Academy

Above left to right: Kate Ward, John Simpson, Gareth Townshend, Julia Rogers, Tony Dix, Emily Campbell, Tracy Warrener, Lisa Berry, Rachael Ball, Allan Black, Chris Downs, Holly Dowler, and Lea Jagendorf.

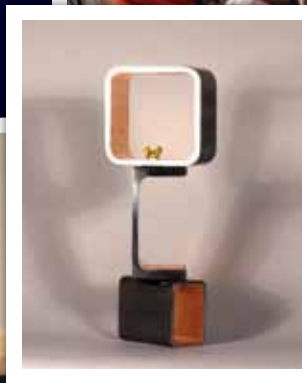
Design Museum awayday

For the fourth year running, Design Faculty staff from CEAT secondaries met at the Design Museum for an immersion day in July for new Year 9 projects. Catherine Ritman-Smith, our host on behalf of the Design Museum’s Learning Team, kicked off with a training session on the marvellous Design Ventura project – a design challenge to school pupils to develop a product which will be sold in the Design Museum shop. The schedule included presentations by our guests John Carter, Customer Relationship Manager for RBS/NatWest/Coutts – our partners in the Economic Reality design challenge – and by service designer, Chris Downs, who is developing an exciting data-based design challenge for CEAT students.

The afternoon gave everyone a chance to update their knowledge of the latest and greatest international design by visiting the Designs of the Year 2014 exhibition, and to explore its more radical conceptual side in Daniel Weil’s Time Machines.

Year 9 manufacturing craft projects

Workshops are under way for three Year 9 manufacturing craft projects – in metal, wood and textiles. These are opportunities for teachers to create a prototype of their own under the expert guidance of tutors and designers. A further project in book design – typography, illustration and binding – is being piloted at Abbeyfield.



Designer **Tony McIntyre** demonstrates how to copper-leaf a piece of mild steel channel in a one-day workshop on the Year 9 metal project at the Rugeley Academies.



Tutor **Gill Baksi** explains the complex binding of a sleeve opening to Leanne Kidson, Technician at Abbeyfield, during a one-day workshop on the Year 9 shirt project. **Thomas Pink Ltd** are supplying fabrics for the project and sending speakers into schools to introduce students to the world of global fashion retail and manufacturing.



Nokia/Microsoft Head of Design **Peter Griffiths** will be leading a further workshop at Sir Terence Conran's furniture company, **Benchmark**, on the Year 9 woodworking project he has developed for CEAT – a hardwood box based on the traditional, four-inch 'hand' measurement.

Round-up



Community Award for Queen Eleanor Primary

In September Daniel Smith and Sarah Jones travelled to London to accept the Quality Inclusion Mark. The assessors in this national scheme observed that Queen Eleanor's diverse socio-economic profile and range of educational needs 'shout for inclusion'. They commended the school for showing determination to bond its groups into a common identity, and for using learning to spread inspiration and strength of purpose to the wider community.



Whitehall calling Rugeley's social entrepreneurs

Year 8 students from Fair Oak and Hagley Park academies won the social enterprise category of the Citizenship Foundation's Giving Nation challenge 2014. Five members of the team travelled from Rugeley to London on 16 October to join other national winners in the workshop and awards ceremony for Giving Nation in the Churchill Room of the Treasury in Whitehall.

Funded by the Cabinet Office, Giving Nation challenges secondary school students to identify a need within their local community and set up a social enterprise, campaign, volunteering or fundraising venture to address the need. The Fair Oak and Hagley Park project is a toy library operating out of Hagley Park Academy, conceived as a mechanism to relieve the isolation of less-affluent families in Rugeley.

Hagley Park student Konan Wood commented "I can't believe our idea has

become a reality!" and Sam Kent added "I'm proud of being a part of something so brilliant". The original Toy Library team are now planning how to pass it on as a legacy to the next Year 8 group.

Emma Southgate, a leading service design professional, who led an early creative workshop with Rugeley students, was impressed that students so young understood how poverty put people at terrible risk of exclusion from their community. She was equally impressed by their energy and creativity.

At the CEAT annual Day of Service in April, Hagley Park Academy hosted teams from five other CEAT schools for the final presentations for Giving Nation. The Day of Service is a key event in the challenging enrichment programme through which CEAT aims to open students' minds to the creative opportunities that await them as citizens in the world beyond school.



New CEAT Sixth-Form Prizes

Two cross-Trust sixth-form prizes have been launched. The Essay Prize poses questions in four subject areas to be answered in a 1500-word essay for submission to a panel of leading academics, writers and journalists. The public-speaking prize will be awarded to the student who addresses this year's theme with insight and eloquence, and thinks on their feet when questioned by the panel. Heats in schools will culminate in a joint April event.

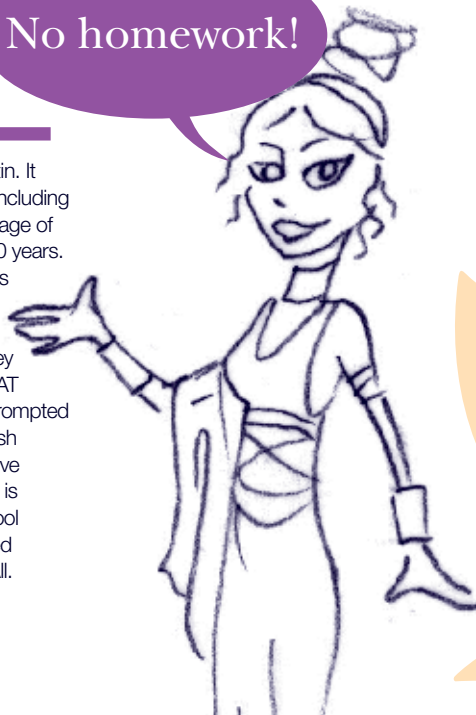
Great trips!



Goddess or Gladiator? New Latin Club at Thistley Hough

There are good reasons to learn Latin. It makes you better at all languages, including your native tongue. It was the language of the Romans who dominated for 500 years. It turns up everywhere – from menus to science textbooks and even celebrity tattoos. Latin impresses people! So congratulations to Thistley Hough on the launch of the first CEAT after-school Latin club, which has prompted similar initiatives at Abbeyfield and Ash Green. A dozen brave and imaginative students have joined the club which is delivered by the University of Liverpool Classics outreach project and funded by the national charity Classics for All.

No homework!



Interactive Communications Toolkit



CEAT Head of Communications Ellen O'Donoghue developed communications strategies for the Rugeley Academies, Thistley Hough and Weavers last year. Working with the Head Office Programme team, she also drew up guidelines which have been turned into a handy, interactive communications 'toolkit'. In addition to guidelines on strategy, websites and dealing with press and media, it contains a set of templates for press releases, statements and articles.

Please ask Head Office for the PDF or download it soon from the CEATCloud.



Day of Performance 2014: Shakespeare 5x5

Roll up, roll up for a packed day of Shakespeare: five plays, five ways performed back-to-back at Ash Green School:

The Tempest, with ingenious puppetry, by the Rugeley Academies

Hamlet, in an RSC-voice-coached and physical theatre-influenced version by Ash Green School

A Midsummer Night's Dream with a new fairies-and-forest-fantasy soundtrack by Weavers Academy

Macbeth in the grand, classical style by Thistley Hough Academy

Richard III interpreted as physical theatre by Abbeyfield School

Parents of the performing students and production crew are warmly invited to attend their school's performance.

Friday 5 December 2014 at Ash Green School, Bedworth, Coventry. Schedule of performances available from schools.

Harpfield alumni of the Children's University



The Children's University, founded in the 1990s to promote social mobility, offers exciting learning experiences outside school hours. 180 Harpfield pupils have graduated since 2010. "Children flash their learning passport with pride," reports Richard Wollacott, Headteacher. "and eagerly add up their credits in anticipation of their next graduation. Best of all, the love of learning is shared beyond the school – parents have started to ask what other out-of-school activities they can credit to their child's passport".

Creativity is the ability to recognise or make new connections between the things we know. Connecting knowledge is at the heart of an effective education. It is vital to improving standards, and it will make young people resourceful and employable in the world of tomorrow.

Creative Education Academies Trust

35 Old Queen Street, London SW1H 9JA
Telephone 020 7378 5762

252-260 Broad Street, Birmingham B1 2HF
Telephone 0121 667 2142

info@creativeeducationtrust.org.uk

Connected is designed by **Vincent Design**
and printed by **Cantate Communications**