

Transforming Lives



Our ATT Magazine
Summer Term 2026



A Welcome from **Our CEO**



It is a pleasure to introduce this term's edition of Transforming Lives, which once again captures the extraordinary work taking place across our Trust.

As you read through these pages, a clear and consistent thread emerges: the quality of what our pupils experience each day is shaped, decisively and deliberately, by the quality of our staff. Whether it is pupils contributing to national policy through Legislative Theatre, colleagues supporting young carers with compassion and determination, or staff engaging in world-class professional learning, the impact of our people is evident everywhere.

This edition highlights that truth clearly. At Caldmore, families are being drawn into mathematics in ways that build confidence and connection. At Sutton, a refurbished theatre has become a symbol of what partnership and shared ambition can achieve. Across the Trust, staff are creating opportunities that extend far beyond the classroom and into the lives our pupils will go on to lead.

At the same time, we see the profound difference that strong teaching and thoughtful development make to outcomes. The recognition of several of our academies at national level for their work with disadvantaged pupils is not an accident. It is the result of disciplined focus on curriculum, on teaching, and on ensuring that every adult in our organisation is continually developing.

This is why professional learning matters so deeply to us. Events such as researchED East Anglia are part of a wider commitment to ensure that every colleague becomes capable, competent and confident, and that this, in turn, transforms the life chances of the children we serve.

It is also why, later this year, we will be introducing our Staff Excellence Awards. These awards will recognise the extraordinary professionalism, expertise and care that exist across our Trust. These awards will celebrate the sustained, often unseen work that leads to better experiences and better outcomes for our pupils.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Transforming Lives. More importantly, I hope it gives you a moment to reflect on the collective strength of our Trust and the difference that each of you makes, every day.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark McCourt'.

Mark McCourt

Chief Executive Officer



Bristnall Hall Academy

Oldbury, West Midlands

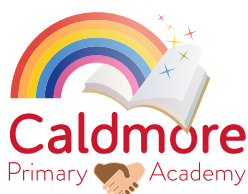
Bristnall Hall Academy we were proud to be invited by the Department for Education to take part in an innovative Legislative Theatre project, contributing to the development of national policy aimed at improving teacher-pupil relationships across secondary schools.

Year 7 and Year 10 students participated in a series of workshops led by 'The People Act', a Legislative Theatre company, in collaboration with the DfE. These sessions provided a platform for students and staff to explore the barriers that can affect positive relationships in schools. Through performance, participants presented real challenges, before working collaboratively to test and refine practical solutions.

The project culminated in a special event on Tuesday 24 March, where Bristnall Hall Academy students joined peers from two other schools to perform these scenarios in front of national policymakers. Students confidently articulated their perspectives and contributed thoughtful, creative solutions. It was inspiring to see their ideas evolve into policy proposals that the DfE is set to publish this summer.



We are incredibly proud of these students for their insight, confidence, and collaboration throughout this process!



Caldmore Primary Academy

Walsall, West Midlands

We are delighted to celebrate the outstanding achievement of Jess Phillips, Deputy DSL at Caldmore Primary Academy, who has been honoured with a Support for Young Carers Award in Walsall. Jess received her award at the Town Hall from the Mayor, following a nomination made on behalf of two families she has supported tirelessly over the past year.

Supporting young carers has been a priority across ATT this year, and Jess stands out as a shining example of best practice.

Her unwavering commitment, compassion, and determination to ensure every child feels seen and supported embody the very best of our safeguarding culture.

This recognition is richly deserved, and we are incredibly proud of Jess and the life-changing difference she continues to make for children and families.



What's Happening Across Our Trust...

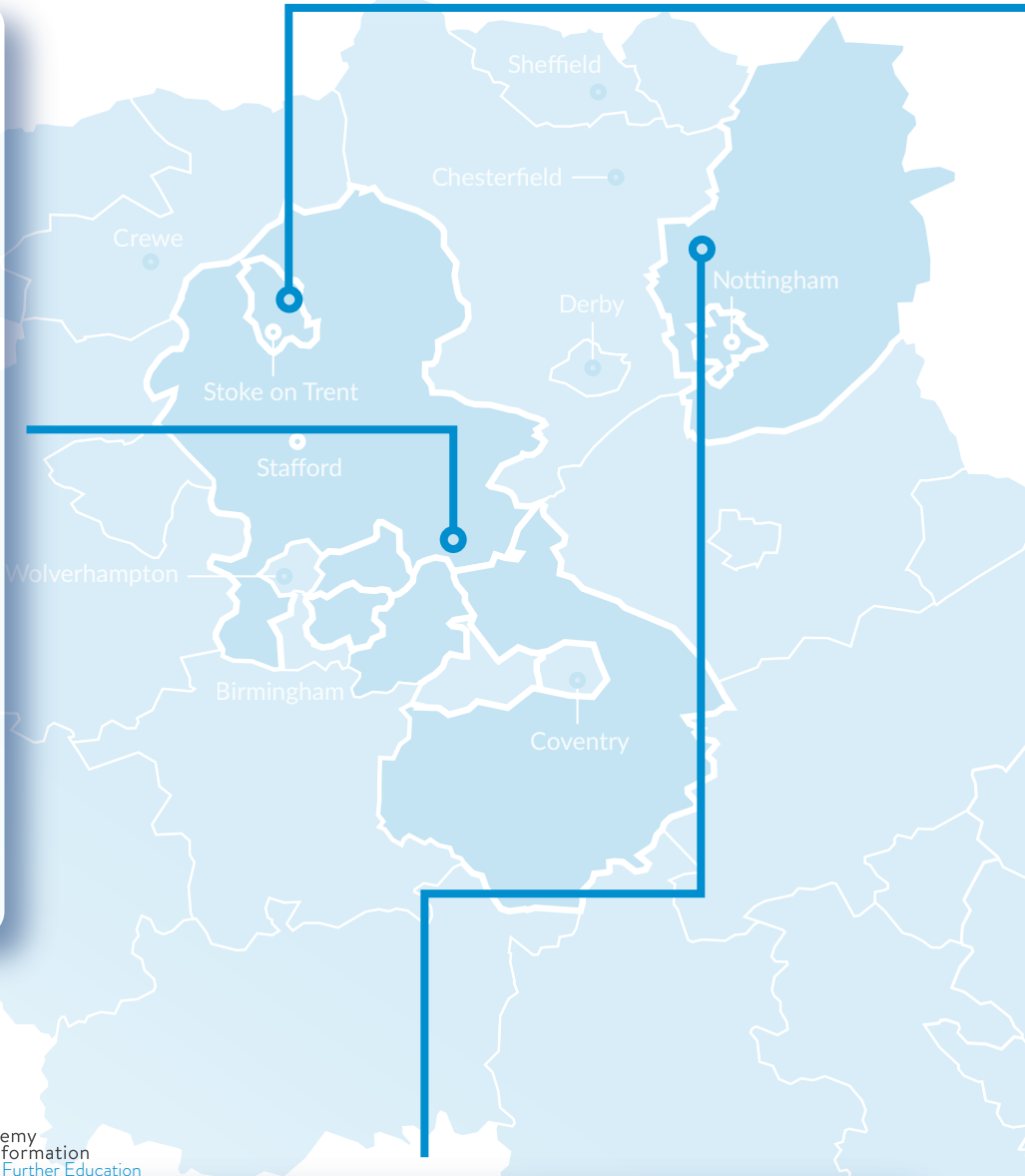
Caldmore Primary Academy
Walsall, West Midlands



This academic year, Caldmore were successful in their application to join the National Numeracy charity's Families Programme. The charity offers training and support, as well as the National Numeracy challenge, which parents who lack confidence with maths can access.

As part of the programme, each school receives interactive scrapbooks for their children to complete with parents, to help them build confidence and develop positive views of maths. Caldmore launched their scrapbooks this term at a 'We Love Maths' session and were blown away when 80 parents arrived to join in and learn more! They then visited classrooms and worked with their children to complete the first of the activities in the scrapbook.

We can't wait to see the impact of this exciting initiative over the coming terms.



ATTFE College & Sutton Community Academy
Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire

Cornerstone Theatre officially had its grand-opening ceremony last month, with a special opening by Professor Veronica Pickering, Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire.

The evening was a wonderful celebration of local talent, featuring fantastic performances from Sutton Community Academy students, alongside Centre Stage Academy and Sutton Centre Stage Group.

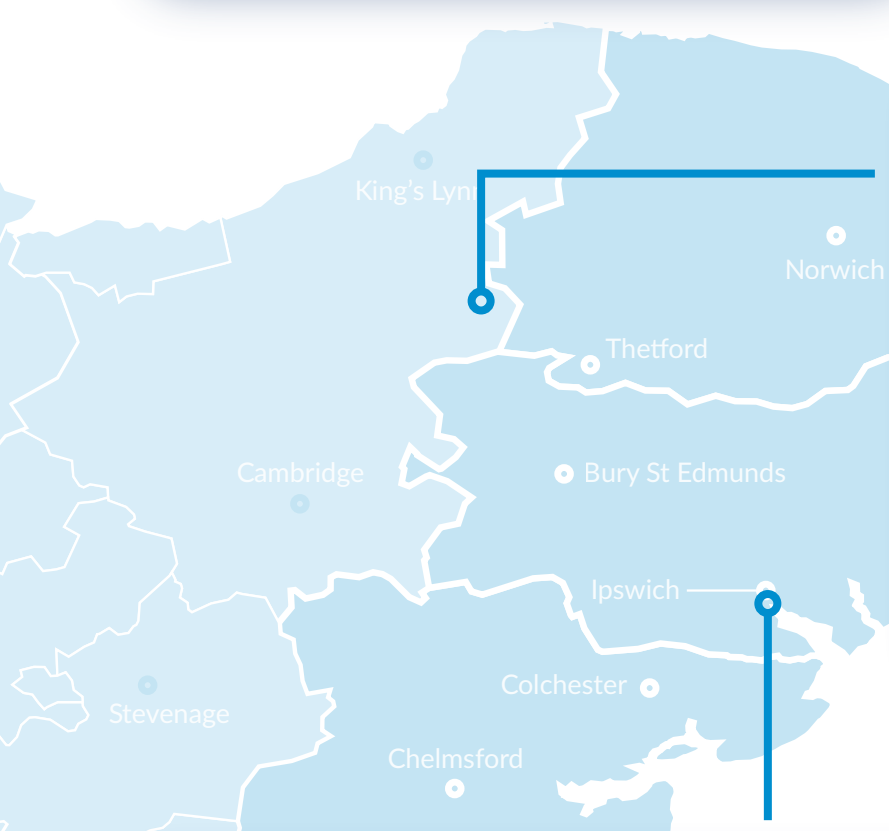
The newly refurbished theatre - which recently won Refurbishment Project of the Year at the Efficiency East Midlands (EEM) Building Communities Awards - is a fantastic example of what can be achieved through strong community partnerships and a shared vision.



Star Academy Sandyford

Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire

Huge thanks are in order for Star Academy's amazing Learning Support Assistant Mrs Keogh, who liaised with The Woodland Trust to secure a donation of saplings - enough for every child in the school! As part of British Science Week celebrations, parents were invited to watch the pupils plant their saplings across the school grounds. The children were taught how to plant and care for their saplings, which will grow into beautiful trees decorating the school for decades to come.



Icenii Secondary Academy

Methwold, Norfolk

Icenii Academy are delighted to share some amazing news about their Year 7 creative writers! Several students recently entered the Young Writers competition, a prominent creative writing project that works with schools across the country to encourage creative writing and poetry across all age groups.

The Icenii pupils' impressive pieces won places in published copies of 'I have a Dream' and 'Grim Tales', 'Fright Club' and 'Empowered'. Well done to all involved!



Westbourne Academy

Ipswich, Suffolk

Twelve Westbourne KS3 EAL students have been working with BBC Journalists Jon Wright and Cad Taylor on a podcast project. The students have been developing their listening and presenting skills by working together to produce podcasts, interviewing fellow students and staff on likes, culture, language and food.

As a result of their incredible work, Jon and Cad invited them on a special visit to BBC Radio Suffolk this April, where they received a guided tour of the BBC Radio Suffolk studios, gaining insight into how radio programmes are created and broadcast. They also had the chance to take part in additional recording activities, building on the excellent work they produced in school.



Bringing World-Class Professional Learning to East Anglia!

This June, Academy Transformation Trust is proud to host researchED East Anglia at Mildenhall College Academy.

ResearchED is an internationally recognised series of education conferences, known for sharing research-informed ideas about what works best in schools. These events focus on practical approaches grounded in evidence, and bring together teachers, school leaders and education experts from across the country.

ResearchED conferences take place around the world, but ours will be the first of its kind in Suffolk. High quality professional development helps teachers continuously improve their practice, but opportunities of this scale are limited in the East of England. By bringing researchED East Anglia to Mildenhall, our Trust is helping to address that gap and ensure staff in our schools - and beyond - can access world class learning.

Professional development directly influences everyday classroom experiences. By attending events like researchED East Anglia, staff gain new knowledge, refine their teaching approaches and reflect on how to better support pupils with different needs. For our children and young people, this means higher quality teaching and learning, and staff that are better aware of how best to support them.

ResearchED East Anglia is organised by ATT Institute, our dedicated professional development team. Through this event, the team is not only supporting our own staff but contributing to stronger education across the region. We are excited to welcome a wide range of expert speakers and leading voices in education, sharing practical ideas that staff can take straight back into their schools. The quality of speakers applications received reflects our Trust's growing profile as a leader of professional learning.

Hosting the event at Mildenhall College Academy highlights our belief that schools should be places where adults and children learn together. We're committed to ensuring that everyone in our organisation, staff and pupils alike, become capable, competent and confident individuals.



ResearchED East Anglia

Saturday 13 June | 9.30 - 16.00

Mildenhall College Academy

[Learn more on our website](#)



Spotlight:

Transforming Outcomes for Disadvantaged Pupils



Disadvantaged pupils face additional barriers to learning linked to family income or life circumstances. These challenges can make school life more difficult, affecting confidence, attendance, or access to enrichment opportunities.

As a Trust, we educate significantly more disadvantaged pupils than the national average for state schools in England. We work closely with our schools to ensure our approach to supporting disadvantaged pupils makes a real impact.

This year, that work has been recognised at the very highest level. Our Kingsmoor Academy, Sun Academy Bradwell, and Bristnall Hall Academy were commended by the Secretary of State for Education, Bridget Phillipson, for ranking among the top schools in the country for academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in 2024–25. This is a remarkable achievement and a powerful reminder that background does not determine potential when pupils receive the right support.

Shared principles run through these schools' successes. At Bristnall Hall Academy, Principal Louisa Simcock explains that high expectations and excellent teaching are key:

“Our disadvantaged students make excellent progress due to our high expectations and continued commitment in ensuring that all students receive the highest quality lessons at all times.”

The school has carefully developed its curriculum to ensure all pupils build strong knowledge and skills, supported by research informed teaching, calm and purposeful classrooms, and a positive school culture. Alongside this, pupil premium funding is used to widen opportunities like clubs, trips and careers education, so disadvantaged pupils have the same rich experiences as their peers.

At Kingsmoor Academy, a similar philosophy underpins their work. Principal Angie Skinner highlights the importance of strong teaching for every child:

“Rather than creating separate approaches, we worked on strengthening universal classroom practice. Our impact came from ensuring that disadvantaged pupils received the same ambitious curriculum, high-quality instruction and high expectations.”

Kingsmoor focused on strengthening everyday classroom practice, supported by well targeted funding, small group tutoring, reading support and investment in staff development. Strong pastoral care plays a vital role, helping pupils feel ready to learn and confident at school.

We believe that great practice should be shared. Recently, we brought colleagues from across the country together for a well attended and highly rated webinar, where leaders from these academies shared the strategies that helped deliver such strong outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

We are incredibly proud of our pupils, staff and school leaders for this achievement. But more importantly, we remain focused on what matters most: ensuring every child feels supported, valued and able to succeed.



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