

DECEMBER 2023 | ISSUE 1



Woodland  
Academy Trust

*Ignite the spark, reveal the champion*

# WE ARE WOODLAND

Connecting our Community



AMBITION COLLABORATION COMPASSION EXCELLENCE INCLUSIVITY

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## WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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**As the CEO of our vibrant group of schools, it is with immense pleasure that we launch our very first Trust Newsletter. This publication is not just a newsletter; it is a celebration of our collective journey, achievements, and the vibrant spirit that binds us.**

In this inaugural edition of our newsletter, you will discover success stories of our digital journey this term and find individual stories from across our schools as well as ways in which we have been working on building a deeper sense of community within and across schools.

This newsletter also serves as a bridge, connecting our diverse community of staff, children, families, and wider supporters and partnerships. It is a platform for us to share, learn, and grow together. Every issue will bring you closer to the heartbeats of our schools, keeping you informed and involved in our journey towards excellence.

As a group of schools, we have been on a journey of improvement over the last few years and at the heart of that we have instilled an underlying philosophy of Ubuntu, a beautiful African principle that says "*I am because we are.*" Our schools are improving and flourishing not just because of the individual, but because of our shared efforts and ambition. Every milestone we celebrate, every challenge we overcome, is a testament to our united strength and communal harmony.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend our deepest gratitude to our dedicated staff for their unwavering commitment to living our values and driving our vision of providing every child with a good education every day. Each day, our staff make a tangible difference in the lives of our children, building an environment where learning thrives and potential is realised. Thank you!

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to all of our families. Their support, engagement, and collaboration have been invaluable. It is their belief in our mission and active participation in our community that strengthens the foundation of our Trust. Together, as a team of educators, families, and supporters, we will continue to collaborate and support each other so we can nurture the leaders of tomorrow.

We welcome your thoughts, feedback, and stories for our future editions. Let's make this newsletter a vibrant reflection of our shared values and achievements.

As we approach the end of the year, everyone at the Woodland Academy Trust wishes our readers a joyous and peaceful Christmas break. May this festive season bring happiness, rest, and cherished moments with loved ones.

Warmest wishes,

Nav Sanghara  
Chief Executive Officer

*"I am because we are."*

# Our Digital Journey



## Collaboration across our Trust for working towards our digital vision

The academic year kicked off with an engaging Trust Inset Day dedicated to digital development. As well as sharing our new Digital Strategy, several staff members from across our schools shared spotlights on how they have been using technology to enhance different areas of the curriculum. As part of this day, we introduced staff to our new device management platform, Jamf. Jamf has been designed to not only keep children safe when using their iPad, but to allow teachers to direct and give access to the correct digital tools to support their learning.



## Sharing our digital journey - Al Kingsley visits our Trust!

This term, we had the honor of hosting Mr Al Kingsley, the CEO of NetSupport Group, to showcase the incredible strides we are making to enrich the learning experiences of children within our Trust. Having him witness our digital vision in action was an inspiring experience, and we are thrilled to have received recognition in his weekly newsletter! Check out the feature on LinkedIn by [clicking here](#).



During his visit, Mr Kingsley engaged in an insightful interview conducted by the Pupil Leadership Team at Pearswood Primary. They delved into a discussion about school values and explored how his company embodies these principles. Don't miss the opportunity to watch this engaging interview by [clicking here!](#)



## LGfL's EdTech Summit at Samsung KC

Mr Davies, our Trust Digital Lead, was invited to be a keynote speaker at the LGfL's EdTech Summit held at Samsung KC. His presentation centered on our Trust's achievements in implementing a Universal Design for Learning approach to our curriculum. Our Headteacher Mrs Ferla also joined him for a panel discussion talking about how Pearswood Primary School have accomplished a whole school approach to this innovative way of learning.



# Our Digital Journey

## Apple Professional Learning Specialist



As part of our ongoing staff professional development, we have continued our work with Vickie Bacon, the Lead Apple Professional Learning Specialist for the UK and Ireland. Different groups of staff from across our Trust have come together to understand and explore how technology can support to engage students and enhance learning opportunities.

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## Professional Development

We are delighted to share that seven of our staff across the Trust have been accepted on to the Apple Learning Coach programme, the first one to run in England. Many congratulations to our Trust Digital Lead Mr Davies, Mr Forrest at Knockhall Primary, Mr Ali at Willow Bank Primary, Mr Benham and Mrs Caldwell at Peareswood Primary and Miss Ludlow at Northumberland Heath.

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## Our Apple Regional Training Centre

Kent and Bexley

Regional Training Centre

We are delighted to have been reaccredited as an Apple Regional Training Centre this year! [Read our news article](#) to find out all about when we were first named as an Apple RTC in 2022.



As part of our Apple RTC, we we run a comprehensive offer of CPD. Visit our dedicated [Apple RTC page](#) on our website for more information and to see what courses we have coming in 2024 to book! We also share news on our RTC twitter page so give us a follow!

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## Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning is our digital driver for teaching and learning. For anyone wanting to read about what UDL is and to see why are are implementing it as a Trust, we recommend this book. Check out this review by one of our school digital leads, Debbie:



*I think that "UDL Now: A Teacher's Guide to Applying Universal Design for Learning" by Katie Novak is a highly readable and relatable exploration of UDL. Although I have not completed reading it, the book's human touch addresses common UDL concerns like equity and assessment. Each chapter includes a summary which aids navigation, so it is easy to dip into. The reflection questions at the end of each chapter encourage thoughtful consideration and practical application. In my opinion and from a teacher's perspective, Novak's approach resonates, making this book a valuable resource for educators who are seeking to implement UDL principles effectively.*

# Our Digital Journey



## School Updates

Our schools have continued to develop their approach to computing and universal design for learning during the term.

**Northumberland Heath Primary School @NHPWAT · Nov 21**  
 Last week in science, Year 3 explored the school grounds in search of different plants and took photos of them. Back in class, the children labelled the different types of plants and explained how those parts help the plant survive.



**Willow Bank Primary School @willowbankpri · Nov 6**  
 Exciting News Alert  
 Introducing the 'Willow Bank Round Up' pilot for our school news! Click the link below:  
[facebook.com/10001372348884...](https://www.facebook.com/10001372348884...)  
 The children are very proud of what they produced, we hope you are too!



**Pearsewood Primary School @peareswood · Oct 31**  
 Year 2 have been using the mark up tool on the iPad to imagine ourselves as king/queen for the day and writing about what we would do if we were king/queen for the day.



**Lime Wood Primary School @limew00d · Dec 1**  
 Engagement and excitement - our Reception children were shocked to see the Gingerbread Man crew captured on CCTV... in their classroom! They have been busy setting traps, making wanted posters, re-telling the story, writing character descriptions - what a week! #teamwork



**Pearsewood Primary School @peareswood**  
 Our Creativity Pupil Leadership Team began running their Swift Playground Coding Club this week and they are proud to say it was a fantastic start. Lots of engagement, fun and collaboration was seen. They loved supporting each other. @KentBexleyRTC @WoodlandAcademy @AppleEDU



**Pearsewood Primary School @peareswood · 11 Dec**  
 Year 1 have started Technology Week by using emoji in Pages to show what they would like to write about this week in their writing lessons. Some have created a visual aid to support sentences, others chose their characters for a story and created a plan. @KentBexleyRTC



We also actively engage in events such as Technology Week to help encourage staff and pupils to #Techsplore!

**Pearsewood Primary School @peareswood**  
 Year 1 have continued to #techsplore today by using the Code and Go Robot Mice. Before using the mice they learnt how to code on the Bee-Bot app. They are having so much fun developing their digital and computing skills in our Technology Week! @KentBexleyRTC



**Pearsewood Primary School @peareswood · 17h**  
 Year 1 absolutely loved using the @OsmoCoding during our technology week! It was their favourite yet. Our EYFS lead even stopped by to see how to use them with Reception children! #techsplore



# JOIN US!

All our schools share the same mission; *ignite the spark, reveal the champion*. We are an inclusive and ambitious Trust, striving to achieve the best possible outcomes for our children. Our aim is to provide the highest quality learning experiences for every child by creating an ethical culture of empowerment and growth for all.

We believe deeply in the importance of nurturing strong partnerships with our local communities and beyond. If you believe that you can make a difference to the lives of our children and families and would like to join our Trust or if you want to find out more, then please do not hesitate to get in touch. We would love to hear from you!

All our vacancies can be found on our Trust website:  
[www.woodlandacademytrust.co.uk](http://www.woodlandacademytrust.co.uk)

We are proud to share that that we have been recognised as a Disability Confident Committed organisation.

At Woodland Academy Trust, we value the incredible contribution and talent that people with disabilities can and do bring to our workplace. Being awarded Disability Confident Committed status is part of our ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace where everyone can thrive.



As a Disability Confident Committed Employer we have committed to:

- ensuring our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible;
- communicating and promoting vacancies;
- offering an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job;
- anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as required;
- supporting any existing employee who acquires a disability or long term health condition, enabling them to stay in work;
- at least one activity that will make a difference for disabled people.



We're thrilled to unveil a series of videos this year showcasing each of our incredible schools and to give insight into what our Trust is about. [Click here](#) to visit our Trust YouTube channel to get a glimpse into what our schools offer. We will also have more videos launching in the Spring term!

Join our growing community on our social media platforms!

# Follow us



@W00dlandAcademy



Woodland Academy Trust



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[www.woodlandacademytrust.co.uk](http://www.woodlandacademytrust.co.uk)



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## Introducing a Community Fridge to Support Local Families

We are delighted to be able to support our community in various ways, thanks to the dedication of our school team. Among these initiatives is the introduction of our Community Fridge, spearheaded by one of our esteemed parent governors, Lauren.

Lauren has been a driving force behind this endeavour, collaborating with local stores, notably the Co-op, to collect any food nearing its expiry date. Her independent efforts have yielded remarkable success, prompting us to embrace this initiative at our school to further aid our local community. We're excited to extend this opportunity to our community, fostering a spirit of mutual support and care.

Every Monday and Thursday, just before the end of the school day, parents are warmly welcomed to visit and benefit from our Community Fridge to collect any items they may need. Equipped with both a fridge and a freezer, we ensure that expiry dates are never a concern. The assortment of items available is diverse, ranging from fresh fruits and vegetables to cupboard essentials, delightful flowers and plants, fresh food, milk, and much more.



## Elevating Music at Knockhall!



At Knockhall, the sound of music has been resonating louder than ever, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Adura, our music lead. Her passion and hard work have significantly amplified the presence of music throughout our school community. Collaborating with Musicly, a series of individual music lessons have been offered that have captured the interests of the children. These sessions have been a resounding success and in the upcoming new year, the children will be showcasing their progress in a special performance.

Our choir also recently made a delightful appearance at the local church's Christmas tree festival. Our choir enchanted the audience with their heartfelt performances. But the joy doesn't stop there! On their musical journey, they have also spread the festive spirit at their local Asda performing to raise funds in support of our school.





## Celebrations Embracing Achievement, Community and Birthdays!

At Knockhall, our tradition of celebrating achievements has undergone an exciting transformation this year! We take immense joy in recognising and applauding the accomplishments of our wonderful children. In addition to our regular accolades like Star of the Week, Golden Book entries, PE class of the week, and attendance, we also invite children to share their achievements from outside of school.

It's been heartwarming to see the children proudly share their medals, certificates, trophies, and badges during our revamped celebration assemblies. This has been a great way for us to celebrate the children beyond their academic achievement and also encourage others to get involved in the local offer for extra curricular activities.

Expanding our celebrations, we've introduced a special spotlight on birthdays, not just for the students but also our dedicated staff members. Every week, those celebrating a birthday are invited to join us at the front of the assembly. The enthusiasm from our students about celebrating their special day in school has been truly heartening.

These initiatives embody our commitment to nurturing holistic development and fostering a sense of community within our school. It's a delightful way to honor accomplishments, encourage engagement beyond academics, and spread the joy of celebrating milestones together.

## Parent Partnership: Workshops and Feedback for Collaboration

We're constantly exploring innovative ways to involve parents and carers in their child's educational journey. In the early stages of this endeavor, we've initiated workshops tailored for families in Reception, Year 1, and Year 6. Additionally, we've warmly welcomed Reception parents/carers into our school environment, encouraging them to share the joy of reading with their children.

These workshops are just the beginning. To ensure that our future engagements align with the interests and needs of our families, we gather feedback and interests for potential future sessions. We look forward to continue fostering a strong partnership between home and school.

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*Follow us*



@KnockhallSch



knockhall\_primary



Knockhall Primary School





# Lime Wood Primary School

Lime Wood Primary officially opened in September welcoming a cohort of Reception children and we will continue to grow year by year, eventually into a three-form entry school catering for children aged 4-11. We are the newest addition to the Trust and we are proud of everything that has been achieved so far -check out some of our news from this term!

## Grand Opening Event

We were honored to welcome guests from Anderson, L&Q and Bexley, as well as Trust members to our momentous grand opening last week. Councillor Baroness O'Neill of Bexley OBE attended to unveil a plaque which will hold pride of place in our atrium, marking this milestone in our journey. Our founding reception pupils captivated guests with a delightful recitation of a poem and we were able to take our guests on a tour of our school's unique building and impressive state of the art facilities. A highlight of the evening was the unveiling of our 'Baby De Luci' sculpture- read more on the next page!

The opening was a proud day for everyone at the school and the Trust. Our staff and founding reception pupils have delighted in acclimating to our remarkable environment and making use of our wonderful facilities and we look forward to becoming an integral part of The Quarry and Erith community as we deliver our vision to find the champion in everyone.

Read the full article about our opening on our Trust's website- [click here!](#)





## Meet our 'Baby De Luci'

Gary Drostle, a local artist renowned for his sculpture of the De Luci fish on the main roundabout in Erith, was commissioned to complete a community project alongside our children and families.

The project was sponsored by our build project partners Anderson and L&Q. Fabrics were donated from our families that represented their culture, heritage or something that meant something to them - we received embroidery from Romania, a range of African wax prints, a babygro and socks as well as Buddhist prayer flags and an army badge. Gary spent time with the children introducing the project and they worked on creating their own 'Luci' fish using collage. The end result - Baby De Luci - which now takes pride of place in our atrium for all visitors to experience.



L-R Headteacher Claire Ingrams with the art project sponsor representatives- Anderson CEO Andrew Jay and L&Q Group Director of Development and Sales Vicky Savage.



## Sponsored Events!

Recently, some of our pupils participated in a sponsored reading event in collaboration with Usborne Books (Ready, Steady, Read). The collective effort resulted in an impressive feat: our children read 118 books, raising approximately £650 through sponsorships. Combining these funds with book sales and matched contributions, we've amassed a total of £1140 earmarked for enriching our book corners and school library! What a fantastic achievement!



## Building Community Links

Fostering connections within our families and community holds great significance for us, and we've relished holding events for our families and welcoming visitors to explore our school, engaging in discussions about potential collaborations- it truly marks an exhilarating journey for us so far!



We were also delighted to share our new promotional video this term- watch it [here!](#)

Follow us



@limew00d



lime\_wood\_primary



Lime Wood Primary School





# Northumberland Heath Primary School

## Our School Choir Spreads Joy At Meyer House



At Northumberland Heath we value fostering connections within our community and making a positive difference in the lives of those around us.

Recently, our school choir embarked on a heart-warming visit to Meyer House Nursing and Care Home in Erith to sing Christmas songs to the residents. They were met with lots of smiles and cheers! It really brightened up their day and we are thrilled to have been invited to go back again. It was a wonderful opportunity to contribute to our community through our school value of kindness and to build connections.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Meyer House for welcoming us with open arms and we look forward to future visits!



## Northumberland Heath Proudly Adopts The Halo Code, Promoting Inclusivity

At our school, we uphold core values of respect and individuality, and we are proud to have adopted The Halo Code, the UK's first black hair code.

Halo works with schools, academy chains, and educational bodies to support them to adopt the Halo Code, the UK's first Black Hair Code.

The Halo Code explicitly protects students and staff who come to school with natural hair and protective hairstyles associated with their racial, ethnic, and cultural identities.

Our commitment to The Halo Code is a commitment to respect, inclusion, and celebration of diversity. By adopting the Halo Code, we are proactively taking a stand to ensure that no member of their community faces barriers or judgments because of their Afro-textured hair.





Empowering Against Bullying Through  
Interactive Workshops and Role Play Activities

Our school community actively participated in Anti-Bullying Week as part of our commitment to fostering a safe and supportive environment. We were fortunate to have Perform for Schools- the UK's leading provider of drama, dance and singing workshops for 4-12 year olds- join us this term to deliver impactful workshops aimed at empowering our children.

Perform engaged our children in interactive sessions focused on combating bullying through understanding and action. Using role play scenarios, they guided our children in exploring diverse situations, fostering empathy, and demonstrating the power of positive choices in supporting one another.



We were also delighted to share our new promotional video this term- watch it [here!](#)



@NHP\_WAT



northumberland\_heath\_primary



Northumberland Heath  
Primary School

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# Peareswood Primary School

## Peareswood's Digital Journey

This term has been an exciting one at Peareswood as we further develop our Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach that supports reducing barriers to learning for all children. A significant stride forward in this endeavor is that we now have provision of 1:1 iPads for all children in Years 1 to 5. The integration of technology has empowered our children, fostering a growing sense of confidence in utilising a diverse array of tools and applications on the iPad to bolster their learning experiences.



We also had the pleasure of hosting a visit from Al Kingsley who had a tour of the school and was impressed with how engaged all pupils were in their learning and the innovative use of technology. Our House Champions had the unique opportunity to conduct an interview him linked to our school values. The interview, delving into valuable discussions with Al Kingsley, CEO of Net Support Group, is available for viewing on our Trust's YouTube channel by [clicking here](#).



## Celebrating Achievements and Community Engagement at Peareswood!

This term we've been fortunate to have incredible support from various members of our local community including engaging workshops and visits from PCSO Piggott and our local Lollipop lady to support and enrich our pupils' educational experiences.





We've also welcomed parents into our school for Pride Time, a special opportunity to share and celebrate the progress and achievements of our pupils in their classrooms. It is an event filled with shared pride and enthusiasm for our pupil's learning journey. Positive Noticing Day was also shared with our parents who received positive notes, recognising their invaluable contributions to our school community.



Supporting the local community is important to us and this term our House Champions visited our local church, to lay a wreath for Remembrance Day. Our House Champions have also led engaging competitions linked to Halloween and Diwali. These activities not only embraced diverse traditions but also encouraged inclusivity and understanding amongst our pupils.

### Tree Planting Event to Help Tackle Pollution

Our school is working with the Bexley Super Zones Project to help combat pollution levels in our local area. We applied for free trees through the Queen's Green Canopy, and worked with Super Zones to host a community planting event last week which was also kindly supported by Orbit, a key housing association in the area, who we look also forward to working with on some other projects.



Our families joined us to plant trees behind the nursery and personalised their contribution by adding messages on tags attached to each tree. This unique endeavour resulted in the creation of individual family trees, symbolising our commitment to a greener environment.



We were thrilled to have the Bexley Mayor and Mayoress, local council members, and our chair of governors join us in planting trees. Our school gardening club extended a helping hand to the Mayor and Mayoress, aiding them in planting their tree and attaching their personalised tag.



We value our community and partnership working, and we are proud to be part of this impactful initiative aimed at tackling pollution in our local area.



We were also delighted to share our new promotional video this term- watch it [here!](#)



@peareswood



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Peareswood Primary School







### It's time to grow a tree! Planting at Southmere Park for National Tree Week!

Our local area is undergoing a major regeneration project and Peabody, who are working together with local people and partners to regenerate Thamesmead, gave our school the special opportunity to participate in tree planting at Southmere Park during National Tree Week. The children are eagerly anticipating revisiting the park to witness the growth of the trees they helped plant!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Peabody for giving us the incredible chance to make a positive and lasting difference to our community. This community event featured in the news for 'Thamesmead Now' - read the article [here!](#)



### PTFA's Festive Wonderland

We truly value the support of our PTFA in helping our school to hold events and raise funds to enhance the quality of our children's education and to improve their school experiences.

This December they transformed the school hall into a Winter Wonderland! Our families enjoyed taking photos, creating Christmas crafts, getting their faces painted, making reindeer food and of course enjoying some hot drinks and treats.





### Inspiring art projects

We have been thrilled to take part in an arts project with Bow Arts, who create exciting accessible learning experiences for children. Our Year 6 children participated in an enriching half-term Arts workshop aimed at fostering creativity and artistic expression. The project is accredited through Arts Award Explore and all those attending receive a level 1 qualification!



This term we also completed a whole school project with renowned artist Will Redgrove. Under Redgrove's guidance, the children embarked on a spectacular endeavor, crafting monumental canvas artworks that display our school's core values. These stunning creations are set to take pride of place in our school hall.



We were also delighted to share our new promotional video this term - watch it [here!](#)



Willow Bank Primary School

Learning Together We Grow As One,  
Ensuring Each Child Achieves Their Potential,  
And Feels Happy And Safe In School With Differences Celebrated

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Willow Bank  
Primary School



*Ignite the spark, reveal the champion*



**Woodland  
Academy Trust**



Knockhall  
Primary School



Lime Wood  
Primary School



Northumberland  
Heath  
Primary School



Peareswood  
Primary School



Willow Bank  
Primary School