

Northern Lights

End of school year magazine
2022-23

SHINE

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR
2022-23



Northern
Lights
LEARNING TRUST



Northern
Lights
TEACHING SCHOOL HUB



Northern
Lights
EARLY YEARS HUB NORTH EAST



Department
for Education

We've a lot to look forward to



Look at how our pupils shine! I am so proud of the children across our trust as they shine every day.

Northern Lights Learning Trust is proud of the diverse opportunities our pupils have and the focus on the holistic

education we provide at Northern Lights. We wanted to live out our trust value of Pride and share a flavour of the things that have happened across our trust this year with you. It is wonderful to see the wide range of opportunities and the joy our children, and staff, have enjoyed through these experiences.

Our aim at Northern Lights is that we enable everyone to flourish and the experiences of this year have certainly enabled us to develop the opportunities to thrive. You will see a range of sports, music, academic, drama, educational visits, school events and trust wide events. This is going to continue to develop further as our trust develops our working together and we are already busy planning opportunities for next year whilst celebrating this year.

This year saw Northern Lights become a primary and secondary trust and we

are now privileged to educate over 3,000 pupils from the ages of 2-16 across Teesside and Wearside. We have also been developing our DfE Teaching School Hub, where we are a designated DfE Centre of Excellence developing teachers across the region as well as being designated as a DfE Early Years Hub for the North East this year. Northern Lights is proud of the role our staff play in the education system and the benefits this brings to our schools, staff and pupils.

You will see one of our trust values embodied in here – the Voice of the Child through the work of the Pupil Parliament. We value the voices of all our children and the work they have been doing in our Primaries this year around sustainability, the environment and the cost of living. Our Pupil Parliament will be extended to our whole trust from September and will be further enriched by our cross phase working of secondary and primary, as will all of our work in Northern Lights.

I hope you enjoy flicking through Shine and seeing a sample of the things that our children have experienced this year and it gives you a wider view of Northern Lights.

Happy reading!



Northern Lights' values tell our story. This is us:

We place the **voice of the child** at the heart of decision-making, recognising that our work is ultimately to guide the next generation.

Our schools are embedded in their communities and sense of **community** is a responsibility as well as a value, embracing belonging, kindness, compassion, respect and the opportunities that brings.

Support is the rock upon which we choose to lean, to thrive, and the scaffolding we can give with humility to others, accepting that all of us need support at one time or another.

Integrity is central to our actions and means doing what we say we will do to stay authentic and encourage trust.

We always do the best we can to be genuine, non-judgmental and instil **pride** and we are proud of what we achieve and the difference we make.

OUR SCHOOLS

JULY 2023



- Benedict Biscop Church of England Academy, Sunderland
- Holley Park Academy, Washington
- Venerable Bede Church of England Academy, Sunderland
- Hart Community Primary School, Hartlepool
- St Helen's Primary School, Hartlepool
- St Peter's Elwick Church of England Primary School, Hartlepool
- Ian Ramsey Church of England Academy, Stockton-on-Tees

HOW TO CONTACT US

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School Improvement Team is making a difference

Northern Lights' School Improvement Team support a wide range of schools and multi-academy trusts across the North East and Yorkshire region.

We offer a full range of support for Early Years settings from birth, primary schools and secondary schools. Our trust support schools and trusts at the request of the Department for Education and also as a result of schools and trusts contacting us directly.

"We are really proud of the work that the Northern Lights team do to help shape and improve the system across the region - support being one of our trust values," said Jo Heaton, chief executive.

"We would like to say a big thank you for all of the work the School Improvement Team do - this team is made up not only of the Central Education Team, but also the senior leadership teams and school staff across our schools who take a role in going out to other schools and facilitating visits to their own schools. You make a difference to staff and children outside of our trust, so thank you!"



Savannah shows the way

Boxer Savannah Marshall, pictured, undisputed super-middleweight world champion, is the knockout choice as Hart Primary School's inspiration person from Hartlepool.

Local girl Savannah paid a visit to the school and her red team supporters and explained how she persevered and found success in her chosen sport, silencing the doubters who told her she couldn't box "because she was a girl". Youngsters from the school's Junior Leadership Team grilled her about her career and Savannah was happy to pose for photos.

Benedict Biscop CE Academy:
Oliver Breheny

Hart Primary School:
Lacey Anderson

Holley Park Academy:
Jack Telford

Ian Ramsey CE Academy:
Ava Place

St Helen's Primary School:
Eve Ingledeew

St Peter's Elwick CE Primary School:
Sophie Lavelle

Venerable Bede CE Academy:
Hannah Buckley

All seven schools in Northern Lights Learning Trust are planting a tree to mark the Coronation of King Charles III. Alongside each sapling will be a plaque featuring these winning designs from school-wide competitions.

Northern Lights
LEARNING TRUST

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Marking the King's Coronation

The King has been sent a copy of this colourful poster, which you can see at all our schools, showing the winning entries in our trust-wide Coronation competition.

Children and young people across Northern Lights' schools took part in a competition to commemorate the historic event, something not seen for over 70 years, at Westminster Abbey. They had to design a plaque which will be installed next to a tree sapling at each school to mark the occasion. The planting of the young trees will take place at the start of the autumn term - the best time to plant

them, according to the Woodland Trust who are our suppliers.

As it is the outline of the King's head that children have used their imagination to colour in, or make a collage for, we thought it only right that he gets to see them.

Our winners, voted for by schools, mined their imaginations to bring images of the King, union flags, UK icons and the Royal family to their drawings and montages to celebrate the Coronation.

King Charles is well known for his environmental passions and so planting a tree at each school helps symbolise sustainability.



Merger is 'powerful force for good' for education in the North East

Northern Lights Learning Trust's merger with Dayspring Trust in February has created an organisation of seven schools and over 3,000 children and young people, from the ages of two to 16.

The merged trust, which has schools from Stockton and Hartlepool in Teesside through to Sunderland and Washington, comes together under the Northern Lights Learning Trust name.

"This was an exciting opportunity for two strong trusts who have high performing schools with shared values, culture and ethos to combine," said Jo Heaton, Chief Executive of Northern Lights Learning Trust, "It brought together secondary expertise and primary expertise and provides the best outcomes and opportunities for all pupils, students and staff."

Gill Booth, Chief Executive and Executive Headteacher of Dayspring Trust, said: "We had already been closely working over the past six months in our shared central office and are delighted that we have formally joined together."

Northern Lights Learning Trust's primary and secondary schools are a mixture of Church and non-Church, small, village, rural, urban and large schools.

Chair of Northern Lights Learning



Stronger together: from left, Gill Booth, Neil Williams, Mark Stouph and Jo Heaton

Trust, Mark Stouph, said: "The merger of the trusts continues to provide fabulous opportunities for pupils to achieve their full potential, thanks to collaboration right through both primary and secondary phases. This represents a powerful force for good for education in the North East."

Neil Williams, Chair of Dayspring Trust, added: "The board of Dayspring Trust are committed to ensuring that we look for

opportunities for all of our young people and staff to grow and have 'wise and generous living'. We are extremely passionate about working in partnership."

Mrs Heaton said: "This has been a fantastic opportunity for our trust to grow and develop cross-phase, with shared strengths, so that we are able to provide the best that we can for our pupils, staff and communities.

"We are really excited about the future of Northern Lights."

Voices in harmony at our primary schools

At Northern Lights, listening to the voice of the child is one of our most important values – and so putting together a choir concert comprising all five primary schools was a logical next step.

Songs, including lyrics and backing tracks, were shared for individual school choirs to practise. While choir leaders met regularly online to collaborate, the first time the full choir came together was the day of the concert itself, at the Lebutkin Theatre at East Durham College's Peterlee Campus.

A wonderful song called "One Voice" was adopted as the collaborative choirs' name as it was felt it encompassed everything that the trust was working to achieve.

"We wanted the children to experience performing on stage," said Marie Crowe, headteacher at Hart Primary School and one of the choir organisers. "All schools



brought their individual choirs to the venue and we rehearsed from the morning through to the afternoon. Families then arrived in the evening to watch the final performance."

As well as the children performing, Jessie Dale, who is an apprentice TA at Benedict Biscop and has starred on The Voice Kids, also performed – and was amazing.

The event itself was special

because it was the students from East Durham College who handled the technical aspects – music, lighting, sound, front of house – and media students videoed and edited the performance for the trust, so valuable experience for them all.

Overall, a really successful night and a real team effort from right across the trust. The voices of the children were certainly heard!

New Early Years hub will benefit the North East's youngest children

Over 100 Early Years and childcare professionals attended the North East launch in March of a government funded initiative to provide advice, share good practice, and offer evidence-based professional development for early years practitioners.

The Northern Lights Early Years Stronger Practice Hub is part of the Department for Education's £153m early years Covid recovery package, set up to address the impact of the pandemic on the youngest children, focusing on those most disadvantaged.

At a launch event at The Fed in Gateshead, Jo Heaton, Chief Executive of Northern Lights Learning Trust, which will run the North East initiative, said the new hub would benefit the region's youngest children.

"Right across the North East there is already a brilliant network of trusted local experts providing a great service to children from birth to starting school. Now we have a chance to harness that expertise and share it widely."

Director of the Northern Lights Early Years Stronger Practice Hub

is Emma Whelam-Tate, who started her career as a nursery nurse working with some of the most disadvantaged children in Sunderland, supporting families with English as an additional language.

Emma said: "Our vision is to work with the whole Early Years sector with children from birth to pre Reception and all practitioners including childminders, the private, voluntary or independent sector, maintained nursery schools and early years settings within primary schools.

"This will unite the workforce to create a successful Stronger Practice Hub which will support our young, vulnerable and disadvantaged children as we recover from the impact of Covid-19. Our hub will

provide a buzz of regular activity within the sector as we work towards uniting the workforce to overcome current challenges through engaging and responsive social media, online learning portals and face-to-face events."

Benedict Biscop CE Academy in Sunderland, one of seven Northern Lights Learning

Trust schools, will be the lead school in the



North East Early Years hub, with Sunningdale Special School as its official partner - but there are many opportunities for partnership working with all providers.

Delegates at the event took part in workshops that explored children's emotional development. Involved were Playology Beach School in Seaham, Sunningdale Special School in Sunderland, Inspiring Foundations, and Boldon Outdoor Nursery School in Tyne & Wear.

Emma added: "To ensure we are able to provide appropriate and responsive support which meets the needs of the Early Years sector, we need to hear from early years providers - please get in touch via email: eyhub@nllt.co.uk"

Delegates at the Gateshead launch took part in workshops that explored children's emotional development



Emily on the ball in Portugal

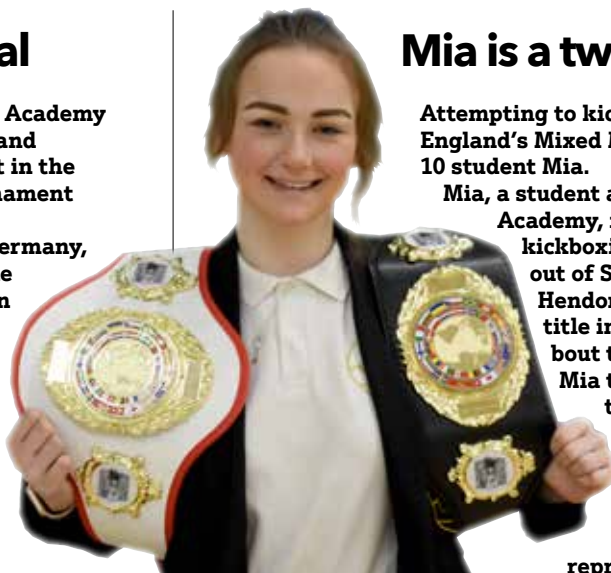


Emily, Venerable Bede CE Academy Year 11 student and England footballer, has taken part in the UEFA Development Tournament in the Algarve, Portugal.

Emily played against Germany, Netherlands and Italy. She described the competition as an "amazing experience". In the three games England drew 2-2 with Germany, lost 2-1 to Netherlands and beat Italy 2-0.

■ Macey in Year 8 is to be part of a tumbling development programme at British Gymnastics.

Mia is a two-times champ



Attempting to kickbox her place into England's Mixed Martial Arts team is Year 10 student Mia.

Mia, a student at Venerable Bede CE Academy, is already a double kickboxing champion. Training out of Spartan Fighting Arts, in Hendon, she won her English title in September 2022 in a bout that took place in Derby. Mia then dedicated herself to her craft and returned to training, eventually being victorious in her pursuit of a British title in April 2023. Her ambition now is to represent her country.

Prayer walk takes in two of our schools

Staff and young people were delighted to welcome the Rt Rev Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham, to two Northern Lights' academies in Sunderland as part of his four-day prayer walk around Wearmouth Deanery.

Bishop Paul, who assisted the Archbishop of Canterbury at the King's Coronation, paid a visit to Benedict Biscop Church of England Academy before moving on to Venerable Bede Church of England Academy in Sunderland.

Bishop Paul, accompanied by his wife Rosemary and other guests, spoke about the importance of prayer and answered questions about his role supporting the Archbishop of Canterbury during



the recent historic event.

The Bishop is pictured third from left with staff and other guests at Venerable Bede Church

of England Academy, including the academy's headteacher, David Airey, and the trust's executive headteacher, Gill Booth.

Outstanding features applauded by Ofsted inspectors at St Peter's Elwick

Outstanding school leaders and governors ensure outstanding behaviours, attitudes and personal development in a Hartlepool primary school, say school inspectors Ofsted.

Pupils at St Peter's Elwick Church of England Primary School benefit from an "exceptional" curriculum that prepares them well for life and they learn to do the right thing, even when it is difficult.

So reports Ofsted in awarding the school, part of the Northern Lights Learning Trust, a "good"

rating with outstanding qualities. St Peter's was judged to be outstanding in behaviour and attitudes, personal development, and leadership and management with overall effectiveness as good.

"Pupils are proud to attend St Peter's Elwick and to be part of the school family," said inspectors in their report. "From the very beginning, pupils learn how to behave and show respect for others. Pupils behave well all the time. They are very well supported by adults and older pupils are strong role models."

From being deputy head, Vikki Wilson moved up to become head of school in September 2022 and paid tribute to the foundations of success laid before her appointment. "It's credit to a team of dedicated people - and our amazing children - that our school is in such a good position and we are all thrilled by such a positive inspection report," she said.

The report noted that behaviour is "exemplary". Staff at the school model high expectations and notice when pupils make the right choice and pupils learn to be polite and courteous as a result. Staff feel valued and supported through

highly effective leadership from the headteacher and from well-informed, coordinated support from the trust.

Leaders are determined to ensure that the curriculum is ambitious and relevant for all pupils. They make excellent use of research, expert advice and best practice to ensure that this is the case. Wherever possible, learning is underpinned by practical experiences, trips and visitors. This helps pupils to engage with and enjoy their education. Pupils often talk about what they have learned through such activities.

The curriculum to promote pupils' personal development is exceptional, says the report. Leaders go above and beyond to ensure that all pupils are able to participate in curricular and extra-curricular activities which foster their talents and interests. Pupils are taught to debate and explore different points of view. By the time they leave the school, pupils have a highly developed understanding of equality and democracy. From the early years onwards, pupils are guided to learn the knowledge and skills to become successful citizens in modern-day Britain.

Inspectors said specific resources are available to meet the particular needs of pupils. Leaders place reading at the heart of the curriculum. A well-chosen range of books supports pupils to make connections between aspects of their learning and the wider world. Pupils value and enjoy reading.

Celebrating their success is head of school Vikki Wilson with children at St Peter's





Trust Parliament members at Hart Primary School with one of the motions they are discussing

'Trust Parliament' shows children democracy at work at school and across trust

Schools across Northern Lights have established their first "Trust Parliament" – electing members at each school and working together on shared priorities and ambitions.

The junior parliamentarians began by meeting up as a group online, deciding on a project to complete – how to save costs at home and school – then set to work.

At Holley Park Academy, children shared what the Trust Parliament is about at a whole school assembly, then created a competition. This was shared on the school website and the children were tasked with creating a poster to remind people of what they could do to save money.

Holley Park's green team chose a winner from each class and three overall winners and all their posters were displayed around school.

Trust Parliament members had a fantastic day out at Hartlepool Power Station and came back and shared what they had learned with the children in an assembly.

Football success

Holley Park Academy's school football team won the Washington League Futsal Tournament and the Year 4 football team came second in the Washington Year 4 football league this year. All children put their utmost into their training and games, showing fantastic sportsmanship on and off the field.

Bishop Vinnie helps broaden horizons

Ian Ramsey CE Academy was pleased to host a visit by Bishop Vicentia of the Lesotho Church of England Diocese.

As the first female bishop of Lesotho, Bishop Vinnie, as she prefers to be known, was keen to share anecdotes from her life and experiences growing up in South Africa during the time of apartheid.

Bishop Vinnie studied hard at school and earned a place at university studying law. She later decided to dedicate her life to the Church and become a female priest. The position of Bishop of Lesotho is a prestigious post, in a country known for its strong Christian belief and the appointment of a female bishop illustrates how much the country has progressed.

Nevertheless, Bishop Vinnie has faced numerous challenges and shared some of her stories with students from both Ian Ramsey CE Academy and Venerable Bede, leaving them in awe of this incredible and inspirational lady.

David Airey, headteacher at Ian Ramsey CE Academy said: "Venerable Bede CE Academy has been running an annual visit to Lesotho since 2008, until the pandemic prevented foreign travel for school trips.

"Some of the young people that our students meet in Lesotho are orphaned and as such have experienced more of life than someone of their age should have to face. Their lives are a stark contrast to ours and the experience serves as a humbling reminder for us all, teachers and students alike.

"It is especially heart-warming to watch these two groups of young people from such different backgrounds share stories, toast marshmallows, sing camp fire songs and play football together without a care in the world.



Bishop Vinnie: an "inspiration"

"Opportunities such as these are important for so many reasons: they offer a unique chance for students to learn outside of the classroom, for them to form new friendships, to push themselves and see their teachers in a different light. But our project does this and so much more. It empowers our students to help those less fortunate than themselves, it offers a unique experience which at times can be quite daunting when you're only 14 and teaches them they can achieve more than they realise.

"It demands team work, patience and resilience to raise the funding to go and enables pupils to reflect upon their lives, to review the simple things that they sometimes take for granted such as, their education, their home life, and their faith."

Dedicated children travel far and wide

Several pupils from St Peter's Elwick Church of England Primary are travelling far and wide to compete in their sport – and some are representing their country internationally in figure skating, netball, dance, cheerleading and ice hockey.

"We have so many talented pupils at our school who relish the

opportunities on offer to be who God created them to be and have fullness of life," said head of school Vikki Wilson.



Hart Primary proud of glowing report from school inspectors

Hart Primary School is celebrating after receiving a glowing Ofsted report that describes children at the school as “polite, friendly and welcoming” and says “adults are always available to listen and help”.

Inspectors identified that “staff know how to support all pupils well” and pupils are “supported to do their best by adults”.

Staff at the school are rightly proud of the report. Marie Crowe, of Hart Primary School, said: “Since taking on the role of head in September, the children have continuously demonstrated a positive attitude and a determination to do their very best.

“I am delighted that inspectors saw this too and that the staff received credit for all the support they provide.”

Executive head, Carole Bradley, said: “I am extremely proud to be involved with Hart Primary School. I get the opportunity to work with committed staff and wonderful

**Spelling it out:
It's a Good report
for Hart Primary
from school
inspectors Ofsted**



pupils, as recognised by Ofsted.”

Jo Heaton, chief executive of Northern Lights Learning Trust, said: “We are very proud of the team at Hart Primary school. The staff and governors work exceptionally hard to provide the best for our pupils, in partnership with our parents.

“At Northern Lights we are committed to providing a wide curriculum, as well as developing our pupils to be caring citizens of the future and are pleased the inspectors recognised the many opportunities to develop pupils’ character and to hear our pupils’ voices.”



A mile's-worth of two pence pieces add up to a lot of help for hospice

Budding entrepreneurs from Hart Primary School converted an initial £20 stake into £1,325, providing much welcome cash for people attending Alice House Hospice.

In amongst the fund-raising activities, which saw Hart the leading fundraiser out of eight primary schools in the Bright Sparks Challenge, was an appeal for two-pence pieces – bringing a staggering 65,000 coins into the

building. They would have stretched over a mile if laid out in a line.

Other money-making schemes included movie and pyjama nights and raffles.

Energy company EDF, owners of Hartlepool Power Station, which has supported the challenge for a number of years, agreed to match the total raised by all the schools, raising more than £7,000 for Alice House.



Sights on heights

Harry from Holley Park Academy began climbing when he was just three years old – and has been an avid fan ever since. As his skills and talents have grown, Harry has regularly attended many competitions. At the National Ropes Competition in Scotland, Harry had to complete two climbs in his category and did exceptionally well.



Secondaries sample great outdoors with DoE

Success in the Duke of Edinburgh programme at Ian Ramsey CE Academy: not only did students complete and pass their Bronze Award, nine went on to gain their Silver Award, overcoming very damp and misty weather conditions to finish their expedition.

For many, the expedition is one of favourite parts of the DoE, as it is often the first time they have cooked outdoors and spent the night in a tent, in a field, in the countryside.

They stay overnight then complete their walk the following day, returning to school tired, sometimes a little wet, but with a sense of satisfaction for their accomplishment.

There's also a lot happening with the popular Duke of Edinburgh award at Venerable Bede CE Academy.

Students in Year 11 have completed their expedition and are finalising evidence needed

so that they can receive their Bronze Award certificates.

Year 10 have now completed their training with tent-pitching skills and are awaiting their practice expedition before embarking on their September full expedition into the Northumberland countryside.

At the beginning of their DoE journey and just about to embark on the adventures ahead are Year 9 students.

Pictures show activities from secondaries.



Lots of cake, but look who chose the Pi...

Say it out loud and you'll think it was a different kind of event – but Pi Day at Ian Ramsey CE Academy was about mathematical prowess, it wasn't an eating competition.

That said, some amazing cakes were introduced as part of the activities and students really enjoyed looking for the Pi t-shirt wearing staff and winning prizes.

It was a day of puzzles, games and buns based around the theme of Pi. A highlight – and maybe he thought it was a different sort of Pi – was Mr Spence being "pi-ed".

The number π – represented by the symbol π – is a mathematical constant that is the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter, approximately equal to 3.14159.



Too much Pi: Mr Spence



Achievers: Louise Douglas, above left and Amy Baines, of St Helen's Primary School, have been awarded prestigious National Professional Qualifications

Our pride in staff at St Helen's Primary

It's been a year of achievement for two members of staff at St Helen's Primary School.

Amy Baines has successfully achieved a national professional qualification (NPQ) in Leading Teaching. Amy has also since gone on to achieve a position on the trust's Aspiring Leaders course, shaping the direction of Art across Northern Lights Learning Trust.

Amy works collaboratively with schools within the trust to help refine and develop art provision.

Louise Douglas is a teaching assistant who works within St Helen's nurture setting and is an amazing colleague, supporting our most vulnerable pupils. Louise leads with great empathy, resilience and determination and has now achieved the NPQ for Leading Behaviour and Culture. Her passion for inclusion is palpable and she



Pictured right: Children from St Helen's Primary School are dressed for the weather for an extra curricular lesson in the great outdoors, at the coast

is a real credit to our trust, says headteacher Marcus Newing. "Also, we are absolutely delighted with the pupils' contributions of their voluntary work within the community we serve," said Mr Newing. "Our pupils have been instrumental in planning, preparing and delivering events for elderly

and sometimes lonely residents of the Headland community. This has been in partnership with Cleveland Fire Brigade.

"The work has seen the pupils lead Easter parties, bingo, carol concerts and we are inviting the residents to our end of year performance and school fayre."



Readers collect book prizes

Holley Park Academy's Reading Ambassadors were pleased to present the winners of their book review competition with their book prizes. Each successful reviewer chose their own book from our book fair.

Feedback invited

Northern Lights wants to hear from you.

We have set up a special email address for parents, carers, volunteers - in fact anyone within our school communities, or even outside of them, so that YOU have the opportunity to get in touch.

Tell us your thoughts on our schools, our trust, our teaching school hub or our Early Years Stronger Practice Hub. What do you think we do right and where are the areas where you think we could do better?

Community is one of our values and so to be effective, we need to know what people in our communities are thinking and how we can help develop a greater sense of belonging.

All schools are at the heart of their communities and so let's open up conversations so that we're all doing the best we can for each other.

Email feedback@nllt.co.uk. We look forward to hearing from you!



Mud, mud, glorious mud!



Children in Early Years at Benedict Biscop CE Academy had so much fun celebrating International Mud Day.

The day began by coming up with great ideas of mud activities. Children decided on mud ball throwing, a mud slide, mud kitchen recipes, mud face painting and mud shakes!

The children especially enjoyed painting their skin with mud and making footprints and handprints on large paper.

All in all it was an amazing day celebrating the great outdoors.



What a load of rubbish: 25 bags to be precise



As part of Environmental week at Benedict Biscop CE Academy, Year 6 went out into the community to complete a litter pick.

After walking round the local area, litter pickers filled an astonishing 25 black bags with rubbish!

This prompted Year 6 to then create posters campaigning for a more sustainable community to hopefully be displayed around Moorside.



Big-hearted donations pour in

Everybody wins with Ian Ramsey CE Academy's "Food Bank Bingo".

There's an inter-tutor competition to see which tutor group can first collect the items that are needed on the bingo card, with a prize for the tutor group completing the card. But

the real winners are the Salvation Army, who receive all the donated items for onward distribution to those people who need them.

Our picture shows Scarlet, Owen and headteacher Brian Janes dropping off the goodies.



Benedict Biscop feel the force

Year 5 at Benedict Biscop CE Academy have been learning about forces in science and have enjoyed investigating gravity and air resistance. The children designed and created their own parachutes to see how surface area impacts the rate at which an object falls to the ground. Pupils were very careful to control variables to ensure a fair test was carried out. As a further bonus, the class loved being able to work outside in the sun!

Our Teaching School Hub: here to work in partnership

by **Zoe Thompson, Director,**
Northern Lights Teaching School Hub

We are very proud of the success and achievements of Northern Lights Teaching School Hub (TSH) this academic year.

We have strengthened our partnerships with other TSHs across the country, our three Local Authorities and other DfE designated hubs. This enables us to share up-and-coming opportunities with schools, identify priority areas

and needs to inform the sector and work collaboratively to help develop schools' understanding of the wider DfE offer and how varying hubs can support them across them.

Hosting a free, in person, Early Career Framework (ECF) and Initial Teaching Training fair with the curriculum hub experts brought over 100 Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and teacher trainees together across the region to see for themselves what professional development opportunities are

out there for them as teachers in the early stages of their career.

Relationships with over 300 schools and 1,000 teachers, both in our region and outside, have meant for a busy, successful and exciting year. It has been a pleasure for our team to not only work with new ECTs and new National Professional Qualification (NPQ) participants this year but for our Appropriate Body (AB) team to visit every school who work with us to oversee the induction of their ECTs.

Framework completed

We have completed our first Early Career Framework (ECF) cohort in the national roll out programme, since the framework became statutory in September 2021. It's fair to say the ECF programme has had its challenges alongside its many successes and schools have shown real commitment by providing ECTs with a provider-led programme, time to focus on their study, the opportunity to attend our face-to-face local and regional sessions and a focussed mentor who has met with them regularly.

We would like to highlight the achievement of every ECT who, in July 2023, will have completed induction and their ECF programme. We are fortunate to have dedicated and passionate ECTs working for Northern Lights Learning Trust who have kindly shared some thoughts on the programme and how it has impacted their development as ECTs...

Sarah Hansen, Benedict Biscop

I have been surrounded by a dedicated team of mentors, teachers and support staff committed to my success; they understood the challenges that I faced as a newcomer to the profession and provided me with the expertise, guidance and encouragement I needed to grow personally and professionally. Their support helped me to refine my instructional techniques and build confidence in my abilities. Additionally, the professional development and continuous learning has played a vital role in shaping my career.



Lauren Price, Hart

Through the support I have received from the whole team at Northern Light Learning Trust, I have become a confident, reflective practitioner with a wealth of tools and skills that I now apply in the classroom. Their support has enabled me to utilise my personal strengths with a lot more ease and have helped me progress in areas I wanted to develop with bespoke opportunities.



Keynote speaker Musharaf Asghar, centre, with Jo Heaton, left and Zoe Thompson

TV's Mushy praises the passion of teachers

The star of an award-winning TV documentary series - Musharaf Asghar, also known as "Mushy" from Educating Yorkshire - was keynote speaker at the Northern Lights Teaching School Hub's School Leadership Conference.

Speaking to an event comprising headteachers and school leaders from across the North East region, Mushy explained how he overcame a severe stammer with the support of teachers who he said transformed his life. He praised the passion of teachers and school leaders committed to finding ways to help fulfil the potential of children and young people.

The theme of the event, held at the Ramside Hall Hotel in Durham, was: "Putting communication at the heart of leadership" and other speakers included Katherine

Powell, who discussed transactional analysis and ensuring effective communication in teams and Wayne Norrie, a multi-academy trust chief executive who focussed on the power of collaboration. Kym Scott talked about her work in Early Years and getting the best from children through play, including children with special educational needs.

"Events such as these give inspiration and fresh ideas to school leaders," said Zoe Thompson, Director of the Northern Lights Teaching School Hub.

Jo Heaton, strategic lead for the Teaching School Hub, said: "It is both a privilege and a responsibility for schools to play such an important part in nurturing a child and using communication effectively to bring out the best in them is really important."