

AGORA
LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP

Agora Learning Partnership

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Dear colleagues

As we draw near to the half term break, I wanted to thank you all for the hard work and dedication in helping the children and young people across the Agora Learning Partnership settle back into school. Pat McAteer (our Chair of Trustees) and I have been meeting with the Chairs of Academy Governing Boards and Headteachers this half term and they have talked so positively about your work. It is clear that across our Partnership, everybody is doing all they can to help our children and young people succeed, supporting them emotionally, socially, behaviourally and academically. Thank you so much for your efforts; work across the Partnership has been truly impressive!

Whilst everybody has been busy in schools, the Trustees and Executive Team have been considering the future development of the Partnership. These discussions have resulted in the creation of the 'Together' Strategy; our new Trust-wide improvement strategy which is underpinned by the views and opinions gathered from a range of sources, including one-to-one conversations with different Partnership groups, such as Headteachers and Chairs of Academy Governing Boards, and the staff survey.

The Strategy is focussed on developing purposeful collaboration across the Partnership in order to improve the outcomes of our children and young people and to help them flourish; it details four key themes:

- Together for children
- Together for staff
- Together for schools
- Together for all

Next half term will see the 'Together' Strategy shared with you all as a period of consultation begins, so that we can gather feedback about the Strategy and make any necessary amendments before it is launched in September 2021. True collaboration even at the Strategy's development stage!

As part of the consultation, we will be seeking to create working groups made up of senior leadership, teacher and support staff representatives from each school. Colleagues from each of the schools will be required to liaise with their teams back in school to ensure they are offering a broad and balanced view when attending the working group meetings. If you are interested in joining a working group, watch out for further details which will be shared after the half term break.

In the meantime, I would like to wish you all a well-earned rest as we finish the first half of the summer term and I look forward to seeing you again soon, when I next visit your schools.

Take care and enjoy some precious time with your loved ones.

Kind regards

Rebecca Daulman
Chief Executive Officer



As part of their 'growth mindset' learning, every child at Wilbury Junior School was given a packet of seeds this half term.

Since the full re-opening of schools, there has been a focus throughout the Agora Learning Partnership on school improvement and achieving the very best outcomes for the children and young people that we serve. As part of this, schools have benefitted from reviews carried out by an independent consultant, Bernard Senier, and the Chief Executive Officer, Rebecca Daulman. All schools have participated in a virtual day, with follow up, face-to-face days in Alban Wood Primary School and Nursery, Meryfield Community Primary School, Oxhey Wood Primary School and Warren Dell Primary School. Everybody who has participated so far has seen the fantastic benefits of this review model. Bernard and Rebecca look forward to visiting all of the other Trust schools next half term.



Congratulations to the eighteen middle leaders from across the Partnership who recently completed six sessions of middle leadership training organised by the Chief Executive Officer and delivered by colleagues from the Chiltern Teaching School Hub. The training culminated in each participant delivering a presentation about their own leadership project, inspired by the training. All of the presentations were of an extremely high standard and all participants should be commended for their hard work and efforts in delivering projects to improve outcomes for the children and young people in their schools.

In the past few months, the Trustees commissioned a review of Partnership-wide governance. Judith Rutherford (from the National Governance Association) carried out the review and she recently presented her findings to the Partnership Members and Partnership Board. The feedback was extremely positive and has also highlighted some areas of development that will form part of the 'Together' Strategy in 2021-2022. Thank you to everyone who took part in the review; your participation and contributions were very much valued and appreciated.



A huge thank you to everybody who completed the staff survey earlier this half term. The results will underpin the work detailed in the 'Together' Strategy.

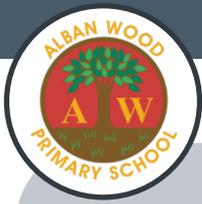
Apprenticeships offer individuals who are 16 or over, living in England and not in full-time education an opportunity to combine practical training in a job with study. We are delighted to announce that four new apprentices will be starting in the new academic year. The apprentices will be working in three of the Partnership schools; one at The Grange Academy, one at The Orchard Primary School and two at Wilbury Junior School. We look forward to welcoming them!

Staff Survey	% Completed Responses
Alban Wood Primary School and Nursery	63
Bromet Primary School	73
Meryfield Community Primary School	74
Oxhey Wood Primary School	31
The Grange Academy	78
The Orchard Primary	64
Warren Dell Primary School	28
Waterside Academy	64
Wilbury Junior School	40
Trust	54



Update to the Partnership's Child Protection Policy: all staff should be aware that the Agora Learning Partnership's Child Protection Policy has been updated to include additional detail about the roles and responsibilities pertaining to child protection Trust-wide. The Policy will be shared with all staff in due course.

PARTNERSHIP NEWS



Huge congratulations to everybody at Alban Wood Primary School and Nursery for embracing a new school-wide challenge...running the Daily Mile! Children across the school are now taking part in this new initiative and the launch of the project has seen the children enjoy much success.



This half term, the children at Bromet Primary School benefitted hugely from a virtual engagement with Baroness Floella Benjamin. It is the 25th Anniversary of Baroness Floella Benjamin's childhood memoir *Coming to England*. Over 30,000 children took part in the virtual meet from over 160 schools across the United Kingdom. Floella talked about her childhood and how this has influenced her life and career.



The children at Meryfield love to read and, as such, they have been fundraising in order to make improvements to the Reading Corners in each classroom. The children will be able to request the books that they love when deciding how to spend the money raised.



At The Grange Academy on Friday 7th May, the school was full of scientists as children and staff came to school dressed to carry out a science-related job role. Super discussion about the need for science skills and knowledge in a range of careers was had by all. Children and staff dressed as vets, forensic scientists, astronauts, gardeners, bakers and several medical professionals...to name but a few. Everybody entered into the spirit of the day and it was wonderful to see the enthusiasm from the children throughout the school as they discussed and researched what was required for their career. Children benefitted from learning about science and its uses outside of the classroom and how it is relevant to many areas of everyday life. A number of children at The Grange Academy now have new aspirations for the future!



At Oxhey Wood Primary School, the children have benefitted from lots of exciting learning opportunities, including:

- A sports festival – the children in Years 3 and 4 took part in football, multi-sports, athletics and dance.
- Year 5 swimming
- A virtual cathedral workshop which helped the children in Year 6 to write some amazing poems
- Making My Footprint sessions for the children in Year 6, which helps them to develop resilience and prepare for secondary school
- The Year 6 children working towards a first aid qualification

Each year, at The Orchard Primary School, children participate in a Year 5 Maths Challenge. This half term, four children from Year 5 made up the team, spending time after school to prepare. With over 250 schools competing, the children knew they would have to work extremely hard to make the final, which consists of only 20 teams! The team scored an extremely impressive 198 (compared to an average score of 121 for most schools), placing them at the top of the leader board - they made it into the final! Well done to Isobel, Manya, Jason and Humza, who are clearly academically fit for life. Wishing you all good luck for the final!

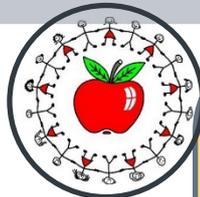


Across the half term, at Warren Dell Primary School, exciting learning opportunities have been taking place; examples include:

- In Nursery, learning how to care for pets as a result of some special 'pet' visitors
- Walks in the local area for Key Stage 1
- Brass lessons in Year 4, which the children have thoroughly enjoyed
- Year 6 swimming in the new pool at South Oxhey

'A Waterside Winner'

Huge congratulations to Emma, a Year 5 pupil at Waterside Academy, for winning first prize in a local photography competition. The wonderful town of Welwyn Garden City turned 100 last year and although celebrations were somewhat muted because of the ongoing pandemic, some children still worked hard to mark the occasion. Emma spent time photographing 'life cycles' during the recent lockdowns and entered her collection of photographs to the competition judges as a part of a borough-wide initiative. We were incredibly pleased to hear that Emma's dedication to both the sciences and arts were recognised when she was awarded the first-place prize.



At Wilbury Junior School this half term, the children have been busy with their creative curriculum topics...Music from the Musicals, Vikings, Mayans and Ancient Greeks. All classes have taken part in workshops in person or virtually, where artifacts were used to support learning. The children have also worked really hard on 'growth mindset' and have enjoyed working hard to achieve the goals that have been set for them. They will finish this half term with yoga sessions to support their mental health and wellbeing. A fun packed half term at Wilbury!



SCHOOL NEWS