

# Spring 2026 newsletter

## Hello from David O'Toole, CEO



Spring brings a sense of renewal, growth and fresh momentum — and across The 3–18 Education Trust, that spirit is clearly reflected in the progress being made across our schools and teams. Over recent months, colleagues have been working with shared purpose and ambition, driving developments that are strengthening our Trust and enhancing the experiences of the children and young people we serve.

From school improvement and inclusion to investment in our people, digital innovation and sustainable growth, these developments are connected by a common thread: collaboration.

While every school remains unique, our collective approach is helping to create greater consistency, clarity and impact where it matters most. By working together, we are building strong foundations for the future — improving systems, developing our workforce and ensuring that every learner is supported to thrive.

Spring is also a time to recognise the dedication behind this work. The progress highlighted in this newsletter reflects the commitment, professionalism and teamwork shown every day across our Trust.

As we look ahead, we do so with optimism and a renewed sense of togetherness — continuing to grow stronger, together, as one Trust.

**David O'Toole**  
CEO  
The 3-18 Education Trust

### **In this term's newsletter**

- [News from our Trust](#)
- [News from our schools](#)
- [Hello from our Trustees](#)
- [Coming up next term](#)

# News from our Trust

## New student-staff Belonging Council launches

December marked the launch of our Belonging Council, a Trust initiative that brings together students and staff from across our community of schools. Building on our Trust [Belonging Framework](#), the Council will meet termly to collaborate, share ideas and shape the future of belonging across our schools and Trust.

[Belonging Council launch event](#)



## NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK 2026

## Spotlight on National Apprenticeship Week

This National Apprenticeship Week 2026, we celebrated some of our staff apprentices. From teaching assistants and school business managers to finance, facilities and IT, apprenticeships offer recognised qualifications alongside experience. We support staff to access apprenticeships via [3-18 Inspiring Futures](#), our Trust's professional learning offer.

[Read our apprentice stories](#)

## Schools 'go all in' for World Book Day 2026

From Pass the Book and book-themed Bake Offs to *Jack and the Beanstalk* and author visits, schools across our Trust marked [World Book Day 2026](#) with imagination, energy and a shared love of reading. In this year's round-up, explore the creative ways our schools brought books to life in their classrooms and corridors.

[Hear from our schools](#)



## Ten-year leisure centre provision secured

A 10-year agreement with [Halo Leisure](#) will see the provision secured at both Bridgnorth Endowed Leisure Centre and Much Wenlock Leisure Centre, further strengthening relations between our Trust schools and local communities.

All permanent and fixed-term Trust staff will be eligible for free gym and swim membership of the leisure centres from April.



# News from our Trust

## STAR Housing refreshes St Martins library

St Martins School are benefiting from a refreshed and welcoming library space thanks to the generosity of local housing provider, [STAR Housing](#). The support was provided through STAR Housing's Hardship Fund and Social Value Fund, reflecting a clear commitment to the wellbeing of children, families and the wider community.

[St Martins library refresh](#)



## Catering Star of the Year award winner

Colleagues at Thomas Adams School came together last week to celebrate a well-deserved achievement, as Louise Rotherham was named Academy Team Star of the Year 2025. Louise was surprised by her colleagues with a special presentation recognising her outstanding contribution to the school's catering team. Congratulations, Louise!

[Star of the Year award](#)

## £164k investment for William Brookes track

In February, the Trust announced a £164,000 investment to resurface the athletics track at William Brookes School in Much Wenlock. As the UK's only 200-metre 'Tartan Track' — an all-weather synthetic surface primarily used for track and field — the six-lane facility is a unique sporting asset that will benefit both students and the wider community.

[Track investment](#)



## Cal Knight appointed Head at Priory School

Congratulations to Cal Knight who was appointed as Headteacher at The Priory School in Shrewsbury in December. Cal brings 23 years' experience and a strong background in pastoral and curriculum leadership to the role.

[New Head for Priory](#)

# News from our schools



## Bowbrook Primary School

The highlight of the term has undoubtedly been the trip for our little superstars to Blackpool Tower Ballroom to dance in front of their biggest audience ever! From the moment we arrived at the stage door, the excitement, atmosphere and energy were electric. At just four to seven years old, we were by far the youngest performers, but we definitely had the loudest cheer - and rightly so! The children danced like they'd never danced before and the smiles on their faces couldn't have been bigger.

[News from Bowbrook](#)

## Bridgnorth Endowed School

Bridgnorth Endowed School has launched an exciting new Virtual Options Event to help Year 9 students make confident, informed choices for their GCSEs. This online platform brings each subject to life through engaging videos featuring teacher introductions, student perspectives, and clear explanations of course content and opportunities. With helpful FAQs, careers guidance, and detailed subject information, the virtual event provides students with everything they need to explore their interests and choose options that genuinely support their future aspirations. [Visit the BES Virtual Options Event](#)



[News from Bridgnorth Endowed](#)



## Coleham Primary School

Coleham Primary School was proud to host a fantastic inter-school maths competition, expertly organised by Miss Featherston. The event showcased high-quality mathematical thinking from pupils at St Martins, John Wilkinson, Hodnet and Much Wenlock, creating a vibrant and positive atmosphere of challenge and collaboration. Congratulations to Coleham's outstanding Year 6 team, who emerged overall winners thanks to their impressive times-tables knowledge.

[News from Coleham](#)

# News from our schools



## Hodnet Primary School

There has been an air of anticipation and excitement buzzing in Hodnet's Year Six this term. Every Friday, Year Six pupils have participated in a Live Friday Book Club ran by author, Jenny McLachlan and HarperCollins Publishers. Each week has a specific theme such as villains, ghosts and monsters, with special guest authors and illustrators. Ms McLachlan was so impressed with the children that she asked some of them to help in her World Book Day live lesson!

[News from Hodnet](#)

## John Wilkinson Primary School and Nursery

Spring Term has been a busy and positive period at John Wilkinson Primary School and Nursery. Children have participated in Young Voices 2026, enjoyed a Roald Dahl-themed World Book Day celebration and taken part in regular outdoor learning opportunities. Alongside this, staff have continued to strengthen teaching, reading and curriculum development, ensuring high-quality learning experiences that support pupils' progress, wellbeing and enjoyment of school throughout the term.

[News from John Wilkinson](#)



## Much Wenlock Primary School and Nursery

This term has been a lovely reminder of how powerful reading can be when it brings people together and creates a real sense of belonging. Much Wenlock Bake Off was a much-loved part of our World Book Day celebrations. Families worked together to create book-themed bakes at home. In the afternoon, the school was buzzing with parents, carers and grandparents who came in to read with the children and to buy slices of the donated bakes. The money raised will go directly towards our school library, with the aim of purchasing audio listening stations so that all children can enjoy stories in ways that work best for them.



[News from Much Wenlock](#)

# News from our schools



## St Martins School

The move back to our permanent reception and admin area marks the start of our school getting back to some of the buildings and areas affected by the fire. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to STAR Housing, who have generously donated bookshelves, bean bags and book vouchers to help us replenish our library/Hub. These contributions will make a real difference to our pupils, creating a welcoming and comfortable space for reading and learning as we continue our recovery. We are extremely grateful to STAR Housing and to everyone in the community who has offered help, encouragement and support following the fire.

[News from St Martins](#)

## The Priory School

We celebrated World Book Day once again in style (questionable!) this year, with lots of students and staff coming dressed as their favourite characters. Huge thanks to the English Department who adorned themselves as Julia Donaldson characters (Mr Dalgarno's 'Stick Man' was a sight to be seen) and SLT took on Roald Dahl. Thankfully, Mrs Knight's orange face paint did come off so she was only an Oompa Loompa for one day!

[News from Priory](#)



## Thomas Adams School and Sixth Form

Students and staff at Thomas Adams School are celebrating after the PE Department received the Peter Haile Secondary School Achievement Award from the Shropshire Schools Sports Association. The award recognises outstanding success and participation in PE and school sport during the past year. It marks the third time the school has received this honour, reflecting the department's ongoing commitment to providing high-quality sporting opportunities for all students. Pictured is sports student, Lena Kozłowska in Year 9, with Ceri Kempster, Head of PE at Thomas Adams School proudly showing the new award.



[News from Thomas Adams](#)

# News from our schools



## William Brookes School

In February, William Brookes School proudly staged *Matilda the Musical*—our first musical in more than five years—and a truly special milestone for our school. We could not be prouder of our cast, who brought to life the story's themes of courage, kindness, cleverness, and standing up for what is right. The children were outstanding, and it was a privilege to watch their confidence, talent, and teamwork grow throughout the rehearsal process.

[News from William Brookes](#)

---

## Hello to our Governors and Trustees

It was wonderful to see so many of you at the January Governance Conference. The day was a great chance to reconnect, share ideas, hear from inspiring speakers and look ahead to what local governance will look like from September.

Our Trustees are currently shaping a refreshed governance structure from September. The aim is simple:

- Give local governance a stronger voice
- Boost engagement with our communities
- Ensure stakeholders are heard and valued



A heartfelt thank you to all governors for your ongoing support during the introduction of the new Ofsted framework. Your role in Leadership and Management is vital during inspections – and deeply appreciated. Never underestimate the difference you make across our school communities.

We are delighted to welcome our newest governors joining us since January: Abby Colburn and Jane Slemensek at John Wilkinson; Barry Horton and Gemma Pennington at William Brookes; Amandine Mabbet at Priory; and Emma Thorpe reappointed at Hodnet.

Your contributions help strengthen our collective impact.

**Gary Turner**  
Chair of Trustees

## 3-18 Inspiring Futures - Train to Teach

This half term, our Associate Teachers have focused on two key areas of the Initial Teacher Training curriculum: formative assessment and effective questioning. Through guided practice, they are strengthening how they check understanding, respond to pupil needs and deepen learning in the classroom. As they develop skills and practice, the number of lessons they teach will gradually increase.

Interested in training to teach Secondary? Join our information session at The Priory on Monday 23rd March.



[Train to Teach information sessions](#)

# Coming up next term

**3-18 Inspiring Futures Train to Teach - Information session**



**In person at The Priory School [More info](#)**

23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026

**3-18 Inspiring Futures Train to Teach - Information session (Online) [More info](#)**



15<sup>th</sup> April 2026

**National primary school offer day**



16<sup>th</sup> April 2026

**CPD: ACAS Investigation Training for Senior Leaders**



23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026

**3-18 Inspiring Futures Train to Teach - Information session (Online) [More info](#)**



28<sup>th</sup> April 2026

**DfE Business Leaders Training Days**



Sessions include: Finance and Budgeting, Strategic Management, Change Management, Human Resource Management

Dates TBC in Summer 1 and Summer 2

Driven by our vision to ensure  
'every individual is in a great school'.



EDUCATION  
TRUST

[www.3-18education.co.uk](http://www.3-18education.co.uk)