

The Active Learning Trust Newsletter



www.activelearningtrust.org

Spring Term 2025

Welcome to our end of term newsletter!

As always, it has been a great pleasure to put together this round-up from another wonderfully rewarding term here at our trust.

I hope you will spend a few minutes enjoying the whistle-stop tour of our 19 schools as they celebrate a brilliant mix of activities, including visits from a modern day Gladiator, a more traditional Roman... and there's even an appearance from some very seasonal four-legged friends!

This term, our newsletter includes two case studies which highlight some of the important recent work carried out by two of our schools' safeguarding teams, really showing the huge difference this work can make to the lives of our children and young people. You will also find some great news from Ofsted and an update on some exciting new facilities developments.

I hope you and your families enjoy a fun and relaxing Easter break and I look forward to welcoming you all back soon for the summer term.

Lynsey Holzer
Chief Executive Officer



Join our team!



Looking for a new career in 2025? Don't forget that the current job vacancies at all our schools and in our central team are [available here on MyNewTerm!](#)



Plus... we're on Facebook! Follow [ALT Careers here](#) to keep up to date with our latest opportunities.

We are The Active Learning Trust...

Albert Pye and Ravensmere Schools Federation - Chantry Academy - Chesterton Primary School - Cromwell Community College - Earith Primary School - Grove Primary School - Gusford Primary School - Highfield Ely Academy - Highfield Littleport Academy - Hillside Primary School - Isle of Ely Primary School - Kingsfield Primary School - Neale-Wade Academy - Pakefield Primary School - Red Oak Primary School - Reydon Primary School - Sidegate Primary School - Westwood Primary School

Update: Ofsted successes



Gusford Primary School celebrated achieving the school's best ever ratings from Ofsted in January. The school was rated 'Outstanding' for personal development and 'Good' for all other categories including quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; leadership and management and early years provision.

[Read more here.](#)

Neale-Wade Academy received positive feedback following their monitoring inspection by Ofsted. Monitoring inspections report on a school's progress, rather than providing grades for specific areas, and inspectors found that progress had been made, highlighting that leaders have "improved the culture" of the school and praising leaders for having raised expectations for behaviour.

[Read more here.](#)



Update: Facilities developments



Highfield Littleport Academy marked the start of building work for the school's extension with a breaking the ground ceremony. The new extension, funded through Cambridgeshire County Council, will feature a state-of-the-art sensory room and greatly improve the school's capacity to deliver specialist provision and meet complex student needs.

[Read more here.](#)

Chesterton Primary School's new play area, funded by The Active Learning Trust, has been specially designed to encourage curiosity, creativity and physical activity, supporting a wide range of learning opportunities for young children.

Features include a climbing frame, large sandpit, water wall, play builder engineering set, mud kitchen, playhouse and a planting area.

[Read more here.](#)





Safeguarding: Case study

At **Neale-Wade Academy** we have been working with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and the Child Exploitation Hub on a number of important issues which can affect young people including county lines, Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

We have supported our young people to understand how and when they may be at risk of exploitation and where they can gain external support if needed. This includes signposting to Social Care, the Child Exploitation Hub, ROTH panel, SAFE and Casus to name but a few. Our work has taken place in weekly meetings over a significant period of time.

Families have responded positively and our work has supported some of our most vulnerable students to remain in full time mainstream education, demonstrating a real determination for positive change.

We have linked in with our Safer Schools Officer and Targeted Support Workers to provide preventative education to the young people in our Academy. Finally, as a Safeguarding Team, we have also delivered parent workshops and staff training to ensure that a holistic approach could be taken.

Our work had been acknowledged by the agencies we have worked with as well as Ofsted. As the Designated Safeguarding Leads this has given us a real sense of achievement and is something which the team has taken great pride in!

Mrs Elliott, Mr Newton and Mrs Martin, DSLs, Neale-Wade Academy



Safeguarding: Case study

In 2023, **Grove Primary School** was offered a spot on a pilot scheme being rolled out in Suffolk called Poverty Proofing The School Day. This is a nationally recognised programme that works with schools to remove barriers for students living in poverty.

We were given training on auditing schools, gaining the voice of pupils, home settings and key staff in school. The audits identified areas that may not have been considered before but could be a barrier to learning. For example, how identifiable Free School Meals (FSM) pupils are amongst the children, access some children have to materials for homework and stigma around second hand clothing.

This helped us to look more closely at how we can support families who may be experiencing financial difficulties and what services could be accessed that we were not aware of. We applied to The Rope Trust, whose objective is the prevention or relief of poverty. With one grant we were able to purchase brand new coats, shoes and clothing that provided new items to children rather than second hand. With another grant, we were able to fund more of the trips in school, putting less pressure on home settings and ensuring all children have the same opportunities.

We enrolled to be able to issue food vouchers, making it easier for our families to access these, and used grants from other services to bridge gaps in food bank offerings, particularly for those families who have medical needs, such as coeliac disease, that can't be met at the food banks.

On occasions where we couldn't access grants, we went directly to shops and asked for donations. Companies were surprisingly forthcoming in offering help and items needed.

Thanks to our work, we have been able to offer assistance at a time where families are struggling, while continuing to work with services who can offer more sustainable support.

Shaneeka Moore, Family Support/DSL, Grove Primary School





At **Highfield Ely Academy**, our students had a blast participating in an interschool cricket tournament, where they put their skills to the test after receiving lots of specialist coaching. The enthusiasm and team spirit displayed by everyone was truly commendable.

We welcomed a fabulous sensory storyteller who sparked imaginations and helped our students engage, nurturing their love for storytelling. Plus, our podcasters were interviewed by BBC Radio Cambridgeshire, an incredible platform for them to showcase their work and share their insights.

We are also proud to have been awarded Level 2 Disability Confident Employer status, reflecting our commitment to supporting everyone in our community and ensuring inclusivity in every aspect of school life.

The children at **Pakefield Primary School** had an exciting World Book Day. We had some fabulous costumes and shared our favourite books with each other. Some of our children even took part in a live lesson with a national read. It was amazing to see how many parents joined us for our Science share afternoons to celebrate British Science Week. We had great feedback from our parents. The children showed great resilience, focus and determination. It was lovely to see everyone learning and having fun.



Grove Primary School pupils celebrated all things literature and the Lowestoft School's Dance Festival at the Marina Theatre. Our group of KS2 children created a dance inspired by the much-loved story *Where The Wild Things Are*. We were so impressed with the progress the children had made and the confidence they developed. You all did Grove proud!

Our Wellbeing Champions helped us celebrate World Sleep Day, we wore our pyjamas for a very comfy day. In classes we shared top tips on how we can ensure we have a good night's sleep.

Cromwell Community College held its second Careers Fair in March. Twenty organisations covering healthcare, social care, policing, engineering, construction, food, manufacturing and training joined us. We also had a number of Higher Education providers represented. Students from primary, secondary and sixth form visited throughout the day. Students from secondary were provided with a booklet of questions based on the theme of 'These companies might interview you one day' and were tasked with collecting organisation-based information that they may, in the future, be asked about at interview. The goal of this approach is to use this information when conducting mock practice interviews during an employability event later in the year for some year groups. Thank you to everyone involved in making this event a success!



There have been many "firsts" for Cromwell's primary phase this term as we continue to grow into Year 4! We've had our first-ever residential trip where the children were an absolute credit to the school, demonstrating fantastic behaviour, enthusiasm and teamwork throughout. A highlight of the trip was their time in the TV studio, where they took their class learning on Rome and Pompeii to the next level.



We have also played our first ever football match against another school and enjoyed learning about different cultures and celebrations, deepening our understanding of faith and community.





Pupils from **Hillside Primary School** had the honour of being mascots for Ipswich Town FC during their 3rd round FA Cup match. Isabela, Riley, Brileigh and Bryant were the lucky pupils chosen to represent the school after their names were drawn at random following an assembly where all children interested in being mascots were invited to participate. The special day included an opportunity for the children to meet the Ipswich Town players, lead the team onto the pitch as mascots, and then cheer them on from the stands as they claimed their impressive 3-0 win.



At **Highfield Littleport Academy**, World Book Day was extra special this year as we welcomed author Justine Demierre who was delighted to share her book with everyone. Students and staff dressed up and shared their favourite book characters and our English coordinator, Barbara Rajya, organised a series of sensory stories, allowing students to be fully immersed in the stories they were experiencing. The World Book Day activities were supported by RG Carter Construction who kindly donated £120 of books to us.

We were delighted to welcome a former pupil back to **Albert Pye and Ravensmere Schools Federation** this term! Will Ellard, a Paralympic champion and world record holder in swimming, talked to the children and answered their questions. They asked everything from how he started his swimming career, his training regime and his experiences at the Olympics to his favourite meal and who inspires him. They also got to hold a gold Paralympic medal and took home autographs from Will. The children will be using all of this as quotes and inspiration for their newspaper reports that they are writing about Will. We are also planning to name our Sports Hall after Will to recognise his amazing achievements.



Students and staff at **Neale-Wade Academy** raised over £1,600 for Comic Relief, which linked to our half term Personal Development theme of Empowerment. Our fundraising activities included a quiz, non-uniform day and an obstacle course. We also enjoyed a staff charity football match which saw Neale-Wade win 4-1 over teachers from Cromwell! Students were able to stay behind at the end of the day to watch the match and very much enjoyed seeing the sporting drama unfold!

Pupils represented **Westwood Primary School** at The Marina Theatre where they performed routines based on 'Giraffes Can't Dance'. Thanks to Ms Gillings & Mrs Lark for supporting the children to create their routines and to build the confidence to get on stage.

We raised over £150 for Comic Relief with a talent show and a Soak The Teacher event where children paid for sponges to throw at brave volunteers! The children also wrote to the Prime Minister to raise concerns about endangered animals and the effects of climate change. They were very excited to receive a detailed reply thanking them for their commitment to raising awareness of this issue.





Chantry Academy held a free community Iftar for everyone. An Iftar is held every evening during Ramadan to break the fast. It was a great success with members from our local mosque, students, families and local primary schools attending. It was lovely to see people from all backgrounds coming together to share food, swap stories and enjoy each other's company. It was a great night celebrating the diversity and community that makes Chantry the fantastic school that it is. A special thanks goes to all the staff who helped bring this wonderful event together. See you all next year!



Steel from Gladiators visited us at **Gusford Primary School** to talk about healthy, balanced eating and exercise. He gave a brilliant interactive presentation to the whole school where he answered a range of questions, took part in mindset activities, practiced breathing techniques and more. We also learned a lot about confidence, mindset and hydration. A huge thank you to Friends of Gusford for funding this really memorable and inspiring event.

At **Kingsfield Primary School** we have been working really hard to improve writing and early reading achievement. To help this we have introduced Talk for Writing and Little Wandle Phonics using Priority Area funding. The implementation of both of the programmes has been recognised as being extremely positive and we have been part of a case study video to celebrate the successes.

One of the visitors monitoring the programmes commented, 'It was great to visit yesterday. The school and the staff should be very proud of the progress and achievements of the children. It was a pleasure to see the children so enthusiastic and engaged in their learning. The staff were clearly very focused and also enjoying teaching'.



TalkforWriting™



Isle of Ely Primary School was amass of book characters as we celebrated World Book Day dressing up as our favourite characters from our favourite books. The adults and children thoroughly enjoyed the day being immersed in stories and reading.

Our children have had much success at local sporting events this term and our Isle of Ely 20 continued with our Year 2 children having a cinema night at the school whilst our Year 3 pupils spent the night sleeping at school. The children are beginning to collect their IOE20 badges.

The choir performed beautifully at the O2 for Young Voices and all of the children have enjoyed a variety of trips from visiting Ely Cathedral to a theatre trip and a visit to Pizza Express. It's been a fun term!



Everyone at **Red Oak Primary School** has been very excited to have a ewe and her lamb staying with us! Classes have been taking it in turns to look after our special visitors. The children have been feeding them, checking their welfare, providing them with water and mucking them out. It has been a fun and educational experience that allows the children to engage with the animals in a safe and supportive environment.

We were even interviewed by BBC Radio Suffolk to share our story!



During Science Week at **Reydon Primary School**, children and their parents and carers thoroughly enjoyed building bridges at one of our regular Parent Share events. Each class had their own set of materials that they used for the challenge of building the strongest bridge. Children came together to share their bridges in a whole school assembly where we put them to the test! We were impressed with the level of engagement, curiosity and creativity of our children - there are certainly lots of budding engineers amongst us!

We had a very exciting day at **Sidegate Primary School** when a Roman came to visit Year 4.

The children received training on how to become a Legionary, practised marching, following orders, battle formations and battle charges. They also tried on a range of armour, tested out weapons and carried shields and wooden swords.

Veni, vidi, vici - "I came, I saw, I conquered." (Julius Caesar)



At **Earith Primary School**, this is our second year of naming our classes after a diverse range of authors due to the impact this has had on spreading a love for reading and keeping reading really visible within school. We run a competition each year for the children to design the class logos based on the authors and his/her books and the authors' books are studied as part of the curriculum. We reach out to the authors who our classes are named after. Lots of them get back in touch and some even visit us, including Steve Antony who we were very excited to meet this term.

This term, the children at **Chesterton Primary School** enjoyed our Reading Parent Share session on World Book Day where children and their parents celebrated reading together. It was a wonderful opportunity to see parents and children engage in storytelling and reading activities. Additionally, we were thrilled to welcome two local poets to the school, inspiring students with their creative words and passion for poetry. To round off the term, our students also enjoyed performing in our piano concert, showcasing their musical talents and hard work. It's been a term full of creativity and community spirit!





The Active Learning Trust



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ActiveLearningTrustCareers



I aspire,
we achieve



We're curious,
creative and bold



A family, not
a house share



Comfortable
being candid



Humour,
humility, humanity

