

WE ARE ASTREA



Astrea Academy Trust
INSPIRING BEYOND MEASURE



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CEO WELCOME

Libby Nicholas

CEO, Astrea Academy Trust

With the half-term behind us and Christmas fast approaching, the autumn term really is flying by at Astrea! Our four new academies, Ernulf and Longsands in St Neots and Astrea Academy Woodfields and Astrea Academy Sheffield in South Yorkshire already feel like established members of our family and it's great to be sharing news from them in this edition of the newsletter.

Hard on the heels of our successes over the summer term and exams season, Gooseacre secured another "Good" from Ofsted, maintaining Astrea's run of positive inspection outcomes, whilst Byron Wood has been recognised as Intermediate by the British Council International School Award.

As our very first brand new school, Astrea Academy Sheffield also opened its doors for the first time this term, and under Kim Walton's leadership has hit the ground running. The academy has attracted a huge amount of interest from visitors and media alike, and the new school is clearly making its positive presence felt in the local community. Our vision of a beacon for Burngreave certainly looks set to become a reality!

Over at Astrea Academy Woodfields, I am delighted to share the news that Joanne Cater, who had been in post as Acting Principal since the start of term, has been confirmed as our substantive head. We had a very impressive field of candidates for the role, but Joanne was the clear frontrunner, and the academy is in safe hands under her leadership.

We have also made a significant appointment in Cambridgeshire, with Hywel Jones joining as our new Deputy Director of Education. Hywel joins us from the Inspiration Trust where he has been Director of Primary since January 2018. Prior to this he was the Head of the West London Free School. His appointment sees Hywel come full circle, as he did his PGCE placement at Cottenham Village College!

I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter - as we grow, the richness of what you each offer to your pupils continues to impress, and truly encapsulate what we are all about: inspiring beyond measure.

Libby



Astrea Academy Sheffield Opens Its Doors!

The start to the academic year has been outstanding and euphoric. Both pupils and staff have celebrated being part of this amazing family every day.

In the last half term alone, the school has celebrated European Day of Languages, World Teacher Day and students are embarking on the Youth Parliament Scheme, visits to Oxford and Cambridge and a Battlefields Trip to northern France!

Many, many visitors have come to see the new facilities and have been impressed with the behaviour, well-being and attitudes to learning the young people at the Academy have displayed, every single day.

All stakeholders to the academy learn our affirmation - We are strong, we are successful, we are Astrea. Pending some final snagging works, the building and the new 25M build will be completed in March 2018.

On the 2nd October, Trustees visited the academy and held their first Board Meeting of the year. Trustees underwent a tour of the academy - led by pupils - and enjoyed a working lunch, which was shared with students. Trustees judged our languages poster competition and all trustees were presented with a personal poem; created by Year 7 pupils. Trustees, members and the Executive Board congratulated staff and pupils to an amazing start to the term.

Open Evening was a huge success with over 100 families attending. Many parents expressed particular interest in the 6th Form, which opens in September 2019 and there were scores of parents looking to move their Year 7 children to Astrea Academy Sheffield!

In other news, the Academy was the first new Free School to receive a visit from Mark Lehain, the Interim Director of the New Schools Network. Councillor Drayton is visiting on the 9th November 2018.

The Academy's amazing early years teachers have been invited to Sheffield Hallam to meet Amanda Spielman, which is a great honour. Executive Principal, Kim Walton, presented At Sheffield Hallam's 'Get into teaching' event to over 600 potential trainee teachers and appeared on Toby Foster's Breakfast Show for BBC Radio Sheffield. The Sheffield Star has done a double page spread on Astrea Academy Sheffield, which was due to go to print at the time of writing.

The Academy runs an extra-curricular programme, which is proving to be a huge success: Police Cadets, Green Top Circus, Grimm and Co Creative Writing, Taekwondo, Football and Dance have all been popular this half term. A cross country team, led by our Head of Languages, Miss Muscroft has already formed and will enjoy their first competition in October.

NEW STARTERS

Astrea is happy to welcome the following new staff:-

Joanne Meadows
Head of Finance

Peter Pawlowski
Finance Officer

Lindsey Wilkinson
Central Office Manager

Heather Fletcher
HR Advisor - Cambridgeshire

Melanie Basson
Cambridgeshire Governance Manager

John Szynal
Deputy Director of Education - Secondary

The Finance Team is also happy to announce the successful "on-boarding" and financial training of the local finance team at Astrea's new academies:- Longsands, Ernulf, Woodfields and Astrea Sheffield.



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AWARD

KEY DATES ANNOUNCEMENT

31st January 2019
Principals Strategy Day

24th January 2019
Central Team Strategy Day

27th & 28th June 2019
Astrea Annual Conference

Byron Wood Awarded International School Award

Byron Wood Academy has successfully met the criteria for the Intermediate level of the British Council International School Award.

The assessor remarked, "Through careful planning and collaboration, Byron Wood Academy has continued to strengthen its learning objectives. Your excellent submission emphasises the positive effect of nurturing an international ethos on both school development and individual citizenship competencies. You celebrate the broad diversity within the wider school community through a wide-ranging cross-curricular approach, which has a strong multicultural dimension; this includes pupils teaching their home language to peers. Your excellent planning and delivery

means that Byron Wood Academy has achieved the British Council International School Award at Intermediate Level."

Now that the academy has successfully reached the Intermediate level, the next stage is to work towards full Accreditation. For this stage, the academy must demonstrate that it has experience working with international partners on various projects, that activities are embedded across the whole school and the curriculum, and that the learning is disseminated to others in the local community, including educators in partner schools.

Congratulations to Byron Wood for achieving the Intermediate level.

Bake Off at Carrfield Academy

Thanks to the lovely staff, pupils, parents and PPA of Carrfield Academy, a Bake Off and Coffee Morning held on Thursday 27th September raised over £400 for Macmillan cancer.

The school council judged the best cake from each class, which included an Astrea Academies cake entered into the competition!





ASTREA ACTIVE -
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 7th March 2019
Spring PE Conference

Thursday 13th June 2019
Summer PE Conference

Tuesday 25th June 2019
KS1 Olympics Day

Wednesday 26th June 2019
KS2 Olympics Day

Wednesday 3rd July 2019
Astrea Active Awards Evening

News from Gooseacre Academy

Gooseacre Primary Academy was happy to welcome Ofsted inspectors in the middle of September, resulting in another “Good” rating for the school. Congratulations to all on this excellent achievement.

Year 6 students enjoyed residential trip to France at the start of the Autumn Term as part of the Astrea Promise. Gooseacre partners with the other Dearne Hub Astrea schools to deliver an excellent educational experience for all children involved.

September also brought recognition in the form of the

“Primary Science Quality Mark”, which celebrates the profile of science teaching, learning and leadership in school. This was led by Jenifer McIntyre (Science Lead) last academic year.

Last but not least, Gooseacre Academy has been awarded a “Silver Barnsley in Bloom” award recognising the work of the Eco-Committee and Gardening Club who have transformed one of the academy’s outdoor spaces including growing plants and vegetables to eat in school and sell at enterprise projects.



National Inclusion Conference

Astrea Academy Trust recently held its first National Inclusion Conference. The event was an enormous success, bringing together amazing and well respected speakers from the industry, including, Dr Luke Beardon, David Bartram OBE and Natalie Packer, to name a few.

The conference focused on the effective use of the Pupil Premium, leadership of SEND and enhancing

safeguarding in schools, as well as covering some key issues and hot topics! We were honoured to be supported by Ann Mroz, Editor of TES. Ann, the speakers and all attendees told us, they walked away feeling inspired and energised.

Tickets will soon be available for next year’s event, to reserve your space, please contact: events@astreaacademytrust.org

Remember to book early to avoid disappointment.





Longsands European Week of Languages

European Day of Languages celebrates different languages as a way of promoting greater understanding between cultures and sharing our rich cultural heritage. This year, Longsands's MFL Department decided to run a week of activities for Key Stages 3 and 4, promoting language learning and celebrating the 32 native languages other than English spoken by students at Longsands.

Activities within lessons included

geo-caching, problem-solving activities from the Linguistics Olympiad and a multi-round quiz. A professional translator came in and spoke to Year 11 about careers in languages and researchers came in from Anglia Ruskin University to work with Year 8 students on forensic linguistics. These ran alongside a programme of lunchtime activities and competitions: a carousel of games and puzzles run by the Year 10 Language Leaders, a bake sale,

a Hispanic fiesta where students found out about culture and traditions from Spanish speaking countries, and a competition to design the official T-shirt for next year's European Day of Languages.

Hopefully, European Week of Languages will become a new Longsands Academy tradition.

Thank you and well done to all who took part for your enthusiasm and commitment to the week.

Longsands Academy Alumni

To complement the existing suite of Longsands social media channels, the academy has recently launched an Alumni page on Facebook. One recent visitor is ex-pupil, Colour Sergeant Matt Waters, who has returned, after 26 years in The British Army, to host a stand at the Academy's Post 16 careers event to inspire current students.

Matt was excited to have a look around the school, which he

attended in the mid-1980s. He recognised quite a few areas including the location of his locker, the E corridor where he was taught RE, the Ritchie Hall and he asked whether an ice cream van still visits the site (alas it does not!)

Other memories of school days included the cycle sheds, Cross Country on Priory Park and the old Sports Pavilion.



Hexthorpe Bear Journeys Into Space



Pupils at Hexthorpe Academy launched a teddy bear into the edge of space after they raised over £1,300 to pay for the mission.

The bear, aptly named "Cosmos", was launched attached to a weather balloon that was released into the sky from the school fields.

Pupils watched him soar into the sky and out of view as he made his way up into space. He later fell back to earth, landing in nearby Coventry, before being returned to the school by post.

A Year 1 teacher said, "When we showed the children they were so excited that you could see the clouds so far below Cosmo. They also thought it was amazing that you could see the curvature of the Earth on the pictures. This has been about raising aspirations as many children are now aspiring to be astronauts and scientists." Students reported, "I couldn't believe it, our bear actually went up in the air and landed far away. I

want to go that high too. One day I might be an astronaut" – Year 1 Pupil. "I loved it. It was so cool when Cosmo went up in the balloon" – Year 2 Pupil. "I loved seeing the teddy go into space, it was going higher than the aeroplanes, it was really fun!" – Year 1 Pupil.



Carrfield Students Get Behind Sport Equality

Students at Carrfield Academy have recently helped launch #SeeSportyBeSporty, a campaign led by "Totally Runable", which calls for the UK media to include more

images of sportswomen in their publications. Presently, 33 pictures of sports men are shown for every one of a sports woman. As part of the campaign, Carrfield

Year 5 children were featured on "Look North", the regional BBC news programme, speaking about what they see in the media and identifying the imbalance.



Year 11 Options Evening

On Thursday 11th October, a post 16/18 options event was held for Year 11 students and their parents.

This is the first time Longsands has run an event of this size and it was a pleasure to welcome employers, training providers, colleges and universities into the Academy.

The aim of the evening was to provide students with impartial and independent advice and guidance on all of the routes available to them at 16 and 18. It was lovely to see students engaging with employers in such a positive manner.

It is hoped that the evening gave a flavour of the jobs and opportunities that are available to students and helped to raise their aspirations about their future careers and educational pathways.

YOYO at Astrea Academy Woodfields



A group of 18 students from Astrea Academy Woodfields Year 9 have recently taken part in a “YOYO” session, where they had the opportunity to produce videos with the Bauer Academy and Hallam FM, highlighting important social issues.

YOYO, which stands for You’re Only Young Once, is funded by the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner and is aimed at changing attitudes and behaviours by “opening authentic conversations with young people.” Dr Alan Billings, South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner

said: “YOYO is a completely new approach to engaging with young people aged 13+.” YOYO uses media to get students engaged in important topics - by helping them make informative videos and podcasts.

Two Bauer Academy tutors led workshops where students researched the topic of child sexual exploitation (CSE). They produced scripts and storyboards which they later directed and produced into informative videos on the topic. The finished videos can be found on the YOYO website:

www.yoyosyorks.co.uk alongside a photo gallery of the students producing their work. These videos may be re-produced and turned into awareness-raising radio advertisements that can be heard on Hallam FM throughout the year.

The students worked tremendously well to research a very sensitive topic and produce original and authentic videos. They were a credit to the academy and to Astrea.

“Genes for Jeans” Founder Jono Lancaster Visits Hexthorpe Primary

Staff and Students of Hexthorpe Primary Academy had the pleasure of welcoming Jono Lancaster to on Monday 8th October.

Jono is an ambassador for “Jeans for Genes” and co-founder of “Love Me Love My Face”, a charity that supports families with medical costs and emotional support.

The children welcomed Jono into their school by singing “True Colours”, “This is Me”, and “A Thousand Words” with sign language. The children and staff then had the privilege of listening to the inspirational guest speaker

during their morning assembly. Jono spoke about his life and his genetic condition, Treacher Collins Syndrome. The children had the opportunity to ask him questions throughout the remainder of the day whilst Jono spent time with each class.

Hexthorpe students already know a lot about genetic disorders through the annual “Jeans for Genes” day, so it was really wonderful that the children and staff had the opportunity to meet Jono and hear his story first-hand whilst also having the opportunity to ask him questions.



Longsands Academy Awarded NCS Champion School Status



National Citizen Service (NCS), the UK's flagship youth programme for 16 and 17 year olds, has awarded 'Champion School' status to 345 schools across England, including Longsands Academy. The status has been given to those who have excelled in promoting the programme and recruiting young people to take part over the last academic year.

Champion school head teachers and staff cite the markedly positive effect that participation in NCS programmes has on both young people and their wider institutions. Schools that have significant numbers of pupils taking part in NCS have seen a notable change in

pupil wellbeing and engagement with academic work. For young people, NCS provides a host of practical and emotional benefits, including a positive contribution to UCAS personal statements and wider social and personal development. Nearly three quarters of those who have taken part in NCS feel more confident about getting a job, and nine in ten feel that it has helped them develop useful skills for the future. They also demonstrate high levels of confidence and resilience and report lower levels of anxiety than their peers.

NCS is a two to four week programme for 16 & 17 year olds which takes place during school holidays. The programme involves teenagers meeting other local young people from a range of backgrounds, living independently, and developing new skills whilst learning more about their communities and how they can make a difference through social action projects. There are a number of ways in which schools can work with their local NCS provider to raise the profile of the programme to students and parents, ranging

from delivering an assembly to students, to attending careers events, parents' evenings and delivering sessions to tutor groups. All are free of charge.

In order to assist schools in tracking and understanding their success in promoting and recruiting for NCS, the organisation has created a tool that enables schools to quickly and easily check uptake amongst their pupils. The tool can be used to view data for an individual school and those across the country, and is being supported by the Department for Education (DfE).

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

"It's really fantastic to see that so many pupils have already benefitted from the wide range of programmes provided by National Citizen Service (NCS). I want to congratulate all the 'champion schools' and thank them for their hard work and commitment helping young people across the country gain vital skills that will help them get on in life and fulfil their potential."

Learning and Professional Development in Astrea: Astrea Learning

We are delighted to announce the launch of 'Astrea Learning', our new online Learning and Professional Development platform. The system has been implemented to support our commitment to translate our core values into practice in every school. Astrea's training programme is focussed on developing the future potential of all participants, whilst also enhancing their immediate practice to make a direct impact in their current school. In particular, the programmes have been designed to develop confidence

in all areas of Astrea school improvement and to ensure all colleagues understand and attain the Astrea Standard of Excellence.

The Astrea Learning system was launched to all staff on Monday 5th November. Every staff member has received a welcome email, detailing their username and login details.

The 'My Learning' section is particularly helpful, it stores past and future training and can be used to support the appraisal process. Please take a moment to familiarise

yourself with the system and if you are unsure of anything, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the events team who can provide full training and support on every aspect of the platform.

Equally, if there is any element of professional development or learning which is not represented on the Astrea Learning platform, please do let your Principal or line manager know so we can respond to need.

Longsands Students Praised in Tanzania

Longsands was delighted to receive the following praise from Camps International after students and staff spent time in Tanzania during the Summer of 2018.

"We just wanted to say thank you for your support and to tell you about the impact your school has made in Tanzania this summer.

Now that all of our summer teams have arrived home, we would like to take this opportunity to give you some feedback on what Meaghan Furlonger, Thomas Smy, James Lampett and students achieved in Tanzania.

What a blast! Through the sheer sweat (and sometimes) tears, your students have made a huge and lasting positive impact on the lives of many rural communities.

Your teachers and students have been involved in shovelling and mixing concrete by hand, carrying and stacking piles of bricks, plastering, polishing and painting. They have helped to improve classrooms, dewormed goats and made elephant poo paper!

Not only have they worked hard at improving the lives of villagers, they have been clearing, digging and planting indigenous saplings, as well as making elephant deterrent fences to help combat the wildlife/human conflict.

Interacting with the local children was a massive highlight for Longsands Academy students. Whether it be playing volleyball or football, sitting quietly, plaiting hair, singing songs or holding very animated 'hand' conversations, very special time was spent with the



local youngsters. This time allowed students to learn about the value of our own language and how it can improve the lives and future employment opportunities for others.

Being pushed to your limits and forced out of your comfort zone is not something we usually enjoy, but your students did both of these! They slept on mattresses on bare boards, washed in cold water, shared their living spaces with mosquitos, bugs, spiders and survived! They have eaten enough stew and chapatis to last them a lifetime and still came back for more.

Living in or close to the local communities has enabled your students to really appreciate how tough daily life can be, but at the same time, how resilient and strong the human spirit is in order to overcome the adversities that life throws at us. We hope they have learnt many lessons from this

and will carry them in their hearts, to pull out, dust down and use whenever they may need them in the future.

Hopefully by now you will have received your personalised school canvas; a gift from us to say thank you and to acknowledge the achievements of your team. We hope you are proudly displaying it in school and if not, please rest assured that our team are keen to meet with you to present this. Please just let me know when will be most convenient if you don't already have a date in the diary.

From the deepest core of everything Camps International stand for, we would sincerely like to thank you, Longsands Academy, Meaghan Furlonger, Thomas Smy, James Lampett and your students for their incredible hard work, dedication, joyous spirits and a whole bunch of great laughs and mind-blowing memories."



KEY DATES AND EVENTS

 **Thursday 7th March 2019:**
Spring PE Conference

 **Thursday 13th June 2019:**
Summer PE Conference

 **Tuesday 25th June 2019:**
KS1 Olympics Day

 **Wednesday 26th June 2019:**
KS2 Olympics Day

 **Wednesday 3rd July 2019:**
Astrea Active Awards Evening



ASTREA STAFF SURVEY

Our employee engagement survey earlier this year was completed by a hugely impressive 78% of people working in Astrea schools. Feedback was very positive and encouraging with key messages shared at Academy Inset days at the beginning of term.

The focus since then has been on acting on the valuable feedback received, including in those areas where improvements could be made to enhance the experience of working at Astrea.

Across the Trust each school has invited a cross-section of colleagues from support, teaching and leadership to participate in a working group to ensure that the voice of all employees is heard in considering the results of the survey. This has helped academies to agree their survey action plans for the academic year that build on what they're already successful at as well as identify and address areas of improvement.

Throughout the rest of the year each academy will reconvene this working group every term to continue to oversee progress in delivering the school's survey action plan. There are also a series of cross-Trust initiatives planned involving colleagues from all schools in relation to specific areas of focus from the survey.

Later on in the academic year a brief pulse survey will be launched to gather colleagues' instant views on progress in implementing key actions since the survey.



SHARE YOUR GOOD NEWS STORIES & EVENTS!

Do you have a good news story or an upcoming event that you would like to share?
If so, we'd like to hear from you for our next issue.

Please email: Lucy.Betteridge@astreaacademytrust.org with your submissions.