

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24

“ I was so happy to be included in Platform 23 and I am grateful to be picked! This was very inspiring for my Arts Award

Pupil, Linton Village College



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Welcome

Welcome to our third annual report which provides an overview of the activity of Anglian Learning and how we work to improve and develop our schools.



Jonathan Culpin
Chief Executive Officer

Our mission is to transform education together. To enable great teaching in the classrooms of our 16 schools. To grow and empower our current and future leaders; and to ensure that every learner has access to the best possible educational experience, whatever school they attend, and whatever their starting point.

Throughout this report, we provide numerous examples

of how we work to achieve these goals. Whether that is supporting collaboration and the exchange of best practices, developing creativity in the curriculum and helping the most vulnerable children and young people to succeed. Or, providing the critical services that support our headteachers, such as IT, Human Resources and management of the buildings and estates. Only a fraction of our work can be captured here but hopefully it will give you a flavour of what it means for your local school to be a part of Anglian Learning.

Pine Cones Pre-School



Jonathan Culpin, CEO, Camilla Saunders, Director of Inclusion and Charity Main, Chief Operating Officer with members of Cambridgeshire Virtual School

Sense of belonging



Anglian Learning data, in line with national statistics, shows that pupils are experiencing increased levels of poor mental health in addition to increasing levels of school absenteeism.

Current research indicates that fostering a strong sense of school belonging has a direct impact on improving pupil outcomes, including increased levels of happiness, academic attainment and attendance. Belonging can be defined as

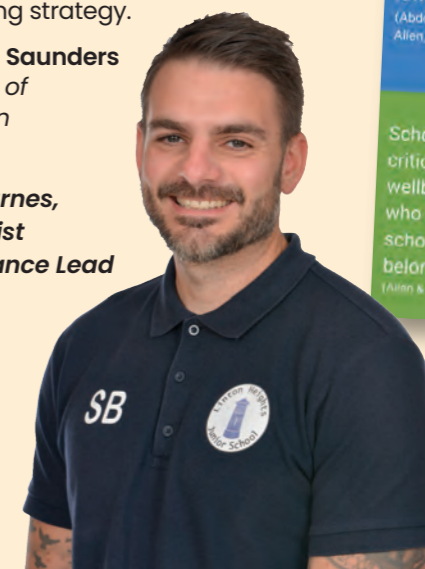
The extent to which pupils feel personally accepted, included, and supported in the school environment.

The Anglian Learning Sense of Belonging initiative will build upon the work on Inclusion that has already started through the strategic groups and blueprint enquiries. One strand of this work has been to develop our Attendance Framework. As part of this, we made a successful bid to collaborate with Cambridgeshire Virtual School. The Virtual School, which supports children and young people in care

between the ages of 2 and 18, are funding a Specialist Attendance Lead to work on an 18-month project with their Educational Psychologist to improve the attendance of our most vulnerable pupils. We are delighted to have successfully recruited Sam Barnes to this role and look forward to developing this key element of our Sense of Belonging strategy.

Camilla Saunders
Director of Inclusion

Sam Barnes,
Specialist Attendance Lead



Promoting a SENSE OF BELONGING

A sense of belonging can be defined as feeling supported, respected, accepted and included.

School belonging has a profound impact on well-being, identity development, and mental health.

Why does it matter?

- Increased student motivation
- Reduction in student absenteeism
- Improved academic achievement
- A growing sense of agency, a belief they can make a difference. (DOE, 2020)

Students who lack a sense of belonging are more likely to engage in problematic behaviour, suffer from mental illness, and experience low achievement. (Abdollahi, Panahipour, Tahri, & Allen, 2020)

A 2020 enquiry by UCL (Riley et al) highlighted the importance of 'belonging' for School Mental Health.

The UCL report states that 1 in 4 pupils feel they do not belong in school.

School belonging is critical to psychological wellbeing and those who feel rejected from school may well seek to belong elsewhere. (Allen & Kern, 2017)



The benefit of good governance



Good governance plays a crucial role in shaping the experiences and outcomes of our pupils.

It ensures high-quality teaching, equitable access, pupil wellbeing, community involvement, and better long-term outcomes.

Effective governance ensures that schools are well-managed, and resources are appropriately allocated. It ensures adequate support for pupils with SEND and fosters an inclusive environment, helping to level the playing field and give every child the chance to thrive academically.

It also encompasses the overall wellbeing of pupils, creating safe and supportive environments where pupils feel valued and cared for.

Active participation by parents, staff and community members at a local governance level creates a sense of ownership and accountability. Investing in effective governance today ensures a better future for everyone.

We have been pleased to see trustees reflecting this good practice with multiple visits to our schools over the past academic year. These visits bring opportunities to meet the staff, speak with pupils and see, first-hand, how good governance has supported the school.

Kerrie Jones, Head of Governance, Compliance and Risk

“ We have been pleased to see trustees reflecting this good practice with multiple visits to our schools over the past year



Three of Anglian Learning's trustees visiting Alison Weir, Headteacher at Howard Community Academy



Extra-curricular offers well regarded by pupils



The Icknield Primary School

Following the parental survey conducted in the Autumn term, all schools have now completed a survey of our pupils.

Nearly **2800** secondary and **1000** primary pupils responded. As with the parent and staff surveys, we used the national surveying company, **EduRio**, which enables us to benchmark findings against national scores.

The results are typically very positive, particularly in primary schools. Our schools' extra-curricular offers are very well regarded by pupils. This is a testament to our schools' commitment to ensuring rich experiences for pupils, and to colleagues' hard work as most extra-

curricular provision relies upon the goodwill and passion of individuals. Results at secondary schools reflect a national picture of concerns around mental health and wellbeing and the challenges of making a dense Key Stage 4 curriculum sufficiently engaging for all.

These are known challenges for the sector and validate the ongoing activity in our strategic groups and improvement networks. For example, our emphasis on inclusion and wellbeing, and the

development of the Teaching and Learning Framework that shows how classroom practice can bring to life our Curriculum Blueprint aspirations. Schools have been reviewing the findings, triangulating them with other evidence, and adapting strategic plans accordingly, and overall trends and patterns have been explored with the Trust Curriculum and Standards Committee.

James Woodcock, Director of Education: Professional Learning and Curriculum



Spreading excellent practice

Our Curriculum Strategic Group has been developing the Teaching and Learning Framework.

As with other Frameworks, this sets out common principles and provides a toolkit of resources for schools to use to enhance our curriculum offering. It embodies a model of teaching that reflects the

prevailing evidence, interpreted through our values, contexts and phase- and subject-specific expertise.

The Framework reflects our Core Principles. Through it, we can spread excellent practice, share understanding and models between our schools, and apply 'universally' applicable evidence-informed practice in context. The Framework

ties in with our professional learning offer, with recommended practice linked to a curated package of relevant online training modules, enabling schools to easily provide bespoke professional learning programmes that reflect their priorities.

James Woodcock, Director of Education: Professional Learning and Curriculum



Introducing Stage 24



Stage 24 is Anglian Learning's first Trust-wide dance festival. The event is being held at Bottisham Village College on 11 July 2024.

Our primary and secondary schools have been invited to showcase an array of performances to promote the importance of dance, the arts and physical activity offerings within our Trust's community.

This event aims to provide the real-life experience that goes with performing on stage and will facilitate opportunities for our dancers to express themselves, whilst gaining a lifelong memory that comes with performing. We wish for our dancers to feel an authentic affiliation to their school's dance team, and we intend for pupils to receive confidence and a personal sense of achievement from their contribution.

We are excited to raise the curtain and celebrate dance in true Anglian Learning style!

Ryan Parker
Primary PE Trust System Leader

Trust growth



Anglian Learning has grown slowly but steadily over the past four years, with the addition of The Icknield Primary School (2021), Marleigh Primary Academy (2022) and Wimbish Primary Academy (2023).

While we are open to adding more schools into the Trust, there has to be an alignment of values and benefits for both parties.

We are therefore delighted that after an extensive period of due diligence and subject to approval by the Department of Education (DfE), the Anglian Learning Trust

Board has approved the transfer of Stour Valley Educational Trust (Stour Valley Community School and Clare Community Primary School) into our family of schools. Assuming the approval is granted by the DfE, we hope the two new schools will join our Trust in January 2025.

We will continue to have discussions with other local schools and multi-academy trusts that are interested in joining us. We continue to work closely with the Local Authority on the opening date for the delayed Deneia Primary Academy.

Jonathan Culpin
Chief Executive Officer

Stour Valley Educational Trust





 **OUR DNA**

Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport

Launch of Anglian Learning's Core Purpose and Core Principles

This academic year we have reviewed and refreshed Anglian Learning's vision, now called 'Our DNA'.

This involved clarifying our purpose of working collectively as a Trust and setting out the Core Principles by which we act and make decisions as a community when working as a whole and as individual schools. Our new Core Principles are:

- Nurture a Healthy Organisational Culture
- Seek Excellence
- Leave No Academy Behind
- Act with a Unity of Purpose, Deliver Contextually
- Build Capacity at All Levels
- Think Systemically

These Core Principles have evolved through rigorous reflection and have

been profoundly informed by our collaboration with Whole Education, a network of schools, trusts and educational professionals. And, drawing upon the insights of Professor Toby Greany, Professor of Education at the University of Nottingham. They have been carefully crafted throughout the year in collaboration with the Trust Leadership Group. Our consultation with colleagues through the People, Culture and Wellbeing Strategic Group and leaders from across Anglian Learning has been instrumental in refining these principles. We have also developed practical examples to illustrate how these Core Principles should be

translated into action, encompassing the behaviours of all staff members across our educational, professional, and support services.

A short video has been created with colleagues discussing how our Core Principles are evident throughout our schools, and how they benefit both staff and pupils. We are also developing an additional leadership training programme to help ensure these behaviours manifest in leaders' day-to-day practice and are evident in our learners' educational experiences.

James Woodcock
Director of Education: Professional Learning and Curriculum

2023-24 finance report



In the 2023-24 academic year our Financial Transformation project has continued focussing on reviewing how we structure and operate our finances.

In September 2023, we restructured our finance team into a new model. Consisting of four hubs, each is responsible for a mixture of primary and secondary schools. The centralised finance structure has allowed the finance team to work collaboratively while maintaining a strong connection with individual schools.

Alongside a team restructure, we have embedded the use of the new finance systems that were implemented in July 2023, including the centralising of payment runs to streamline processes.

The work of our finance team and the improved systems directly contribute to better outcomes for our schools by freeing up time for leaders and other staff, allowing

them to focus on our pupils and learning in the classroom. Information produced by the finance team is used to prepare both budget and actual returns to the central government, as well as reporting to headteachers and trustees to assist with informed decision-making.

Stacie Cox, Financial Controller

1,278 
Employees

8,244 
Pupils

£42m
Annual payroll costs 

£22m
Supplier payments 

£47.9m
Core funding 



Bottisham Community Primary School

Improving our learning environments



The School Condition Allocation (SCA) is a funding scheme provided by the Department for Education to help multi-academy trusts maintain their school buildings and ensure that they provide a safe and suitable learning environment for pupils.

The school condition allocation benefits our pupils in several ways. Firstly, it ensures the Trust has the necessary funding to maintain and improve its estate in areas identified within the Asset Management Plan. This creates a more conducive learning environment for pupils, promoting their overall wellbeing and academic success.

The allocation helps address any existing issues with the school infrastructure, such as repairs or upgrades to heating, ventilation, and electrical systems. Additionally, it has supported the Trust's Energy Strategy through the installation of Solar PV across thirteen of our academies, including LED lighting across the estate.

Claudine Bateman
Director of Operations



The Meadow Primary School Solar PV installation



Howard Community Academy toilet refurbishment

Works to be completed over the summer 2024 period include:

- **Bottisham Village College** – replacement of roofing and installation of Solar PV
- **Bassingbourn Village College** – refurbishment of circulation areas
- **Bottisham Community Primary School** – window replacements
- **Fen Ditton Community Primary School** – re-roofing of the main hall
- **Linton Village College** – re-roofing of selected areas
- **Stapleford Community Primary School** – installation of a new boiler
- **Wimbish Primary Academy** – replacement of the hard court area
- **Marleigh Primary Academy** – additional Solar PV

Development through collaboration



Peer reviews have continued to be a powerful tool for professional development and school improvement this year.

Leaders and teachers have exchanged valuable dialogue and feedback, supporting schools in their strategic improvement. This ongoing process has directly contributed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement within an open and supportive environment of collaboration. Alongside this, our primary subject improvement networks, which include subject leaders from across our ten primary schools, have been focussing this year on developing pedagogy within their subject specialisms. By working together, subject leaders have shared best practices, innovative teaching strategies, and opportunities to enhance the curriculum in our schools.

Our secondary schools continue to engage with and seek out opportunities to participate in professional learning from each other and with other educational partners. These include visiting other multi-academy trusts facilitated by Whole Education, coaching training by external programmes such as John Kane's, of Kanevolve Limited, Coaching Culture, continuing research projects through Creativity Collaboratives, attending sector and trust leadership group conferences, participating in steering groups and delivering shared training day opportunities for teaching staff.

Rachael Johnston
Director of Primary Education and
Duncan Cooper
Director of Secondary Education

“ This ongoing process has directly contributed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement



Colleagues taking part in John Kane's coaching programme

A date for the diary



November 2024 will see the heads of art from Anglian Learning secondary schools and sixth forms come together to curate Platform 24, a joint exhibition of pupil artwork.

As with our previous Platform exhibitions, this year's exhibition will take place in the Michaelhouse Centre in Cambridge. The centre opens as a café during the day and has an estimated 2,000 visitors a week, so is an excellent venue to showcase our pupils' creativity.

The annual exhibition runs over two weeks, with a Private View to mark the official opening. The Private View provides an opportunity for pupils to enjoy the exhibition at leisure, to see their work in this prestigious venue

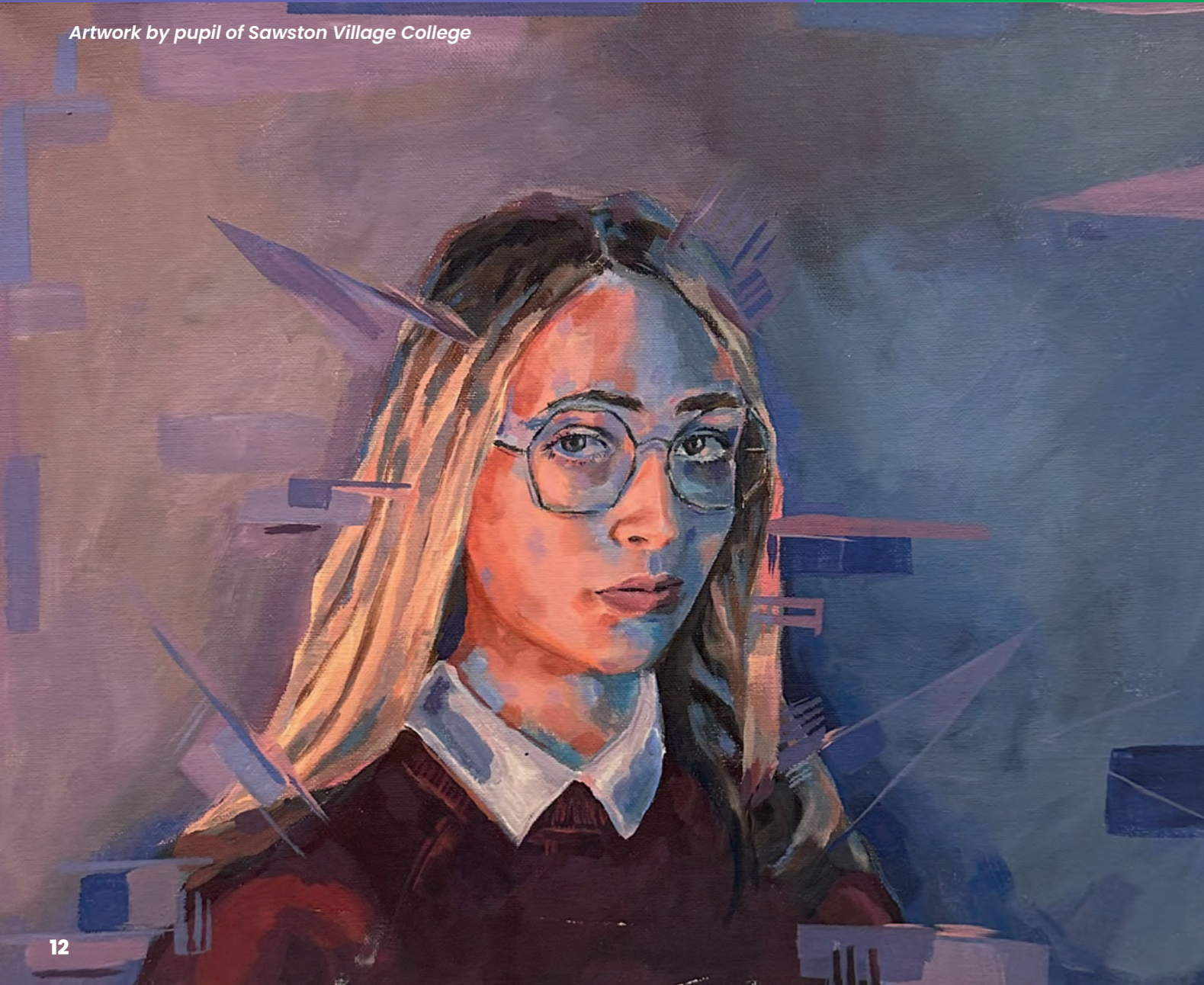
and to be inspired by the other artworks on display. It also allows for both teachers and pupils from our different schools to meet and discuss practice.

The Platform 24 art exhibition is free and will take place from 11 to 23 November 2024. We encourage all to visit the Michaelhouse Centre and view the outstanding artwork on display.

Lesley Morgan
Arts Development Manager

“ **Very proud moment to see our daughter's first piece of art at an exhibition. The first of many, I am sure**
Parent and carer

Artwork by pupil of Sawston Village College



Anglian Leisure promotes wellbeing



It has been a busy 12 months for Anglian Leisure centres with continued growth in membership and participation.

The five centres are located across South and East Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City and North Essex. All offer a diverse range of sports and activities to suit all ages and abilities including swimming, fitness suites, group exercise classes, archery, judo, gymnastics, football, hockey, badminton, squash, tennis, basketball and children's birthday parties.

South Cambridgeshire District Council has funded successful Exercise4Fun programmes at [Anglian Leisure Linton](#) and [Anglian Leisure Sawston](#). The programmes are a 12-week free active lifestyle initiative for participants with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 25 or above and who are inactive. The inclusive sessions have led to life-changing

results for many of the participants, both mentally and physically, offering them the opportunity to try different sports and activities while meeting like-minded people. We are excited that East Cambridgeshire District Council is now funding a similar scheme, Active for Health, and the programme has recently launched at [Anglian Leisure Bottisham](#).

[Anglian Leisure Joyce Frankland](#) and [Anglian Leisure Netherhall](#) have seen a continued increase in bookings, hosting a variety of additional activities and groups including pickleball, musical theatre, cultural community groups and choral groups.

Michelle Wilson, General Manager, Anglian Leisure

“ **The inclusive sessions have led to life-changing results**

Report from our Director of Primary Education



Wimbish Primary Academy

The 2023–24 academic year has continued to be a period of growth and development for primary education within Anglian Learning. As a Trust, we continue to foster a collaborative environment that enhances the educational experiences of our pupils.

Our commitment to our Core Value of Inclusivity has been evident in the strides made in developing provisions for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). While challenges remain in meeting the diverse needs of all pupils, primary schools within Anglian Learning have focused on enhancing their ordinarily available provision.

Our schools are working hard to ensure that classrooms are inclusive learning environments where every child can succeed.

Reflecting on our work together over the last academic year, our collaborative efforts have significantly benefited our pupils. One example is the improved quality of the teaching of reading to pupils following the combined Primary Inset Day back in January 2024. The hard work and dedication of our school leaders and staff in our primary academies have been crucial in driving this success.

As we look ahead to the next academic year, we are optimistic and excited to build on these successes, continuing to enhance the educational experiences and outcomes for all our pupils.

Rachael Johnston
Director of Primary Education

Report from our Director of Secondary Education



This academic year has focussed on deepening our shared understanding of our newly created Blueprints.

Each of our four Blueprints sets out an aspirational culture and key elements for the Curriculum, Inclusion, Safeguarding and People and Leadership. The Blueprints have been co-constructed with headteachers and our strategic groups utilising external expert input.

Leaders have begun to use the Blueprints as a basis to reflect upon

the culture of their school recognising areas of strength and development. This information enables schools to explore great practice across the Trust and shape improvement priorities at a school and Trust-wide level.

We have also seen the evolution of our 'Peer Review' process into our 'Blueprint Enquiries' which have been designed to enable leaders to explore together and develop a collective understanding of the Blueprints. The Enquiries support senior leaders to visit different schools within the Trust to build networks and help with their

improvement priorities. Feedback from the participants has been very positive so far. Leaders involved include headteachers, central team, deputies, assistant headteachers, middle leaders, SENCOs, and designated safeguarding leads.

In summary, it has been a very busy and productive year. We continue to build networks and professional relationships across our Trust for the benefit of improving the experiences and education of our young people.

Duncan Cooper, Director of Secondary Education

Linton Village College



Lessons learned from Creativity Collaboratives



The Creativity Collaboratives research project is nearing the end of its third year and the end of this first phase.

This has been an inspiring and thought-provoking project, and our thanks go to Jenny Rankine, Principal of Bottisham Village College, Phil Burgess, Assistant Principal of Bottisham Village College, Heather Wayman, Teacher of English at Bottisham Village College and Louise Scott, Deputy Headteacher of The Pines Primary School for their leadership roles.

We are in the process of reviewing the findings and drawing up conclusions and recommendations. Anglian Learning was pleased to

learn that Arts Council England, who funded the project, has recently secured further funding for schools to help secure the legacy of the project. Our schools will be able to use this to support further trials to build the evidence base, along with resourcing, training and leadership time.

Alongside this, the Creativity Collaboratives team is developing a 'Playbook' that shares what has been learnt and recommendations for practice, which will be published nationally, as well as supplementing

the forthcoming Teaching and Learning Framework. The Teaching and Learning Framework and Creativity Collaboratives Playbook will together provide in-depth guidance on the classroom practices that can help to realise the ambitious vision of the Curriculum Blueprint for curricula that extend horizons, build curiosity and empower pupils to think critically and creatively.

James Woodcock
Director of Education: Professional Learning and Curriculum

Jenny Rankine and Phil Burgess of Bottisham Village College, and Louise Scott of The Pines Primary School speaking at the Trust Leadership Conference, May 2024



People transformation journey

Following the launch of the People Strategy in 2023, it has been a busy 2023-24 academic year with several new initiatives launching.

These initiatives enable us to lay the foundations for both a progressive people agenda and an inclusive culture within Anglian Learning.

Recruitment and Retention

- Development of new recruitment materials and branding
- Preferential rates negotiated and agreed with recruitment and executive search agencies

Engage and Retain

- New staff engagement strategy developed
- HR speedy update newsletter published regularly

Grow and Develop

- Four Trust-wide induction events held
- Coaching culture programme for both the Trust Leadership Group and our middle leaders led by John Kane of Kanevolve Limited

Support and Reward

- Launch of Perkbox, our new employee benefits platform.
- Agreed on new occupational health provider

Operational Excellence and Efficiency

- Consistent Trust-wide HR processes and procedures implemented
- Launch of various policies including our new Menopause Policy

Agile HR Model and Digitisation

- Embedding the new HR Business Partnering and central HR team model
- Launching the new core HR and payroll system. This included a new Employee Self Service (ESS) portal and a new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) platform

To continue the people transformation journey we have an exciting set of 2024-25 priorities which will soon be published.

Caroline Newman, Director of People



Better connected

Connect the Classroom is a government-funded programme that aims to improve the quality of wireless networks within schools.

The programme includes the replacement of multi-gigabit capable network switches, copper and fibre cabling, as well as the WIFI 6e wireless access points themselves. Falling within the boundaries of the national "priority education investment areas", four Anglian Learning schools have benefited from a full upgrade of this

equipment over recent months, amounting to a total of over £320,000 worth of investment.

Pupils, staff and community users of the networks at [Bottisham Village College](#), [Bottisham Community Primary School](#), [Howard Community Academy](#) and [Linton Village College](#) are already benefiting from the programme, but it is hoped that the

initiative will extend further in the near future. In the meantime, Anglian Learning is committed to realising residual benefits to other schools beyond the reach of this phase of the project by reutilising perfectly serviceable equipment elsewhere within our Trust.

Richard Mayer, *Director of ICT*



Ofsted recognises strengths in inclusive provision

Inspection helps inform the school community about their local school and provides an independent view of how that school, and the educational system as a whole, is performing.

We do not believe that school and Trust leaders should only be focused on inspection outcomes which risks distorting the experience of pupils and may impact negatively on the workload and wellbeing of staff.

Furthermore, we have serious reservations about the current high-stakes approach to inspections, which remains a focus for the teaching unions and political parties. We continue to work with different areas of the educational sector to influence and help shape the future of inspection.

However, at the time of writing, four of our schools have had Ofsted reports published over the past academic year and, on the whole, we have been satisfied that a robust and fair process was undertaken. Each of the schools inspected (Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport, The Icknield Primary School, The Netherhall School and Oakes College Cambridge and Linton Village College) received reports that highlighted numerous strengths and provided a helpful platform upon which to build on for continued improvement. All the reports recognised the strengths of our inclusive provision, supported by

a depth of well-considered and coordinated approaches to personal development, led by the excellent work of the school and our central team.

This is the added value that Anglian Learning can bring to its schools. As a Trust, we provide the capacity to deliver sustainable change. We are driven by our moral purpose to ensure that all children, no matter where they live, can attend an excellent local school where they can flourish and grow as learners.

Duncan Cooper, *Director of Secondary Education*

The Netherhall School



Details of the Annual Report are accurate at the time and date of publication

“ We are excited to build on our successes, and will continue to enhance the educational experiences and outcomes for all our pupils

Rachael Johnston



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Stay in touch