

A word from our CEO...

As we reach the end of term, I want to take a moment to reflect on what has been a successful and encouraging period across Esteem Multi-Academy Trust. This term has seen continued commitment and hard work from colleagues right across our academies. I'm particularly pleased that, following the most recent Ofsted inspections, all schools within Esteem MAT are now judged to be at least Good. This is a significant achievement and a testament to the dedication of our staff and leaders.

It was great to see so many of you at our Stronger Together Conference in May. Bringing together all colleagues from across the Trust is no small feat, but the day underlined the strength of our shared values and the impact of our collective effort. I very much enjoyed chatting to individual colleagues and the feedback I have received since the conference has been overwhelmingly positive.

This newsletter highlights just some of the excellent work taking place across our schools—from individual achievements to community-focused initiatives—and I hope you'll take a few minutes to read and reflect on all that has been accomplished.

Thank you for everything you do to support our pupils, families and each other. I hope you're able to have a well-earned rest over the summer and spend time with those closest to you.

Wishing you a restful and enjoyable break.

Julian Scholefield - CEO



Award Winning APs

We are proud to share that several of our staff across our Alternative Provision academies were recognised at this year's PRUSAP Awards, with several nominations and commendations across multiple categories.

Geraint Brown and Karen Hayes received Highly Commended awards for Support Practitioner of the Year and Lifetime Achievement Award respectively.

We were also thrilled to see many of our colleagues nominated for their outstanding contributions:

- David Marlow – AP Leader of the Year
- Debbie Beckett – AP Leader of the Year
- Charlotte Harris – AP Practitioner of the Year
- Sian – AP Leader of the Year
- Rebecca Hale – AP Practitioner – Teacher of the Year

Team nominations included:

- The ENA Reading Team – AP Team of the Year
- The ENA Primary Team – AP Team of the Year

These nominations and commendations reflect the incredible dedication, passion, and professionalism across our teams. Congratulations to everyone recognised – your hard work continues to make a real difference!



Stronger Together Conference

A huge thank you to everyone who attended the Stronger Together Conference 2025 — it was incredible to see all 1,000+ Esteem colleagues gathered in one place, united by our shared purpose and passion.

We began the day with an inspiring keynote from Richard McCann, who reminded us of the lasting impact educators have on young lives. Later, the Geese Theatre Company delivered an engaging, interactive session on safeguarding that sparked important conversations across the trust.

We wrapped up the day with a fun and energising session from Dave Keeling of Laughology, who left us all laughing and uplifted. We also celebrated staff with 25+ years of service, a true testament to dedication and commitment, and heard from our Climate Taskforce, who showcased their progress around sustainability initiatives across the trust.

Thank you again to everyone who made the day so special. Here's to the future we're building together — stronger than ever!



EVA Students Go Viral

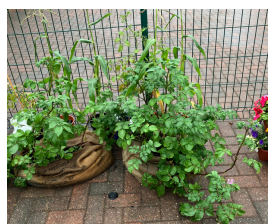
A raw and powerful video offering a glimpse into the lives of young people in Ilkeston, Derbyshire, has unexpectedly taken social media by storm, amassing over five million views and counting. What makes this viral sensation particularly meaningful for Esteem Valley Academy is the prominent presence of two of our own students within the footage. Their inclusion in this widely viewed piece serves as a potent affirmation of the vital work we undertake at our alternative provision. The widespread attention this video has garnered presents a unique opportunity for broader understanding and empathy towards the experiences of young people in our communities.

Super Scooters at Elmsleigh

“As part of Derbyshire’s Travel Smart Week, we held a Scooter Day to promote walking, scooting, and other eco-friendly ways of getting to school. It was a fun way to remind everyone about sustainable travel and healthy habits. We are also proud of our amazing children who became true Elmsleigh Superheroes on 3rd June as they took to the stage at The Glade, Rosliston Forestry Centre. With confidence, energy, and big smiles, they danced their hearts out and represented Elmsleigh Infant and Nursery School brilliantly! The event was a celebration of dance across South Derbyshire, and our children truly shone. A huge well done to all our performers – you were simply super!”



What a fantastic first year we've had on our sustainability journey across the Trust! Since kicking things off in September, we've come such a long way, and it's been amazing to see so many people getting involved in different ways. A massive thank you to everyone who's played a part—big or small!



One of the highlights has been watching all our Academies take part in the potato growing challenge. We can't wait to see how everyone's crops turn out—fingers crossed for some bumper harvests!



A huge shoutout to Tarina and Charlotte, who did an amazing job representing Esteem at the ASCL Sustainability Conference! They shared Esteem's journey from day one, highlighting the brilliant projects and progress we've made in just one year. From potato growing to eco-clubs, their talk showed just how much our schools have embraced being more sustainable—and they even gave a glimpse into some exciting plans for the year ahead!



We're excited to announce that we now have a dedicated Sustainability webpage on the Esteem website! It's where we'll be gathering updates, sharing inspiring stories from across our schools, and keeping everyone in the loop with eco-friendly tips and ideas.

We've also launched a brand-new Swap Shop webpage, making it even easier for families and staff to donate or pick up good-quality school items like uniforms, shoes, and stationery. It's a great way to reduce waste, save money, and support one another within our school communities.

A Peek at Peak's Brand-New Facilities!

At Peak School, we were delighted to have a brand-new sensory room installed over the Easter holiday by Rhino. This vibrant and welcoming space features 14 interactive elements designed to engage, stimulate, and support our pupils' sensory needs. Since opening, it has quickly become a favourite place for exploration, learning, and relaxation. Among the most popular features is the waterbed, which offers a calming sensory experience that many pupils particularly enjoy.



We were also very pleased to reinstate rebound therapy after Easter. This valuable provision now takes place three days each week and is delivered by two members of our staff who have completed specialist training to become qualified rebound therapy practitioners. Rebound therapy provides pupils with opportunities to develop balance, coordination, communication, and confidence in a motivating and fun environment.

Looking ahead, we are excited that over the summer holiday, our swimming pool will undergo much-needed repairs to ensure it remains a safe and accessible facility for our pupils. Between the sensory room, rebound therapy, and the swimming pool, we are proud to be providing a high-quality physical curriculum that meets the needs of our pupils with the most complex needs.

Enterprise at Bennerley Fields

On 15th May, Bennerley Fields School celebrated another successful year of entrepreneurial spirit at their annual Enterprise Marketplace event. Guided by the Skills Builder Framework, pupils were not only encouraged to develop their entrepreneurial skills but also to hone essential life skills crucial for their future. The journey began with a Dragons' Den style pitch, where pupils presented their business ideas to secure their funding. This was then followed by weeks of dedicated effort in business development: from crafting compelling business logos and selecting catchy names, to identifying target audiences and conducting thorough market research. As we reflect on this year's Enterprise Marketplace, we extend a heartfelt thank you to all who supported and encouraged our young entrepreneurs.



FPS Head to Barcelona

This year some Key Stage 2 pupils at Fountains Primary School have been learning Spanish in their Languages lesson and therefore we wanted to extend their experiences and memorable moments building each pupil's cultural capital. Because of this, this term some of the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils visited Barcelona, in Spain. We flew from Birmingham airport and stayed in a hotel in the center of the city. The pupils were excited to experience the Spanish culture, go on the Beach and visit the Barcelona Stadium. We then went on an open bus tour around the city, looking at various sights, such as the main Cathedral the 'Sagrada Familia'. We were able to use some of the simple phrases and greetings we have been learning in class to converse with our tour guides and order food and drinks in the local cafes. They were all so well behaved and had a fantastic time.



We are delighted to announce that Fountains High and Primary have achieved the School Games Gold Mark Award for the 2024/25 academic year. The School Games Mark is a Government-led award scheme launched in 2012, facilitated by the Youth Sport Trust to reward schools for their commitment to the development of competition across their school and into the community. Their sporting achievements this year include Cricket, Archery, Boccia and sit down volleyball with lots of pupils competing in local inter-school competitions. Our school community was extremely dedicated to all aspects of school sport, including young volunteers, leaders and officials who made competitions possible. A special thanks to Mrs Shakles, Mrs Wilburn and Miss Clements from Fountains Primary and to Mr Abbey from Fountains High who have supported these events.



Sports Hall Progress

We are delighted to share an exciting update on the construction of Fountains High School's new sports hall. The interior is taking shape, marking a major milestone in the development of this fantastic facility.

Once completed, the sports hall will provide a modern and spacious environment for students to participate in a variety of sports, training sessions, and physical activities. This new space will support our commitment to promoting health, fitness, and teamwork, offering students more opportunities to engage in both curriculum-based and extracurricular sports.

We can't wait to see students using this amazing facility. Watch this space for more updates as we move towards completion!



EVA Battles DPA to 3-3 Draw

Esteem Valley Academy's football team faced Derby Pride Academy for the second time in a keenly anticipated warm-up match before May's inaugural Notts/Derbyshire tournament. Both Esteem Valley and Derby Pride Academies competed with admirable sportsmanship, setting a positive tone for the upcoming tournament. The match ended in a 3-3 draw after an exciting back and forth. Well done to all students involved!



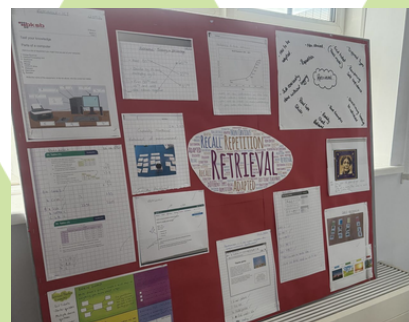
Esteem Valley Academy's Inaugural Teaching and Learning Symposium

This term, Esteem Valley Academy proudly hosted its first-ever Teaching and Learning Symposium — and it was a resounding success!

Colleagues from across Esteem MAT came together to celebrate and explore innovative practice in education. Many commented on the passion, dedication, and creativity of the EVA team, particularly their commitment to making a real difference in the lives of their students.

Highlights included the academy's inspiring use of technology to engage learners and insightful sessions on research-informed pedagogical approaches that have been tried, tested, and refined by EVA staff.

The symposium was a fantastic opportunity to share best practice, spark meaningful discussion, and strengthen collaboration across our trust. The team at Esteem Valley Academy is already looking forward to continuing this work with colleagues in other academies in the near future.



Ben Shares Best Practice

Esteem Valley Academy's Senior Assistant Head, Ben Taylor, has had the opportunity to deliver presentations based on the improvement journey at Esteem Valley Academy. In January, he went to London to present at the IncludEd conference around the school's work on inclusive practice and the impact it had on specific students in the school. He was back in the capital this month, at The Difference symposium, to talk about EVA's improvement journey over the last two years and the impact it has had on all areas of the school. He proposed a set of design principles to allow other Alternative Provisions to improve the belonging felt by students.

Esteem North Academy Embarks on First DofE Overnight Adventure

Esteem North Academy recently completed its very first overnight Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) camping trip, spread across three different dates and involving students from both High Peak and Hasland sites.

In total, 14 pupils took part, embracing the challenge and beauty of the Peak District with enthusiasm and resilience. Highlights of the expedition included walking over 20km, admiring the stunning views from Monsal Head Viaduct, and taking in the scenic Crescent Weir along Monsal Dale.

For many pupils, this was their first experience away from home — and their excitement was impossible to miss! One particularly enthusiastic student even managed to chat with almost every member of the public they encountered, simply out of sheer joy. One pupil was so moved by the view at Monsal Head that they video-called their mum to share the breathtaking scenery, describing it as “so beautiful and amazing.”

Students tackled the high ropes course with confidence and cooked their own meals, showcasing their independence and teamwork.

Throughout the trip, pupils conducted themselves brilliantly and were a true credit to themselves and the Academy. A fantastic achievement for all involved — we can't wait for the next adventure!



Sports Day at Fountains High

This term, students from Fountains High School had an amazing day at Shobnall Leisure Centre for their annual Sports Day – and the sunshine made it even better!

From basketball and football to tennis, netball, javelin, hurdles, and the classic 100m sprint, everyone took part with fantastic energy and enthusiasm.

A huge well done to all students for showing brilliant teamwork, resilience, and sportsmanship throughout the day!



Staff went above and beyond to entertain the students during the Sports Day staff race — complete with inflatable costumes! From wobbly waddles to full-on sprints, it was all laughs and brilliant fun.



Click the image to watch the video!



Budding Talent Blooms at Green Garden Project Celebration

Over the past two terms, seven teams from across our Esteem Multi-Academy Trust have been digging deep into creativity, sustainability, and science as part of the very first collaboration with the Engineering Development Trust (EDT), and the results are nothing short of inspirational.

The Green Garden Project, developed as part of the prestigious Industrial Cadets Bronze Awards, challenged students to design green spaces tailored to specific people, places, or purposes. From rejuvenating underused plots to imagining tranquil new spaces, each team was tasked with creating a garden that considered sustainability, accessibility, and community needs, all while uncovering the hidden STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths) behind gardening.

The culmination of this exciting initiative was marked with a celebration of innovation, teamwork, and environmental stewardship, and the projects certainly didn't disappoint.

- Bennerley Fields (Rufford) worked hand-in-hand with the Bennerley Viaduct team to design a welcoming community space, showcasing a strong local partnership.
- Bennerley Fields (Hardwick) transformed their school grounds with brand-new growing areas, embracing nature right outside their classroom doors.
- Holbrook School impressed judges with their scientific ingenuity, crafting a unique banana-skin fertiliser that helps gardens thrive while educating others about sustainable chemistry.
- Fountains Primary designed a peaceful oasis in their forest school area, demonstrating exceptional teamwork and attention to detail.
- Esteem Valley Academy (EVA) developed a prototype sensory garden, packed with creative flair and is set to become a reality next year.
- Peak School partnered with TARMAC to establish an eco-conscious garden, complete with a buzzing bug hotel and tyre planters that reflect their commitment to reusing and recycling.
- Fountains High showcased a remarkable transformation of a plain grassy patch into a vibrant, exploratory haven that invites curiosity and joy.

Celebrating Success

All teams received the Bronze Certificate presented by the EDT for gaining the Industrial Cadets Award.

Two teams received special recognition during the celebration event: Fountains primary School was honoured with the Most Innovative Project award for their unique design, use of space and the sustainable features they had utilised.

Bennerley Fields (Rufford Class) earned the People's Choice Award, voted for by peers and attendees for their outstanding community-driven design. There was also a special mention to Holbrook School for Autism, who created their unique fertiliser. The judges were extremely impressed with the science aspect they had incorporated into their project.

Sowing Seeds for the Future

This pioneering project has not only nurtured creativity and environmental awareness but also strengthened teamwork, problem-solving, and real-world application of STEM. With such resounding success and enthusiasm, the Green Garden Project is set to grow even bigger, welcoming more schools into the initiative in the coming years.

A massive congratulations to all the students, mentors, and schools involved. Your gardens may be rooted in soil, but your ideas are reaching for the stars.



Year 11 Leavers' Celebration at DPA

"What a fantastic afternoon we had celebrating our incredible Year 11 students! The atmosphere was wonderful and staff and Year 11 students enjoyed a well-deserved celebration after the completion of the GCSE exams. It was brilliant to see so many smiling faces, especially students and staff taking on the inflatable "wipe out" challenge. The pizza was a huge hit, keeping everyone fuelled for an afternoon of fun followed by a visit from the ice-cream van.

Beyond the activities, it was wonderful to see our students and staff letting loose and dancing together, sharing laughter and celebrating all their hard work, resilience, and growth throughout their time with us. This celebration was the perfect opportunity to acknowledge everything they've achieved. We're so proud of them and can't wait to see the amazing things they'll do next. It's truly been a privilege to watch them develop into the confident, capable young adults they are today. We wish them all the very best for their future adventures!"



FPS Receive Silver Rights and Respecting Schools Award (RRSA)

A huge well done and thank you to Miss Snow who recently received official notification that the work she had completed across Fountains Primary School had achieved a Silver Aware Award from UNICEF UK making FPS officially a Silver: Rights Aware school. The Silver: Rights Aware is the second stage of the Rights Respecting Schools Award. It is granted by UNICEF UK to schools that show good progress towards embedding children's rights in the school's policy, practice and ethos, as outlined in the RRSA Strands and Outcomes. To achieve Silver: Rights Aware, FPS was assessed by one of the RRSA Professional Advisers who looked at the school's rights respecting work.

Achieving Silver Rights Aware means there was evidence that:

- Fountains Primary School is explicitly embedding the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in its policy, practice and culture.
- They are promoting knowledge and understanding of the Convention throughout your school community.
- They are putting into action and developing the plans outlined on your Action Plan for Silver, which you submitted to achieve Bronze: Rights Committed.
- They are beginning to see the positive impact of these actions on children and young people, staff, and on the school's ethos, practice and environment.
- Children and young people are beginning to see themselves as rights respecting global citizens and advocates for fairness and children's rights, both locally and globally.

This accreditation is valid for three years, Miss Snow's next aim over the next couple of years is for FPS to be a Gold Rights and Respecting School. Congratulations FPS!

