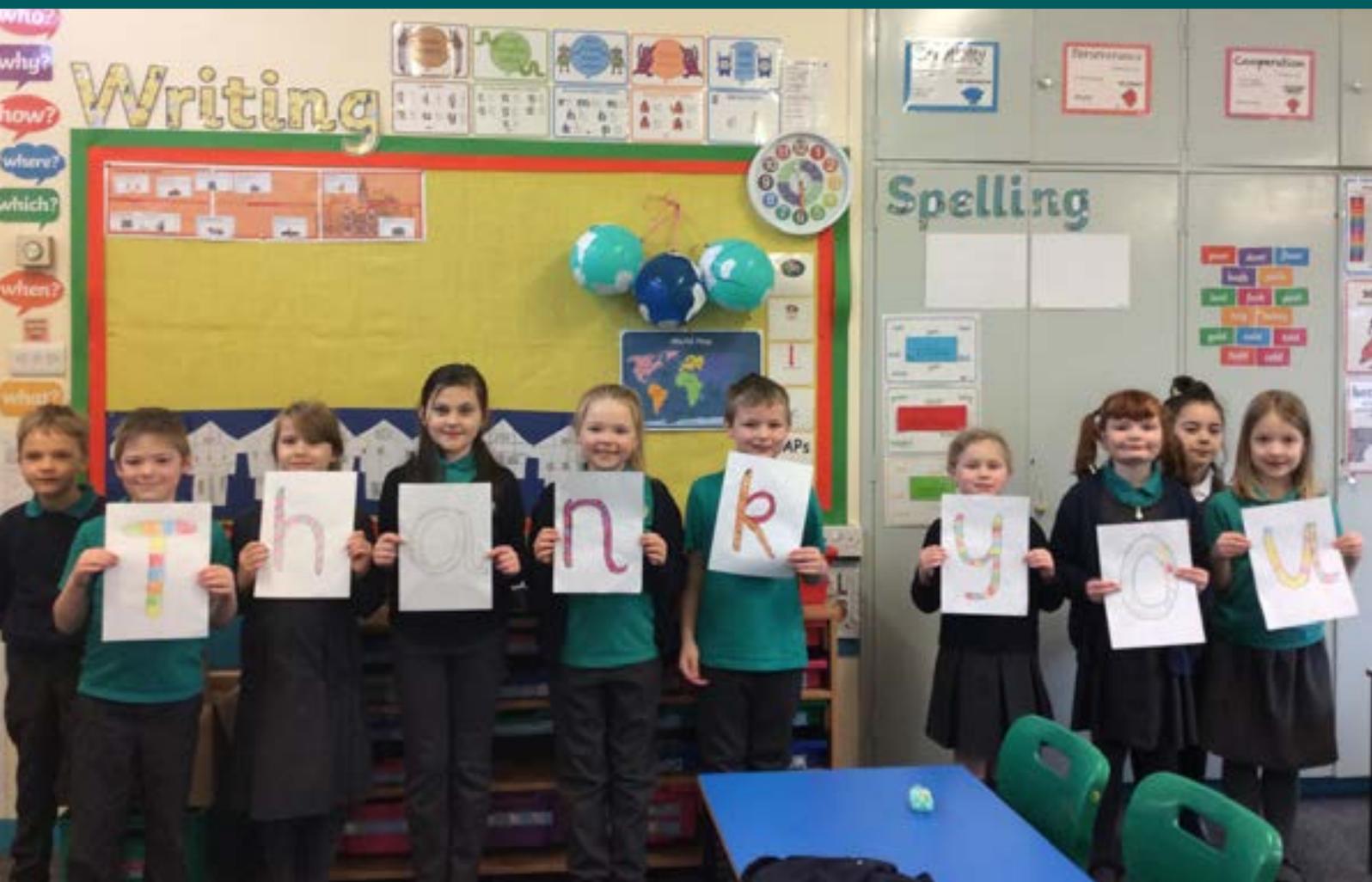


SPRING/SUMMER 2021



## Welcome from the CEO

I am delighted to be writing to you in the midst of a busy and exciting term.

It would be an understatement to say that it has certainly been an eventful year or so for us all. A time that has been characterised by a number of lockdowns and a return to home learning at the start of 2021. It is, therefore, wonderful to see our schools returning to a sense of normality again.

I cannot tell you how happy it makes me to hear the familiar sounds of busy school life, to see pupils enjoying catching up with their friends and teachers greeting their classes with fascinating face-to-face lessons.

I know it has not been an easy process

to get to this point and I would like to thank everyone across our community that has supported us – parents and carers who have worked tirelessly with us to provide learning at home and our wonderful staff and governors for continuing to go the extra mile to provide the best for our pupils.

I would like to express an extra-special thanks to everyone who was involved in setting up Ashlawn School's COVID-19 testing centre, and in particular the army of volunteers who gave up their time to ensure that the testing process ran smoothly and safely.

You are all quite simply incredible!

As the days become warmer and brighter and we move through the summer months, there is much for us to look forward to as a Trust community. Alongside continuing to nurture our pupils' academic potential, you will see that we are placing an even greater emphasis on their wellbeing and happiness, as now, more than ever, we believe that should be at the heart of our approach.

**James Higham**  
CEO

Transforming Lives Educational Trust

All systems go! Houlton School gets the green light for opening

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## After years of planning and preparation, Houlton School has been given the all clear to open.

Following the submission of the school's recent Section 10 consultation, the Secretary of State for Education has formally signed the school's funding agreement, which is one of the final milestones before welcoming the first pupils in September.

With building works on the school progressing well and on programme, the campus will see the Grade II listed buildings transformed to become the heart of the school. The site will also boast purpose-built Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and Humanities buildings, as well as a Sport England Compliant Sports Centre that will be available for community use. There will also be a professional grade radio studio that will broadcast from the site, honouring the campus' heritage as a global centre for communication.

Michael McCulley, Principal Designate at Houlton School,

said: "It has certainly been a busy few months for us here at Houlton, from building progress to staff recruitment and everything in between, it is fantastic to see our plans coming to fruition and to receive such overwhelming support from members of our community."



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BBC One programme 'Dom Digs In' visits Houlton School

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## Houlton School's Principal Designate was delighted to welcome the team from the BBC One TV programme 'Dom Digs In' for an in-depth look at the construction of the school.

The programme, which is hosted by Dom Littlewood and aired earlier this month, explored the construction of the school buildings ahead of opening to its very first Year 7 pupils in September 2021. Dom also got stuck in and tried his hand at bricklaying, plastering and other key trades working on the school site.

Michael McCulley, Principal Designate at Houlton School, said: "It was a privilege to welcome Dom and his team for a tour of our brand-new school and to show him the wonderful

facilities that we will have to offer.

"As we get closer to opening our doors in September, it becomes more and more exciting to see all of our plans coming together. Not only are the building works progressing well, but we now have a fantastic staff team in place and are getting all of the finer details confirmed in preparation for welcoming our new pupils."

Watch 'Dom Digs In' on BBC iPlayer now:  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000vsr8>





New Principal and her dog receive a warm welcome at Henry Hinde Junior School

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## Henry Hinde Junior's new Principal and her faithful dog, Lola, have received a warm welcome from staff, pupils and their families.

Jennie Nurse, who became Principal at the start of this term, joins the school from her role at a good school with outstanding features in Leicester.

With over 20 years' experience in teaching and over a decade spent as a senior leader, Miss Nurse is passionate about the power of education to transform the lives of young people, not just academically, but in order to help them grow as a person. Her dog, Lola, a Pets as Therapy registered Cockapoo, also comes with years of experience as a School Wellbeing Dog.

Jennie Nurse, Principal at Henry Hinde Junior School, said: "I firmly believe that school should be a sanctuary for children - somewhere to build their self-esteem, their confidence and their resilience and to really nurture their wellbeing.

"That's why I've introduced my Cockapoo, Lola, as Henry Hinde Junior's new Wellbeing Dog. Lola has worked in schools for her whole life and is very used to children and the workings of the school day. She is friendly, sociable and well-trained, and loves being around children and the school environment.

"From my experience, and the research I have carried out, I believe there will be so many benefits for the whole school community. From developing a sense of responsibility, to helping to reduce stress and anxiety, I've seen first-hand the impact that a dog like Lola can have on behaviour and the self-esteem of children too."

A former English and maths lead, Miss Nurse also brings with her a passion for the arts, drama and music, which will become the hub of school life. With new activities and events set to take place throughout the year, the school will also continue to build upon its close partnership with Henry Hinde Infant School.

Miss Nurse added: "Feedback from children and their families has been brilliant so far, and it has been a pleasure getting to know them. The staff here are so fantastic too, they are really committed and keen to make a difference for our pupils.

"I've also been getting to know the team at Henry Hinde Infant School as well, and I look forward to further collaboration across our schools over the coming months."

Our commitment to wellbeing and happiness

A strong commitment to the wellbeing and happiness of our pupils, staff and our wider community has always been an integral part of what we stand for.

As the impacts of the pandemic have shown us, it is now even more important to care for ourselves and each other.

Over the last few months we have been building on our wellbeing provision and introducing new activities and initiatives to promote the positive mental health and wellbeing of our pupils, as well as developing their self-confidence and resilience.

For example, at Ashlawn School new daily themes have been adopted including Motivation Monday, Wellbeing Wednesday and Thank you Thursday, which have become a key feature of the weekly calendar.

At Henry Hinde Junior School, during the lockdown each child received a 'Keep fit at home pack', including a ball, skipping rope and frisbee to play with, while pupils at Henry Hinde Infant School were delighted to receive their very own ball as part of a weekly fitness and skills challenge.

Across each school, 'exercise across the world' competitions were also introduced, encouraging pupils to get outside, enjoy the fresh air and count their steps or complete other types of exercise in order to contribute to school-wide journeys across the world.

James Higham, CEO of the Transforming Lives Educational Trust, said: "For me, positive mental health and wellbeing is absolutely vital for ensuring we nurture happy, confident and fulfilled children who are ready to learn.

"On a daily basis, we encourage pupils to discuss their thoughts and feelings and staff are on hand to provide additional support for those who need it most. Our schools are also there for our families, and we continue to provide support for parents and carers in whatever way we can, throughout the pandemic and beyond."





## Volunteers play “vital role” in testing centre

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When Ashlawn School found out that they would be required to set up a COVID-19 testing centre, they knew that they would need to enlist the support of volunteers in order to make it happen.

The school was blown away by how many members of the local community stepped forward, with over 75 initial applications in a matter of days, offering their time in order to help the cause.

After taking part in an intensive training programme, a wonderful army of volunteers had a vital role to play in the testing centre.

Siobhan Evans, Principal at

Ashlawn School, said: “We are so grateful to our fantastic volunteers who were so calm and professional when supporting our pupils and staff to have lateral flow tests.

“It was a real team effort between the Trust team, Ashlawn staff and our volunteers, and I am very proud of what was accomplished.”

## Ashlawn School remembers loved ones lost during the COVID-19 pandemic

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As we approached the one-year anniversary of the beginning of the first national lockdown, pupils and staff at Ashlawn School wanted to find a way to remember the loved ones lost during the pandemic.

After considering various options for an appropriate tribute, the Pastoral Team and Art Department set to work on creating a dedicated COVID-19 Memorial Tree in the school canteen, a place at the heart of the school community for pupils and staff to come together, contemplate and remember.

For those that have lost a loved one, whether it is family, friends, neighbours or other people that were close to them, the memorial offers a chance to create a message of

remembrance that will appear as a leaf on the Memorial Tree.

Siobhan Evans, Principal at Ashlawn School, said: “As a school community, we wanted to find a way to treasure the memories of the people who have sadly been taken from us, particularly for pupils and staff who have lost people close to them.

“Our memorial is just one small way for us to remember them and to support one another over the coming months.”

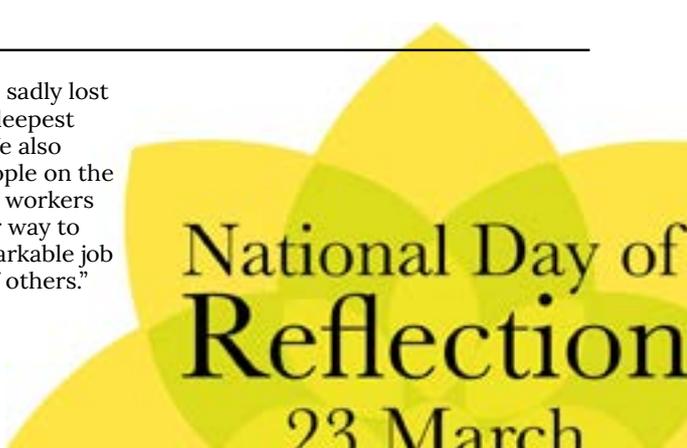
## National Day of Reflection

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On Tuesday 23rd March we marked the first anniversary of the first UK lockdown, by taking part in the National Day of Reflection, a day to reflect on our collective loss, support those who've been bereaved, and hope for a brighter future.

James Higham, CEO of the Transforming Lives Educational Trust, said: “As a Trust, we are here

to support those who have sadly lost loved ones and share our deepest condolences with them. We also wish to thank all of the people on the frontline and other critical workers who have gone out of their way to carry on doing such a remarkable job to look after the welfare of others.”



National Day of  
Reflection  
23 March

World Book Day became the latest event to take place during lockdown – but that didn't stop our pupils from marking the occasion.

In time-honoured tradition, staff and pupils at Ashlawn School dressed as their favourite book characters and held a week-long series of reading activities. At Henry Hinde Infant School pupils took part in an extreme reading competition, inviting photographs of reading in imaginative places; and Year 2 pupils who were in school also had the chance to set up their own reading dens, to share their favourite books with their friends.

At Henry Hinde Junior School, staff decided to put a different spin on things and set up their very own 'Car Park Library'. After making a call out to the

community, the school was inundated with book donations to be quarantined onsite before being added to the Car Park Library collection.

Pupils, parents and other children in the community who passed the school site were invited to pick up a book to read at home.

Mark Baird, Year 6 Teacher and Reading Lead at Henry Hinde Junior School, said: "Our Car Park Library has been a huge success and the school has been overwhelmed by the many generous donations to such a good cause. We would like to thank everyone who contributed in any way."



## Henry Hinde Infant School Home Learning Survey

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Staff at Henry Hinde Infant School have been overwhelmed by the wonderful feedback from parents in a recent survey about home learning provision during the winter lockdown. Here are just some of the highlights:

- "Every day we are reminded that we made the best decision to send [our child] to Henry Hinde Infants, staff are so caring, passionate and family orientated, always considering the child's best interests first."
- "As always, the team has gone above and beyond with your efforts to support our children so "Thank you!"
- "I honestly can't thank you all enough for the work you are doing for our children, it is much appreciated."
- "Your recorded lessons are fab. I love the energy you guys are all putting in. [My child] is really focused during the lessons you record and you are really engaging him. I think you are all doing an amazing job."

Fleur Edwards, Principal at Henry Hinde Infant School, said: "Thank you to all of the parents and carers who took the time to complete our recent survey. Your feedback is so valuable to us and it has been so lovely to read your kind messages about our hard-working staff."