



SPARK

Issue 3—Summer2026

EDUCATION TRUST

magazine

United by football

Spark schools come together





This has been a really busy year and we have achieved so much. Congratulations to Bader and Chandlers Ridge for not just surviving the inspection process but thriving and securing reports to be truly proud of.

Our focus this year has been on the things we can do together that forge our Spark identity. Thus our career development programme for teachers has completed its first year and has been hugely successful. Next year the programme will widen with a focus on pedagogy, AI and leadership and we are very proud to launch our Professional Services Staff leadership programme. We have established network groups to share the brilliant work that happens in all of our schools, hosted an ECT day in the Autumn term and are looking forward to our first Teaching and Learning conference in October. A conference that is truly for Spark, by Spark.

Together, we have created brilliant opportunities for our students. Spark Sings, held at The Globe in Stockton was a magical evening that we shared with an audience of 800. Our primary pupil



ambassadors have been visiting our schools and the Primary Football extravaganza was fabulous, eventually won by Levendale Primary School in a closely contested final. The year has drawn to a close with Spark Speaks, which showcases the work on oracy that has been undertaken in our schools.

Our central teams have worked tirelessly to establish systems and processes to ensure that schools run both smoothly and effectively. Across finance, HR, ICT, estates and governance the team have worked with schools and their leaders with the aim of providing protection, support and challenge to ensure that every child in a Spark school gains the very best education.

As the year draws to a close I would like to wish you a wonderful summer break and look forward to working with you next year.

Louise Spellman, CEO Spark Education Trust





Schools united by football

SCORES of children made memories and friends on the football pitch in a trust-wide tournament designed to boost a sense of community.

In the first event of its kind, Spark Education Trust staged a primary festival of sport attracting young footballers from its ten primary schools across Teesside.

Perfect conditions saw Year 5 boys and girls play six minute halves of seven-a-side football, at Conyers School and Sixth Form, Yarm.

Conyers Year 8 sports leaders provided the referees and additional support for the event which pitted teams from Bader Primary School, Thornaby, Bewley Primary School, Billingham, Chandlers Ridge Academy, Nunthorpe, Kirkclevington Primary School, Layfield Primary School and Levendale Primary School, Yarm, Saltburn Primary School, The Links Primary School, Eaglescliffe, Whinstone Primary School, Ingleby Barwick, and Whitehouse Primary School, Stockton.

The final saw Levendale play Saltburn in a closely fought match decided in the dying minutes. A last minute goal from the edge of the penalty area clinched it for Saltburn who collected the trophy

from Spark Chief Executive Louise Spellman.

Saltburn captain Alistair Carey, 10, said: "The tournament was really good and gave us the chance to develop as a team and individuals. I was really surprised to win but our goal from the edge of the box was a worthy winner."

Organised by Conyers' head of PE Rachel Lilley, the tournament was the idea of Whinstone Primary School teacher Mark Good.

Rachel said: "Children's work rate was incredible and we could see how much they all developed as players in just over two hours. All matches were staged in the possible spirit of the game and they should all feel extremely proud. We know many pupils from our feeder primaries but it was lovely to be able to welcome children from all the trust's other schools."

Mrs Spellman said: "It has been absolutely fantastic, a gorgeous day of making friends and memories and a chance for Conyers students to develop their leadership skills.

"It has been a brilliant opportunity for children to come together and shine. I could tell players were inspired by the England team at the World Cup and this will be the first of many opportunities to come together as a trust to play sport."



SPARK SPORT



For best friends, Boro fans and fellow Stokesley Red football team players Henry Gallagher and Archie Suddes it was a chance to play against each other.

Henry, 10, a key player on the left wing for Saltburn, said: "There has been a real buzz about the place and it has been such good fun."

Archie, 10, left back for Kirklevington, added: "It has been great because we have played people of all different levels and got to meet children from other schools."



SPARK SPORT





SPARK SPORT





Celebrating teaching success!

TEACHERS and support staff celebrated in style after another year of success.

The Spark Education Trust, which runs secondary and primary schools across the North East, staged an awards night to recognise the commitment and hard work of its staff.

Hosted by Conyers School and Sixth Form, Yarm, one of its four secondary schools, the ceremony marked the Trust's second year of operations with the presentation of a string of accolades.

Spark Chief Executive Louise Spellman said: "This has been a really busy year and we have achieved so much.

"Our focus this year has been on the things we can do together that forge our Spark identity. Thus our career development programme for teachers is completing its first year and has been hugely successful.

"Together, we have created brilliant opportunities for our students. Our central teams have worked tirelessly to establish systems and processes to ensure that schools run both smoothly and effectively.



"Tonight is about celebrating talent and the difference staff make to our schools every day. We have many reasons to be cheerful. In every school and our central team there is talent in abundance. Talent, hard work and an absolute commitment to our children and young people." Nominations were made in the areas of innovation, inclusion, outstanding teaching, support, pastoral care, enrichment, learning for life, for being an unsung hero, inspirational leadership and making outstanding contributions to the trust. The awards ceremony also celebrated primary, secondary and central services staff who were moving on or retiring from the Trust.

Outstanding Primary Teacher of the Year was Jessie Poulson from Bader Primary School, Thornaby.



A citation read out by Mrs Spellman said: "Jessie is passionate and enthusiastic and puts her all into every lesson. She inspires the Year 1 children she teaches and has an approachable, friendly and hard working personality. She has created a classroom environment where children can be curious and every child feels valued. She is empathetic, patient and always willing to support colleagues."

Outstanding Secondary Teacher of the Year accolade went to Martyn Burke, of Laurence Jackson School, Guisborough.

His citation read: "Martyn consistently goes above and beyond. His positive attitude creates an encouraging environment for both students and staff and he leads by example through his professionalism and dedication. Martyn is always supportive of his team, offering guidance and fostering collaboration. He builds strong relationships with young people, inspiring confidence and helping them achieve their full potential. His commitment to making a difference to students' lives is clear in everything he does."



Other winners were: Early Career Teacher of the Year, Mollie McGregor, from Kirklevington Primary School and Romana Asghar, from Egglecliffe Secondary School; Inclusion Champion Award, Kathryn Barr, from The Links Primary School; Outstanding Support Staff, Louise Nouri, of Whitehouse Primary School, Jayne Howes, from Conyers Secondary School and Lucy Wilson, from Central Finance; Pastoral Care Award, Meral Jackson, from Egglecliffe Secondary School; Community Engagement Award, Mike Fowle, from Laurence Jackson Secondary School; Enrichment Champion Awards, Charlotte Wilson-Dukes, from Whinstone Primary School and Jo Croft, from Conyers Secondary School; Learning for Life Award, Lara Kapps, from Huntcliff Secondary School; Team of the Year Award, The Junction Farm ARP Team and the Huntcliff English Team; Unsung Hero Award, Dean Underwood, of Layfield Primary School, Paul Bridge, of The Trust Central Services Team; Bright Spark Award, Lucy Hakes, of Bewley Primary School, Carla Breckon, from Levendale Primary School; Governor of the Year Award, Robbie Harris, of Whitehouse Primary School; Inspirational Leader of the Year, Ali Dixon, of Chandlers Ridge Primary School and Charlotte Tomey, of Laurence Jackson Secondary School; Collaboration Champions Award, The Spark Ed Learning Group; Outstanding Contribution to the Trust Awards, Paul Webster, of Conyers School, Jo Richardson, of Egglecliffe School, Karen Tattersdill, of Bewley School,



Annemarie Longster, of Bewley School, Jill Gullon, of Levendale, Sue Crinnion, of Junction Farm, Joanne McKenna-Moore, of Saltburn Primary School.



Pupils on track for healthier learning



PUPILS are on track to healthier learning thanks to a new development on the school field.

A 500m track for running and cycling has been created at Bader Primary School, Thornaby, as part of an enrichment vision. The compressed gravel surface is proving to be a hit with young walkers, runners and cyclists.

The majority of the track is flat, but there are some uphill and downhill sections, with ramps and jumps.

At lunch times, the track is open for all the children to use.

Year 6 children marshal the track, with support from school adults, ensuring everyone enjoys the experience and they follow track etiquette.

Head teacher David Hodgson said: "It has been wonderful to see the children eagerly bringing their bikes to school and cycling lap after lap around the track, wearing big smiles and reaping the benefits of healthy exercise.

"As part of the bike track experience, we are promoting safe cycling. All the children are encouraged to bring their own helmets and we are advocating for cyclists to wear them outside of school too."



All new riders are taught the basic bike safety checks before they are allowed to ride and the Year 6 marshals support the initiative. Some of the Year 6 children have been keen to help with the ongoing maintenance of the bikes, leading to the addition of workshops as part of the school's future offer.

New bike storage has been introduced to allow for easier access to the track and to accommodate the increase in the number of children cycling to school. Some adults have also been encouraged to cycle to school with their children.

At Bader, the aim is to make activities accessible for all. So a bike and helmet loan scheme has been set up for the track. Over recent weeks, donations of bikes have been received along with the purchasing of cycle helmets.

When operational, the loan scheme will allow children without bikes to borrow a helmet and bike and then enjoy the fun of cycling on the track.

Mr Hodgson said: "We have a number of non-riders in the older classes in school as well as our younger learners. Therefore, we have attended Bikeability training, with the intention of enabling all children at Bader to learn to ride a bike.

"As part of the training, we received some new balance bikes and helmets to be used with EYFS and KS1. For the older children, we have created our own balance bikes by removing the pedals on school bikes. These have already been used by some Year 5 and 6 children who are progressing well."

In addition to the cycle track being used for cycling and the daily walk, it is also a super course for developing the stamina required for running longer distances.

Mr Hodgson said: "We hope to use the track to support the cross country training at the start of each academic year and with our 1k and 2k fun runs."





FOOTBALL COMES HOME TO SALTburn PRIMARY SCHOOL

AFTER almost as many years of hurt as the England National Team, Saltburn Primary School can finally say they are champions.

The Wilf Mannion Trophy has been a fixture on Teesside local primary school's football calendar for more than 20 years and is always keenly contested.

The first day comprised of mini leagues with the top two teams progressing to the knock-out stages.

After a few tough games, Saltburn managed to finish top of their group and moved on to the next day's challenge – knock-out football.

After tackling some tricky opponents, Saltburn made their way through to the semi-finals and were drawn against a tough side.

A nail-biting game followed ending all square. Extra time could not separate them either so penalties ensued. Fortunately, Saltburn players managed to hold their nerve and when the final

penalty was scored there was jubilation. At last, after all the years of finishing second, Saltburn were finally the champions.

Headteacher Caroline Chadwick said: "It was a tremendous achievement which the boys loved. We are so proud of them, but even more proud of their attitude and sportsmanship which was evident throughout."





School achieves UNICEF gold award

A SCHOOL community is celebrating after being awarded a prestigious accolade.

Levendale Primary School, Yarm, has been presented with the Gold award by UNICEF UK as part of its Rights Respecting School programme.

UNICEF is the world's leading organisation working for children and their rights. The Rights Respecting Schools Award is granted to schools that show commitment to promoting and realising children's rights and encouraging adults, children and young people to respect the rights of others in school.

Gold is the highest order given by UNICEF UK and shows a deep and thorough commitment to children's rights at all levels of school life. There are over 600 schools across England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales that have received Gold.

Headteacher Joanne Lewis said: "The rights of children is pivotal at Levendale Primary School and we are all thrilled that our work has been recognised by such a prestigious organisation.

"We really do put children's rights at the heart of everything we do at school and I'd like to thank pupils, families and staff for their unstinting support of something that has a huge impact on school life and learning."





The Award recognises achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of a school's planning, policies and practice. A Rights Respecting School is a community where children's rights are learned, taught, practised, respected, protected and promoted.

The UNICEF UK Rights Respecting Schools initiative is aimed at schools across the UK, including those in an early years setting. Currently, it works with nearly

5,000 primary schools, secondary schools, schools for children and young people with special educational needs and pupil referral units across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Schools have reported a positive impact on behaviour, relationships and well-being by enhancing pupils' self-esteem, leading to less truancy and bullying, better learning and improved academic standards.

Chandlers Ridge shows its strength



A **POPULAR** primary academy has proven to be a tower of strength, winning high praise from official school inspectors.

The Nunthorpe-based Chandlers Ridge Academy, which is part of the Spark Education Trust, secured six 'strong' gradings in its latest Ofsted report.

These included the areas of achievement, attendance and behaviour, curriculum and teaching, inclusion, leadership and governance and personal development and wellbeing.

Inspectors described the school as 'welcoming'. They said: "Pupils are greeted by name and with a smile each morning. Pupils benefit from the positive relationships with staff who know them well and care for them. Most pupils attend regularly because they are happy to come to school. Pupils' respectful behaviour and secure relationships contribute to them experiencing a sense of belonging at the school."

Inspectors highlighted that pupils in all year groups achieved well from their starting points, developing a thorough knowledge and understanding across all subjects. They produced work of a high standard. Consequently, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, were very well prepared for the next stage of learning.

The report stated: "In national tests, pupils achieve above-average outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils outperform their non-disadvantaged peers in reading and writing. In mathematics they are closing the gaps with their non-disadvantaged peers nationally."

Inspectors noted that there was a 'culture of attendance being everybody's business'. Leaders had clear steps in place to manage expectations for pupils' attendance.

Leaders had also established a highly effective behaviour system that was consistently applied across the school. Pupils showed dedication to their work in lessons and pupils' behaviour showed self-discipline.

Inspectors highlighted that leaders had designed a well-considered curriculum across all subjects so that pupils' knowledge built as they progressed through the school.

"Teaching is highly effective, providing regular opportunities for pupils to revisit and practise prior learning," the report said.

"Leaders and staff are meticulous in their checks on how well pupils are learning, ensuring misconceptions are addressed and gaps in knowledge are quickly closed. Leaders ensure there is a sharp focus on reading, writing and mathematics in the curriculum. This helps pupils to become successful in other subjects."

On inclusion, inspectors noted that the school was a 'welcoming community where every pupil is valued and supported to succeed'.

Leaders identified swiftly any barriers to learning and wellbeing and closely tracked pupils' progress to monitor the impact of support and make timely changes when necessary.

Leadership and governance was also praised. Inspectors said: "Leaders, including governors, have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They have successfully developed a culture of high achievement in which pupils thrive.

"Pupils, staff, governors and parents alike express pride in being part of the school community."

Inspectors highlighted a 'thoughtfully designed personal development programme that aims to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills and attitude to become confident members of society'.

"Pupils benefit from opportunities that broaden their horizons and fully prepare them for life in modern Britain," the report said.

Pupils take pride in leadership roles, such as pupil parliament and play leaders. Through the academy's 'CREATE' values, children leave the

school as collaborative, respectful, empathetic, aspirational, tenacious individuals who pursue excellence in whatever they do.

Inspectors noted that children in early years got off to a secure start to their education.

"Children concentrate well and are eager to learn," inspectors said. "Caring staff look after children very well. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or other barriers to their learning are supported effectively and fully included in all activities."

Head of Chandlers Ridge Academy Richard Thompson said: "This inspection outcome really is the product of the wider Chandlers family working together including children, parents, staff, governors, volunteers and the wider community.

"Everyone works with the children in the forefront of their mind. As a result, we generate excellent outcomes for our children both academically and in terms of enrichment and wellbeing. With everybody pulling in the same direction, we create the future for our children which they thoroughly deserve."





Everything is rosy in the garden

A collaborative project has created a new sensory garden in a forest school.

Staff and pupils at Bewley Primary School, Billingham, are thrilled with the transformation of their forest school into a vibrant, inspiring sensory garden.

The whole-school project saw each year group eagerly planting seeds and flowers tailored to one of the five senses, creating a truly immersive outdoor learning space for the pupils.

The magical makeover was made possible thanks to

the incredible support of local industry.CFF generously donated funds for a new polytunnel, topsoil and plants, while also sending a team of volunteers to tidy the area.

A&B Woodworking kindly crafted bespoke planters using reclaimed wood at a significantly reduced price.

Headteacher Sheona Clift said: "The school is thrilled with this amazing community achievement, which has provided an extraordinary new environment for young minds to explore and thrive in."



Pupils attend wilderness camp



PUPILS have been encouraged to dream, believe and achieve thanks to a series of residential visits.

Year 4s at The Links Primary School, Eaglescliffe, attended a wilderness camp where they demonstrated outstanding teamwork, resilience and independence as they embraced a fun-filled evening of outdoor adventure.

Head of school Carly Briston said: "They had an unforgettable time at their very own wilderness camp residential held at school where they shared a delicious BBQ together before settling into their tents for the evening.

"There was plenty of laughter, excitement and a real sense of adventure as the children immersed themselves in the camping experience."

After a night under canvas, everyone emerged with smiles on their faces and a tremendous sense of achievement. "The children should be incredibly proud of the positive attitude, enthusiasm and determination they displayed throughout the residential," Miss Briston said. "It is a memory that will stay with them for many years to come."

Year 5s went on a three-day residential to Gulliver's World where they took part in a wide range of activities designed to challenge, inspire and build confidence.

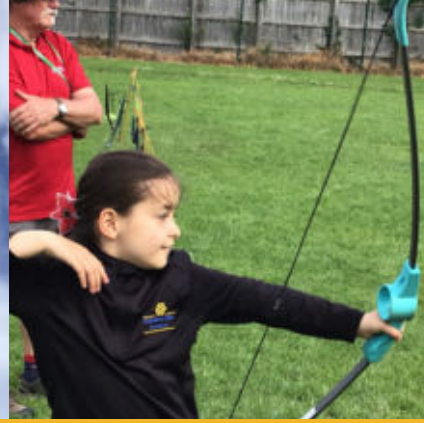
The children enjoyed inflatables, crazy golf, grass sledging, archery, laser blast and a variety of rides. One of the most talked-about moments of the trip was the opportunity to meet a range of animals, with some brave pupils even holding a 12-foot snake.

"Throughout the visit, the children represented the school exceptionally well, demonstrating excellent behaviour, positive attitudes and a willingness to embrace new experiences," said Miss Briston. "The residential provided countless opportunities for pupils to build friendships, develop independence and create lasting memories.

"At our school, residential experiences are an important part of our commitment to developing the whole child. While academic achievement remains central to our work, we also believe that some of the most valuable learning takes place beyond the classroom.

"Residential visits provide children with opportunities to step outside their comfort zones, develop resilience, strengthen friendships, build independence and gain confidence in unfamiliar situations. These experiences help children discover strengths they may not have realised they possessed and encourage them to approach new challenges with courage and determination.

"This directly reflects our school ethos of Dream, Believe, Achieve. We want every child to dream big, believe in themselves and their potential and achieve success in all aspects of their lives. Residential experiences play a vital role in helping children develop the character, confidence and life skills that will support them both now and in the future."



Crafting the perfect learning environment



STAFF at Chandlers Ridge Academy are using a bit of CREATE-ive thinking when it comes to crafting the perfect learning environment.

CREATE which stands for C olin Collaboration, R emba Respect, E mma Empathy, A strid Aspiration, T enesh Tenacity and E li Excellence, reflects the school's ambitions to nurture the imaginative thinkers and creative problem-solvers of the future.

Headteacher Richard Thompson said: "Our Ridge Crew characters are embedded throughout our school, woven into our curriculum and celebrated every day. As a result, our children don't simply learn our values; they live and breathe them, creating a culture where every child is inspired to flourish.

"Each term, we shine a spotlight on one of our CREATE values, recognising one exceptional child from each phase with a prestigious Award for truly embodying that value. This term, our focus has been Excellence, and our pupils have embraced every opportunity to demonstrate a growth mindset, striving to achieve their very best in sport, music, drama and across the curriculum."

That pursuit of excellence is reflected in outstanding outcomes with 66 per cent of Year 4 pupils achieving full marks in the Multiplication Tables Check, with an exceptional average score of 22.9.

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check results are equally impressive with 88.6 per cent of pupils meeting the expected standard, while 81.4 per cent of Reception children achieved a Good Level of Development.

"These achievements are testament to the dedication of our pupils, staff and families working together to help every child succeed," Mr Thomspson said. "A dedication which was reflected in a recent Ofsted report which described the school as one where 'Pupils are greeted by name and with a smile each morning'."

Excellence extends far beyond the classroom. Year 3 and 4 pupils embraced challenge during an unforgettable visit from the team at Tees Outdoors, conquering climbing walls, mastering archery, building shelters and even learning how to start fires.

Year 6 boys' football team, undefeated in their league, continue to demonstrate determination, teamwork and sporting excellence, while talented Year 5 pupils amazed us with their creativity through beautifully crafted 'Make Do and Mend' projects, transforming old clothes into remarkable new creations inspired by their Second World War history studies.

"Together, we are not only celebrating success today, we are creating the future," Mr Thomspson said.

Exploring faith, diversity and culture

YEAR 7 students have been given an insight into the Sikh faith thanks to a visit to mark Diversity Month.

Egglescliffe School pupils were visited by members of the National Sikh Service who shared their beliefs, values and lived experiences. The session gave students a valuable opportunity to explore religious diversity, learning about key principles such as service, equality and respect, alongside personal stories that helped bring the faith to life.

"Year 7 students engaged thoughtfully throughout, asking questions and reflecting on how faith can shape identity, community and everyday life," said deputy headteacher of pastoral, safeguarding and personal development Lee Henderson.

"It was a powerful reminder of the importance of listening, learning, and celebrating religious diversity within our school."



EGGLESCLIFFE students also benefitted from a talk by representatives from Amal Project Teesside, a local grassroots charity dedicated to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion across the community.

Inspired by the values of kindness, compassion and service, the organisation works to support people from diverse backgrounds, ensuring that everyone feels valued and included.

During their visit, Amal Project Teesside engaged with Year 9 students in a range of enriching cultural activities, including dance workshops and henna art.

YEAR 7 students enjoyed an unforgettable experience with the visiting Taste of Africa team, who brought culture, heritage, and celebration to life through a highly engaging and interactive session. Through music, storytelling, and shared traditions, students explored the richness and diversity of African cultures while reflecting on the significance and meaning of their own names.

The session encouraged pupils to take pride in their identity, appreciate the heritage of others, and recognise the connections that unite us all. It was a vibrant and uplifting experience that perfectly embodied the values of respect, inclusion, and cultural understanding.





Adventure builds confidence

CONFIDENCE, resilience and teamwork were in clear evidence as Year 6 pupils from Layfield Primary School embraced every challenge during an unforgettable residential visit to Barnard Castle.

During their stay with The Wilderness Company, pupils stepped outside their comfort zones as they took part in activities including canoeing, giant paddleboarding, tree climbing, archery and orienteering.

They also enjoyed making their own pizzas, while evenings were spent around the campfire, playing games, toasting marshmallows and relaxing by the lake, creating memories that will stay with them long after primary school.

The residential was about much more than adventurous activities. Throughout the week, pupils were encouraged to develop their independence by looking after their tents, washing up after meals and taking responsibility for their own belongings. Staff were delighted to see the children grow in confidence as they embraced these new responsibilities.

Throughout the residential, children encouraged one another to tackle new experiences, demonstrating determination, kindness and excellent teamwork. Staff were particularly proud of the way pupils supported their classmates, celebrated each other's successes and showed resilience when faced with new challenges.

Teacher Mrs Brunskill said: "Residential visits provide so much more than outdoor activities. It was wonderful to see the children grow in confidence, challenge themselves and encourage one another throughout the week. Every child achieved something they could be proud of and they represented Layfield brilliantly."

Reflecting on the experience, one pupil said: "I was nervous before some of the activities, but everyone encouraged me to have a go. I'm really proud of what I achieved and it was the best trip ever."

Mrs Brunskill added: "The residential provided a fitting celebration of the pupils' final weeks at primary school, leaving them with lasting friendships, increased confidence, greater independence and memories they will treasure as they prepare for the next stage of their education."



Active in the community

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

More than 90 students across Year 9 and 10, from Laurence Jackson School, Guisborough, tackled their bronze or silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award compiling evidence and completing their qualifying expeditions. "Students demonstrated outstanding resilience, teamwork and commitment and we have been delighted with their conduct throughout the whole course," said executive headteacher Catherine Jukes.



Year 8 PGL Outdoor and Adventurous Residential Weekend

More than 90 Year 8 students spent a weekend enjoying an outdoor and adventure activity residential at PGL Adventures centre near Northallerton. Many demonstrated excellent resilience and courage to overcome some of their personal fears, particularly around heights and water. They showed excellent co-operation and support for one another and worked extremely well in their teams.



Celebrating Diversity

Celebrating Diversity Month saw a number of students try wheelchair basketball. The sessions were thoroughly enjoyed by all who took part. "It was great to see everyone who took part fully engaged and participating so enthusiastically," said assistant headteacher and leader of physical education Marc Tyzack.



Taste of Africa

Year 8 students also benefitted during Celebrating Diversity Month from a visit by Folasade and Hilaire, from Taste Of Africa North East, who gave a presentation. They joined in singing, music and listened to stories promoting unity, inclusion and friendship, in an exercise aiming to help combat discrimination, stereotyping and prejudice.



Literature Illustration Masterclass

Students found themselves on the same page after being invited to work with a cartoonist and comic maker. Thirty two Year 7 and 8 students created their own comics as part of a programme being run in partnership with the National Literacy Trust, made possible through funding from the owner of British Land.

The Young Readers Programme encourages children to read for enjoyment by providing three workshops with an author or illustrator. As part of the programme students were gifted three of their own brand new reading books. Students focussed on comic creating and enjoyed working with cartoonist and comic creator Marc Jackson, of Marc Makes Comics.



Attendance Project

Caring students took gifts to support veterans on their journey of recovery and reintegration.

Year 10 students taking part in the North East United Project, in collaboration with MFC, visited Morgan House, in Boosbeck.

The students thoroughly enjoyed the experience and had the opportunity to meet some of the veterans who lived there. Seeing how much the residents appreciated their thoughtful gifts made the visit even more meaningful and rewarding for everyone involved.

We are incredibly proud of the kindness, dedication and community spirit our students have shown throughout this project.

National Table Tennis Success

Three students proved to be on the ball after progressing as champions through the Tees Valley and North of England stages to represent the region at the National Schools Table Tennis Championships in Wolverhampton. Year 7 students Mila, Mindy and Evie performed exceptionally well and finished in a remarkable third place, bringing home bronze medals.



Dance Show Spectacular

Dancers found themselves on their toes as they showcased and celebrated their talents.

All year groups at LJS took part in the annual dance show where the quality of performances was outstanding, with a great range of styles and genres. A spectacular event, it was wonderful to see so many happy, smiling faces clearly doing what they love best.



Year 7 County Cup Football Champions

Year 7 boys collected the silverware after winning the coveted County Cup Final.

The boys defeated Nunthorpe 8-3, a fantastic achievement and the culmination of a superb season.

Jackson Club Residential

Students took to the hills on a residential expedition to remember.

Members of the Jackson Club travelled to Comondale to a centre at Ravengill in the North Yorkshire Moors National Park.

Throughout the trip, students took part in various outdoor activities and team building exercises which they all thoroughly enjoyed. The school also received some lovely feedback from the staff at Ravengill Centre on how polite and friendly the students were.



Year 10 Making Opportunities Day

Year 10 students have been given a taste of the workplace in an initiative designed to prepare them for the next chapter of their lives.

Making Opportunities Day saw them take part in mock interviews with local employers and attend sessions on interview skills, modern-day recruitment, employability skills and their next steps.

They also enjoyed an informative talk from Sarah Firth, of Teesside University, one of more than 25 professionals from the local community who gave their time and support to the event.

KS3 Sports Day

Summer sports day saw KS3 students take part in a carousel of three activities including a traditional athletics sports day, an inter-form rounders tournament and an optional activity. It was great to see so much enthusiasm, competitive spirit and a genuinely supportive approach to all competitors.



College Taster Days

Year 10 students experienced college life thanks to a programme of taster days.

Middlesbrough College, Redcar & Cleveland College and Prior Pursglove College opened their doors to students who experienced various workshops and lessons to give them an idea of what college life would be like. Students represented themselves and the school superbly, with some excellent feedback received from the college tutors.

Year 9: Digging Into Cyber-Security with Anglo American

Cyber security was the order of the day as Year 9 students took part in an engaging workplace activity delivered by Anglo American.

They learned about careers in IT and cyber security from professionals who had completed the Anglo American Cyber Apprenticeship.

Students worked together to respond to a range of cyber security threats, presenting their response plans and receiving valuable feedback from staff. A huge thank you to Bailey, Harry and Heather from Anglo American for giving up their time to deliver such an interactive and inspiring session.





Year 11 Prom

Year 11 students ended their school days in style at a leavers prom to remember.

Dressed in their finery, they attended Gisborough Hall Hotel. Every student looked incredible and it was great to see so many unique styles and personalities sharing this wonderful event together. Their behaviour, enthusiasm and respect for the venue, staff and each other was amazing. Everyone had a brilliant evening and thank you to the Year 11 students for making it so special.





Rewarded with the highest of accolades

THE power of play has proved to be a precious experience for Whinstone Primary School which has been rewarded with the highest accolade for its efforts.

For the past two years the school has been on an exciting OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) journey at the end of which was an official OPAL inspection and final audit.

As a result the school has been awarded the highest possible accreditation of Platinum.

Head teacher Lorraine Batty said: "However, achieving Platinum is not the end of our journey. We have many more ideas to develop and implement and over the next two years we will be striving for a Double Platinum award.

"This achievement reflects the dedication of the whole school, but especially the key members of our OPAL team who have worked tirelessly to ensure its successful implementation and day-to-day running. Mrs Wilson-Dukes and Mrs Godwin have both played a vital role in our OPAL journey working alongside our lunchtime supervisors who manage the areas. What they have achieved is truly fantastic. All of us at Whinstone Primary are delighted to have yet another wonderful award to celebrate."

Whinstone Primary has also been awarded the national Computing Quality Mark by the National Centre for Computing Education (NCCE).



This recognises excellence in computing education as part of a school's curriculum development through the Computing Quality Framework (CQF).

To achieve this award, Whinstone successfully met all seven aspects of the CQF, demonstrating excellence in leadership and vision, curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment, workforce development, addressing the needs of every pupil, enrichment, destinations and careers and impact and outcomes.

Senior lead facilitator at the NCCE Claire Garside said Whinstone was "among the schools leading the way in delivering high standards in computing education. The Computing Quality Mark recognises the quality of their provision, ensuring all pupils develop the computing skills and knowledge so valuable for today and their future careers." Special recognition should go to computing lead Mrs Woodley and her digital leaders who have played a vital and integral role in us achieving this recognition.

With three prestigious awards (Heritage England, OPAL Platinum and Computing Quality Mark) in just six months, Whinstone continues to go from strength to strength.



The school's Mental Health Champions once again organised for pupils to take part in the Teesside Mind Colour Run, which took place on Friday, June 26.

Teesside Mind and their fundraising team hosted the event in school, creating a fun, vibrant and memorable experience for all involved.

All funds raised went towards supporting Teesside Mind in their work to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and families across the local community.

This event was the third year the school has taken part.

Mrs Batty said: "We are proud that we can support improving mental health in our local community whilst sending a clear message to our children - our own mental health is always a priority."

Whinstone Drama Club proudly presented Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

The children demonstrated exceptional confidence and maturity, performing in front of large audiences with enthusiasm and pride. It was particularly inspiring to see pupils with additional needs fully included in the production, taking to the stage with such assurance and joy.

We are incredibly grateful to the dedicated staff who made this possible, Miss Hole, Miss Ambrosini, Mrs Goldsmith, Ms McNaughton, Mrs Lofts and Miss Towler. Mrs Batty said: "Their commitment ensured that every child had the opportunity to shine and shine they certainly did across both performances."





Pupils benefit from outdoors initiative

PUPILS have been putting their best foot forward as part of an initiative tapping into the benefits of the outdoors.

Passport for Life Walking Adventures have been stepping up the challenges in the rich and diverse local area for every child at Whitehouse Primary School, Stockton.

As part of the programme, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils successfully completed the Great Ayton to Roseberry Topping circular walk, covering approximately 7km.

Years 3 and 4 enjoyed the Grindon Loop at Castle Eden Walkway, walking around 3.5 miles and KS1 pupils completed the 2.4-mile Cod Beck Reservoir Circular Walk.

Reception children proudly took part in a 1.5-mile walk to Newham Grange Park and nursery children also embraced the challenge through a series of local walks to the woods, post box, shops and nearby parks.

Headteacher Jane Eyre said: "The weather was perfect for all of the walks, allowing everyone to fully appreciate the beautiful scenery and local landmarks along the way.

"Throughout each challenge, the children demonstrated outstanding determination, perseverance, resilience and teamwork, supporting one another every step of the journey.

"They completed their walks with a tremendous sense of pride and achievement, making the experience both memorable and rewarding for everyone involved. We are incredibly proud of all of our children for embracing these challenges and showcasing the positive attitudes and values that are at the heart of Whitehouse."





Pupils showcase creative flair



Pupils have also been celebrating creativity with Access All Arts Week.

As part of Sky Arts Access All Arts Week, the children immersed themselves in a fantastic week celebrating creativity in all its forms.

Throughout the week, they created a 2D portrait inspired by a famous artist, designed and made a 3D sculpture representing something that brings them joy, completed a photography challenge, wrote a personal poem and took part in exciting drama and dance workshops.

Ms Eyre said: "To celebrate the children's incredible achievements, we transformed the school into an art gallery and welcomed parents and carers to view their work. We are sure you'll agree that the quality of the artwork was exceptional. The week was a wonderful opportunity for our children to showcase their imagination, talent and creativity and they certainly demonstrated what fantastic young artists Whitehouse Primary has."



Pupils retain sporting award

PUPILS have proved to be great sports in helping their school retain a prestigious award.

Junction Farm Primary School has retained the coveted Platinum School Sport Award through the Sports Partnership following one of the most successful years on record for PE.

Headteacher Louise Daly said: "Our pupils have embraced every opportunity to participate, compete and challenge themselves, representing the school with determination, resilience and exceptional sportsmanship.

"Thanks to the commitment of our staff and the enthusiasm of our children, we have enjoyed success across a wide range of sporting events while continuing to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to be active and achieve their personal best."

The platinum award is the highest level of recognition, reflecting the school's long-term commitment to providing outstanding physical education, school sport and physical activity for every pupil.

Retaining this prestigious accreditation demonstrates that PE and sport remain a key priority at Junction Farm, with opportunities extending far beyond the curriculum. This includes high-quality PE lessons, a varied programme of extra-curricular clubs, competitive fixtures, inclusive festivals and leadership opportunities.

Pupils enjoyed an outstanding year in competition, achieving success across a variety of sports. The athletics team progressed to the Athletics Finals, where they achieved an impressive third place overall.



Individual pupils also celebrated fantastic success in cross country and cricket, securing victories in their respective events and demonstrating the talent and dedication that exists across the school.

In football, the teams continued to perform exceptionally well, with the Year 3/4 boys' team reaching the prestigious finals at Rockliffe Hall, while the Year 3/4 girls' team achieved a brilliant third-place finish in their tournament.

The school also strengthened its commitment to inclusive sport by increasing participation in SEND sporting festivals and activities throughout the year.

Mrs Daly said: "These events have reinforced our belief that sport should be accessible to everyone and that every child deserves the opportunity to experience success."

The annual Sports Week was another highlight of the school year bringing the school community together.

The school also celebrated the success of the ARP Team which received recognition for its unwavering commitment to inclusion, excellence and the life-changing support they provide to pupils.

Mrs Daly said: "Winning Team of the Year at the SPARK Awards is testament to the remarkable dedication, compassion, and professionalism of every member of the ARP Team. The team works

tirelessly to transform the lives of some of our most vulnerable learners. They are, without doubt, our real-life superheroes."

The team's commitment to continuous improvement was further recognised at the ARP Celebration Event, hosted by the Stockton Local Authority SEND Team, where Junction Farm was presented with the Excellence in Professional Learning and Inclusive Practice Award.

This award recognises the school's strong engagement in professional development, leading to enhanced staff knowledge, skills, and expertise in developing highly inclusive provision that meets the individual needs of every pupil.

Mrs Daly said: "We are incredibly proud of everything they have achieved and grateful for the positive impact they have on our school community."





Kirklevington sees a splash of colour

PUPILS discovered the colour of money when they organised a special fundraiser for school equipment.

Kirklevington Primary School recently hosted its very first colour run to help pay for improvements to the school playground.

Teacher Amber Harris said: "The event was a fantastic success, with pupils enjoying an afternoon

filled with fun, laughter and plenty of colour while supporting an important cause.

"Thanks to the enthusiasm of the children and the support of the school community, the fundraiser was a memorable event that will help enhance the playground for everyone to enjoy."



Pupils win awards!

Two pupils proved to be excellent orators after being awarded third place in their respective categories at the Spark Speaks competition.

Each child delivered a thoughtful and engaging speech about a cause that is close to their heart.

Libby Curry achieved third place in the Lower Key Stage 2 category with an inspiring speech on the importance of bees and the vital role they play in our environment.

Iman Lambert was awarded third place in the Upper Key Stage 2 category for a powerful speech about hidden disabilities, with a particular focus on autism.

Mrs Harris said: "Their confidence, passion and dedication to raising awareness were a credit to themselves and to our school. Congratulations to both pupils on this fantastic achievement."



Students given a taste of work

YEAR 10 and 12 students at Conyers School have been given a valuable insight into the workplace and the chance to develop their skills to support their future ambitions.

Across the successful work experience programme students completed more than 440 days of placement with over 80 different employers, each providing fantastic opportunities to experience a wide range of careers and industries.

Placements included observing veterinary surgeons at work, supporting teachers in primary schools and taking part in practical activities across many different professional settings.

Students also gained experience in laboratories, TV studios, global financial institutions and a variety of other workplaces, studios, allowing them to explore potential career pathways and understand the expectations of professional life. Deputy headteacher Sam Pickering said: "Throughout their placements, students

demonstrated enthusiasm, maturity and a willingness to learn. They developed important employability skills, including communication, teamwork, problem-solving, resilience and independence, while also building confidence in unfamiliar environments.

"We are incredibly proud of the way our students represented themselves and the school. We are also extremely grateful for the continued support of our local business community, whose time, expertise and generosity made these valuable experiences possible.

"The programme has helped students connect classroom learning with the world of work and it provided greater clarity about future education, training and career choices."





Volunteers create new garden



A COMMUNITY has pulled together to develop a peace garden for school.

Planning for a Peace Garden at Huntcliff School, Saltburn, began in the summer term of 2025 with Student Council members and members of the Wednesday Well-being Group working together, led by Ms Kaps, to create a plan.

A successful bid for funding allowed the project to progress and volunteers carried out hours of hard work, digging, sowing and planting to create a fabulous space for all to use.

Headteacher Lynsey Wilkinson said: "Staff have supported the initiative and we have involved the local community who have offered plants, soil and funding from local organisations and the result is incredible."

Pupil Wren and her therapy dog Bramble joined students to create a fantastic new water feature in the wellbeing garden, the students working hard to bring the project to life.

Miss Wilkinson said: "Their teamwork, dedication and creativity have helped transform the space into something truly special for everyone to enjoy."

Students also paid a visit to Saltburn Meadow, where they learned all about the local wildlife, caught and identified a variety of butterflies and moths and discovered how the meadow and its beautiful wildflowers have developed over time.

Megan, the Redcar and Cleveland Ranger, shared her knowledge with the students who have brought back ideas for the school garden.

Miss Wilkinson said: "We are incredibly grateful for everyone's help and support and look forward to seeing the garden flourish over the summer."





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