

Summer Newsletter 2021

Dear Families,

This newsletter hopefully marks the end of a very difficult year and the beginning of normality as we used to know it.

You will see from this newsletter that staff have worked extremely hard this term to create fun and exciting learning opportunities which has included many whole school and college events where we have been able to bring the school and college community together safely. We hope you enjoy looking through this newsletter and our social media sites.

I am pleased to announce that over the Summer we have extensive works going on across the Trust to improve the provision for our current and future learners. At the Academy, this includes preliminary works for a significant expansion to the school, creating additional toilet and changing rooms, creating an extra teaching space at the Sixth Form ollege and improving outdoor spaces. At Catcote Futures modifications are taking place to create an extra classroom and outdoor spaces are being modified to create extra regulation spaces. We will keep you updated next term with these developments.

These last two years have been challenging for us all and I want to thank you all for your continued support. I also want to thank the staff for all their hard work and to all the students for the resilience they have demonstrated over the past year.

Have a lovely, safe Summer and we look forward to welcoming all students back on the 6th September.

Mrs Greig (Head Teacher)







World in Motion



Catcote Sixth Form produced their own music video to support the England football team on their historic journey in the Euros. The video they chose to recreate was the 1990 world cup classic by New Order "World in Motion" featuring the now very famous rap by England/Liverpool legend John Barnes MBE.

They were lucky enough to secure an introduction by the man himself and he was even game enough to demonstrate his 'Rapping' talents for them, which they edited into the video with our own Bradley Crannage rapping alongside him!

The creation of the video gave them an excellent opportunity to explore the world of international football and its participating countries' various cultures, as well as allowing them the chance to indulge in some muchneeded therapeutic physical activity! Both students and staff had a fantastic time researching the teams and the countries that they represent, having a kick around on Brierton field and re-making the video with a Catcote twist!



Makaton - Class 7

Class 7 have been AMAZING at incorporating Makaton into their lessons all year, throughout the curriculum. Students have successfully signed along to stories and songs and enjoyed sharing them with the world!

Some of the highlights were signing 'It's Raining Men' by the Weather Girls and teaming up with their friends to sign along to the fearsome Gruffalo!

We hope you have all enjoyed watching our videos, there will be many more to come in the future. Thank you!



Careers and Enterprise Challenge Week

In the week commencing the 21st June 2021, over 200 students from five special schools from across Tees Valley, participated in a fantastic week of careers and enterprise activities and challenges. This was in collaboration with Tees Valley Combined Authority and Skillsbuilder.

What a fantastic week they had! Students were able to participate in a range of exciting challenges to develop their skills for the world of work.



Day 1 started with the Egg Parachute Challenge; this enabled them to put their problem-solving skills into action! Only two eggs did not make it, so well done everyone!

Day 2 followed with students taking part in a crime scene investigation challenge; they worked well together to solve the mystery of the chocolate thief! They used their initiative and detective skills, communicating effectively and using their teamwork skills. They were also paid a visit from PC Coggin who spoke about his job as a police officer.

Day 3 continued with a Moon Base Challenge; students used their creativity, communication and negotiation skills to come up with their very own planet Utopia! They discussed who they would like to take with them to their planet and what jobs would be needed there!

Day four, students heard from Jasper Maudley, franchisee at McDonalds; they had the opportunity to ask Jasper lots of questions about what employers are looking for when recruiting. They learnt top tips for interviews and also had the opportunity to speak to one of our ex-students, Kim Waring who has been employed for over three years as a Dining Area Crew Member at McDonalds!



Wow! What an amazing week they had. It was also wonderful for our students and staff to see and speak to other young people with SEND from across the region!

Operation De-Weed!

Link 1 have loved spending time in Mr Chapman's memorial garden and noticed that there were lots of weeds growing which were making it look sad - something Mr Chapman would never be!



They wanted to help and got to work digging up those pesky weeds and making the area tidier. No stone was left unturned or weed left rooted as they worked tirelessly to get rid of every single one! Mr Chapman would have been proud! To fill the gaps that were left from the weeds. they planted some beautiful flowers, displaying good team work, care and support for each other whilst smiling and remembering Mr Chapman and how much happiness he brought them!



'Rocking Out' with happiness!

One of the ways to lift peoples' spirits is to get active and get outside! 6th Form group S4 wanted to lift their own spirits as well as of those around them. To do this, they thought it would be a great idea to decorate some rocks with uplifting pictures and words that would put smiles on the faces of people who found them!



When students had used their art skills on the rocks, they announced what they were going to do through our social media. A challenge was posted to see if the community could find the rocks and, if so, could post a picture of them holding them.

Students were amazed to see the response and very pleased at the comments. They were especially pleased that they had inspired other young people to do the same thing and spread a little more happiness around the town!

'Enterprising' with a message of kindness

Students in 6th Form group S4 wanted to put into practice the work-related skills they have been learning about all year. They decided that an arts project would be a good idea as it would allow them to build on their creative skills. In addition to this, students felt it was really important, especially in these difficult times, to spread a message of kindness. It also fitted into the wider idea of the 'Great Dream' project they have been working on all year.

Students designed, made, marketed and sold bracelets with two messages on, "Be Kind" and "Thank you". Bracelets were advertised within the school and college as well as through our social media channels. Students kept a record of the orders, sales and income on a spreadsheet using excellent maths skills.

The students have learned a lot about enterprise and essential work skills in a fun and creative way. Well done everybody!



One Million Steps Challenge

Following the success of last term's challenge to walk 300,000 steps, S4 wanted to set themselves a new challenge. They aimed to walk ONE MILLION steps before 28th May which was a half term, and raise money for the Sixth Form and Parents and Friends of Catcote School charity.

In order to achieve this massive goal, students had to walk every day come rain or shine!

Due to some absences, students had to work



extra hard on some days to try to remain on target. Daily logs were kept with steps done and steps remaining to see how they were progressing. Maths skills were worked on throughout the challenge.

It went right to the wire and took until the last day of the challenge, but students managed to achieve their goal! They were encouraged when things got tough by checking on the donations that were coming in through the college and through the Parents and Friends charity page which was set up. The wonderful students raised nearly £1,000 which was absolutely amazing! Half of the money raised will go towards learning/enrichment resources for 6th Form the other half towards the Leavers Celebration Ball in 2021.

Celebrates Pride through Fashion

Sixth Form Class 5 have been celebrating diversity and loved supporting 'pride month' by designing a range of T-shirts to match different flags! The students worked really hard and I'm sure you'll agree, they look absolutely amazing!



Sports for Champions Afternoon!

Students took part in a sponsored event lead by the elite boxing athlete Stephen 'Swifty' Smith!

Stephen worked with students throughout the event, talking about his life and how he became a boxer. He presented a PowerPoint in assembly about fitness and the nutrition needed to keep our bodies in peak condition. Stephen then did a fantastic demonstration of his super-fast skipping skills.



Stephen then led sponsored fitness circuits composing of Burpees, Leg Dives, Press Ups and Star Jumps – phew! Students then finished the sessions with question and answers for Stephen. Throughout the afternoon, Stephen really inspired the students, giving tips on how to succeed in all aspects of life by outlining the four key elements of success: Teamwork, Responsibility, Communication and Creativity.

This was a fantastic event for our students to take part in, they had a great time!

Seaton Statistics Skills

In maths, S4 were working on recording and using statistics using various tables and graphs. To do this in a fun way, they went to Seaton on what felt like the coldest day of the year! Students recorded people who walked past them on the seafront in a ten minute period and sorted them into groups such as male, female, adult, child and even animal!

They then used a tally chart to record the colour of vehicles that went past in ten minutes when they sat at the bus station. (They then warmed up with some lovely chips.)

On returning to the classroom, they used the data in lots of mathematical exercises including creating bar charts and making questions for other students to answer using mathematical language.



Trashion show- Gold ECO school's status!

The Catcote 'Trashion' show whole school event aimed at raising awareness of environmental issues and to offer a greater understanding culture and our throwaway society through art and design. Students and staff at the Academy worked together over seven weeks to create fashion outfits and accessories fit for the runway, using upcycled and recycled materials. Catcote have recently gained their gold 'ECO' schools award, encouraging the students to learn about the fashion industry, landfill and the large impact on biodiversity linked to recycling!

To demonstrate this, a fabulous live catwalk Trashion Show took place outside at Catcote Academy on FRIDAY 18th JUNE 2021!

Why did we do it?

Evidence shows that 'fast fashion' is a significant contributor to biodiversity loss, whether this is through the creation of materials such as cotton or the manufacturing processes (e.g. treating and dying fabrics). As a result, the students found that apparel supply chains are directly linked to soil degradation, conversion of natural ecosystems and waterway pollution.

Catcote Academy students have been creating a wide range of fashion ideas and focusing on positive changes, despite struggles they have faced through the pandemic. Focusing on 'what we CAN do, not what we can't,' Academy staff have been committed to ensuring that their students reach their full potential and become valuable members of society. Staff upcycled waistcoats to wear on the day to remember former Head Teacher Alan Chapman who loved waistcoats, the 'bairns' and art!

J&B Recycling and Sainsbury's have generously supported employability at the Academy, however, haven't been able to engage with the local community as much due to COVID19 restrictions. However, sessions by both companies were delivered via Zoom during assembly. Sainsbury's kindly donated new trees and bulbs for planting to regenerate our new outdoor learning zone, which students planted. Though J&B recycling and Sainsbury's sadly couldn't attend the 'Trashion' Show and meet some of the students, they hope to welcome them to exhibit artwork and to the plant for educational visits after the Summer holidays.

Catcote students ask for your support in the maintenance of biodiversity, the best advice they can give is:

- Think before you buy do you really need it? Will the fashion last?
- Buy better quality clothes that will last.
- Look after your clothes repair and re-wear clothes where possible.
- Donate or re-sell your clothes when you are finished. Or you can take them to a textile bank
 you should be able to find one at your supermarket. Just try not to put them in your general waste and definitely don't put them in the recycle bin at home!



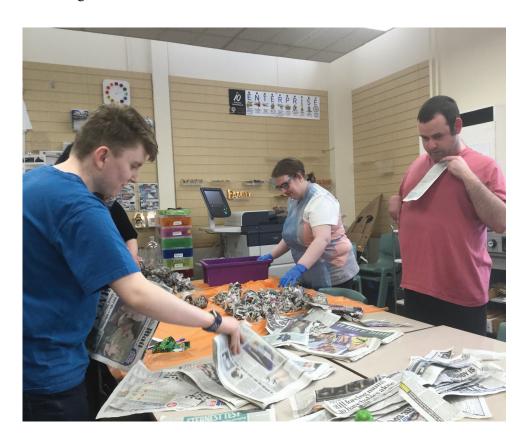
Go Team CF7!

This term, CF7 have been working hard as a team to complete many activities, relying on team work, communication and creativity!

During the Great British challenge week, the students decided to celebrate Britain in the best way, with a full English Breakfast! This was welcomed greatly by the class, working together to think about what they would like and what they would need. Learners tried new foods and ate well, while thinking about why this is such a great British tradition!

They also studied Britsh History, looking at many different British events before using papier-mâché to create World War 1 trenches as a group, thinking about people's strengths and interests to make these! They made two sets of trenches within the class using their research skills to decide for themselves what they need and how to decorate it.

Classteacher Ruth said "The class have also worked together so well this year! I'm very proud of them! From the spaghetti and marshmallow challenge, the 'Who I am' Challenge, 'Class Kahoots' and even making an active volcano! They've been amazing!



Moving into Independent Living

Four of our gentlemen from the Catcote Futures STEPs program, have recently moved into their own independent homes. They have worked hard, spending time acquiring home life skills, independence in the community and employability skills.

These skills are very important to be able to look after themselves and become independent in the community. Even more important was the confidence to speak up and state that this is what they wanted to do and that they were ready to move on with in their journey of education, training and independence! Each young person has taken their own personal route and pathway for housing and each they all live in different kinds of accommodation to match their needs.

Catcote Futures staff and Catcote Academy staff very kindly worked with the young people to support them with furniture, food hampers and starter kits for their new homes. This was very much appreciated by the young people and they would like to take this opportunity to shout out a massive 'THANK YOU!' for all their support then, now and in the future!!

Another fantastic opportunity was offered to these four gentlemen from Get Connected, a company who supplies phones, Wi-Fi and other technology, who have very generously offered our learners a FREE router and FREE Wi-Fi until the end of the summer!

STEPs coordinator Amanda Metcalf said "We all know bills have to be paid when you live on your own, but some luxuries like Wi-Fi have to be sacrificed to pay for food, electricity and clothes. This is a fantastic gesture from this company and it has certainly made them smile from ear to ear!"

Congratulations and good luck in your new homes! Kettle on and a cup of tea with biscuits anyone?

Well done and thanks again to: https://www.get-connected.org.uk/





STEPs Stars in 'Preparing for Adulthood' Short Films!

This year Catcote Futures have been really lucky to be included in a pilot venture to produce two short films explaining and demonstrating the journey from education into employment. Even more importantly our very own STEPs learners were asked to be the 'stars' of the show!!!

The project was funded by Tees Valley Combined Authority in collaboration with Catcote staff Amanda Metcalf and Jackie McGarry. The filming and editing was completed by Andrew Stogdale of Spark Tees Valley.

The first video is four minutes in length and shows the journey of a learner, Olivia, applying for a job. The short film demonstrates how to apply for a job and the emotions and fears this can sometimes create for young people.

The film is designed to be followed up with a discussion between teacher and learners about the journey to employment. There is also a teacher guide sheet to accompany the short film, explaining key areas for discussion.

The second film is slightly longer at around 10-12 minutes in length and introduces the viewer to several prominent local employers, who are interviewed by STEPs students around the job application and interview process. Again, this video is split into different sections to allow time for questions and reflection at the end of each section.

Schools across Tees Valley submitted questions after watching the second film, which were then sent to Andrew Stogdale of Spark Tees Valley and posed to the employers during follow up interactive sessions. The sessions took place as a live broadcast on You Tube during June and July, this can be accessed from the homepage of the Spark Tees Valley website (https://sparkteesvalley.com/)

Amanda Metcalf said "This project has been really successful and enabled both us, and schools across Tees Valley to work together towards achieving the Gatsby Benchmarks. Due to COVID, meaningful encounters with employers have been challenging, and these films and live Q&A sessions have continued to ensure that learners with SEND can make an informed choice about their future careers options!"



STEPs Independent Travel Training Success!

Some of our STEP's students expressed that they would love to be able to travel independently, but felt quite nervous about being able to do this. Being able to travel independently allows greater freedom of movement and is highly beneficial for the pathway to employment. Additionally, and more importantly, it enables and empowers young people to join friends, who already travel independently, and access their local community and facilities.

Independent travel training follows a strictly controlled format. Staff have a discussion with learner, look at travel routes, locate the correct bus stop and number, look for landmarks, plan for 'what if' senarios and so on. Although all these areas of learning are vital, it is important to remember that each learner is unique and will learn and progress, at their own pace and in their own way.

The aim for learners during this journey is also to experience and learn, more than the desired outcome. For example, how to cross roads safely, use pedestrian crossings in the correct manner and what strategies to use when there are no "safer places' to cross. Be aware of 'stranger danger' and incorporating appropriate social skills and cues to be able to enter this new environment successfully, safely and with confidence.

The learners initially begin by sourcing timetables, looking at safest routes and planning travel times. The next step is the trainer meeting the young person at their home, walking the route and travelling together. This enables the trainer to identify any areas of specific concern, such as road safety and also for the young person to be able to express any specific concerns or worries they may have. During this period, local landmarks are identified and discussed, to use as points of reference along the way.

The young person will progress to accessing the route, roads, bus and journey, independently, with a trainer following from a distance. This allows the young person to experience the journey as if alone, but with the knowledge that support is at hand if required!

Eventually, the young person will continue this journey independently, with trainer following in car, again, allowing a degree of independence but in a safe manner and offer support if and when needed.

The final stage is the learner carrying out the travel totally independently.

This year, we congratulate and celebrate three students who have followed this pathway of learning.

Chloe and Brandon, who now travel independently both to, and from college, using local bus services, Brandon even catching two buses to and from college. Andrew has been making good progress with his travel, but unfortunately, the development of his skills have been delayed due to work experience commitment and COVID restrictions. However, this will resume in the new academic year and will offer him the opportunity to become an independent traveller.

Big well done to all!



Mamma Mia!

This year, CF1 have been studying musicals, with the students enjoying sensory versions of The Greatest Showman, Wicked, Jesus Christ Superstar and Joseph and Technicolour Dreamcoat. In the summer term, the students have enjoyed all things ABBA by delving into the world of 'Mamma Mia!' and it's sequel 'Mamma Mia! Here I go again!'

In addition to steeping the students in the upbeat disco music of ABBA, these musicals gave a great excuse to learn all about Greek culture with its' amazing sights, smells, sounds and tastes! The students enjoyed replicating a beach holiday and made an impressive Greek mosaic to decorate the sensory garden. The students made their own Greek Taverna and practised making and tasting various mocktails and Greek food, including an incredibly aromatic chicken gyros!



Link 1 Police Academy!

Link 1 took part in Careers and Enterprise week and enjoyed a range of activities to help them enhance their skills to carry forward into adulthood. They became CSI for the day and investigated their own crime scene showing fantastic communication and listening skills as well as their team work and leadership.

They took their own finger prints and analysed the finger prints of the criminal to help them to figure out just who committed the crime! They discussed the skills needed to be in the Class teacher Pete said "We have had a ball doing the two Mamma Mia musicals! The students really enjoyed the uplifting music and there's been a lot of Greek culture that we have enjoyed steeping ourselves in. One of the highlights was learning the Zorba Greek Dance, with the students really responding to the rhythmic, increasing tempo of the song."

He continued "This has been a really joyous summer topic that has captured everyone's imagination. However, I'm a little bit ABBAed out now and I'm looking forward to the summer break without hearing the music of Bjorn and Benny for a little while!"



police force, the importance of the police and the job they do, and what it takes to become a police officer. They even got to speak to PC Coggin who helped them to uncover who was responsible!



ONEFest – The Festival of Love!

Forget Woodstock! Move over Glastonbury! There's a new festival in town and it is called ONEfest!

On Tuesday 6th July, to celebrate England's phenomenal run in the Euros and Gareth Southgate's inspiring messages of unity and pride in our nation, CF1 decided to hold its own music festival to celebrate all things British!

Staff and students all dressed in their best festival gear, ate festival food such as doughnuts and pie, drank cheeky shandies and mocktails and had a whale of a time! There was facepainting, (temporary) tattoos, a chill out zone and a selfie wall where the students got some groovy photographs of themselves and their friends!

Of course, it wouldn't be a British music festival without the rain and, true to form, it absolutely bucketed down! Thankfully, the students were safe and warm watching the highlight of the day – a star studded celebration British music featuring top talents which the students had made! Acts included; Robbie Williams, Geri Halliwell, Oasis, Erasure, Madness, Adele, S Club 7, Little Mix and George Ezra! This took the form of a wooden spoon puppet show that the creative students of CF1 turned into their favourite popstars! Can you guess the popstars from the pictures below?

Class teacher Pete Wells said "ONEfest was, without a doubt, a huge success! Staff and students had the best time and it was a phenomenal way to end off such a difficult year! The students worked their socks off making the classroom look amazing with Union Jack bunting, an amazing flower wall for our selfies and a really cool chillout zone. There truly was a feeling

of togetherness and genuine love in the festival which really made me proud. This is definitely something that we will be turning into an annual event and hopefully, next year, we can make it college-wide! I would like to give a special thanks to the CF1 staff who worked tirelessly helping the students. As ever, they were amazing!"







CF3 Backing the Boys and Celebrating England!

As part of the weekly Catcote Challenges, CF3 worked as team to produce a football chant to cheer on Gareth Southgate's inspirational English team! Set to the tune of Vindaloo, the hilarious chant featured all members of CF3 and was super catchy!

The students also made British placemats and bunting to decorate their outside area for a decadent Great British Afternoon Tea! This involved preparing their own fruit scones, strawberries and cream sweet treats and, of course, cucumber sandwiches! The stirring music for the event was provided by the cream of British bands and solo artists!

Jodie Crosby said "The students worked really hard in this one, transforming our outdoor area into an English County Garden! We had a lot of fun making our chant and the boys really enjoyed kicking the football around and interacting with each other!"

Come on England!



Art Movement

CF8 have had a fabulous term despite all the challenges of our current situation! The students have been keeping fit with daily morning exercise, gone all out on the Wednesday Zoom challenges and the art sessions have also been hugely enjoyable!

Wherever possible this term, we have been creating a running theme through many of our classes. As part of our 'Art Movements' studies, we looked at the abstract work of Jackson Pollock, creating a big canvas outside driving over the picture with painted tyres and spraying paint on to the canvas using water bottles and syringes.



Screen - Free Week Challenge!

This term, CF4 set a Screen Free challenge! Students and staff were challenged to put down their electronics and to participate in as many different screen-free activities as they could during the week.

Teacher Katie Courtney said "Computers, iPads and game consoles are loved by so many, however, we wanted to remind people of the great things we can do without screens!"

All the students got to work and thought of some amazing ideas and everyone really enjoyed the week. Ideas included; group games, cookery, sensory massage, bingo and getting out and about in the local community.

Katie continued "CF4 especially enjoyed the outdoor group games and a well-deserved ice cream after a walk around the park!"

Well done to everyone who took part! What things would YOU do during screen-free week?



Fairy Garden Challenge

Over the past academic year, Catcote Futures have been set weekly challenges by different members of staff. One challenge that stood out to CF6 was to help to create items to place in a brand new, magical fairy garden. This did NOT sit well with CF6!

CF6 had a class discussion and decided that they weren't the biggest fan on fairies, but would create something slightly different. And so was born 'The Game Destroyer', the enemy of the fairies! The students came up with the concept, the back story to the long running feud and created a second garden where the evil Game Destroyer lived.

CF6 were very proud of their creation... and the fairies were terrified!



CF6 have Outdoor Fun!

At Catcote Futures we are very lucky to have a fantastic outdoor space in which to enjoy our lessons as well as improving our physical and mental wellbeing.

CF6 have taken full advantage of the fantastic weather this term and have enjoyed lots of outdoor learning experiences. They have taken part in Forest School lessons, keeping fit on the field, team activities, giant jenga, horticulture and even guided meditation.

Class teacher, Danielle Coulton said "It's so important for the students to get out and get active, especially during this awful COVID pandemic. The group are always enthusiastic and really throw themselves into any challenge I give them!"



CF7 The Class of 2021!

Watch out David Bailey! CF7 have been studying photography and many of the students have shown a real flair! Using their brand new, state of the art cameras and green screen, the students have undertaken several projects, culminating in some very professional graduation photos.

Thankfully, those learners will not be leaving Catcote Futures, however, they will be moving on from CF7 to different tutor groups in September.

Class teacher, Ruth said "The class are a real bunch of posers, so they loved this project! As well as taking these amazing formal graduation pictures, they also had lots of fun taking and manipulating sillier photos! However, they'd be horrified if I put them in this newsletter so they will remain at Catcote Futures... for now!"







Catcote Futures Students are an Enterprising Bunch!

Over this year Catcote Futures has been completing many, many enterprise projects. These have ranged from the amazing brochure selling Christmas trees, sweet hampers and resin ornaments, to chopping boards and even wreaths and door stops! Many classes used their enterprising skills to try new ideas, using their creativity to make everything from bath bombs and salts to colourful coasters and even experimenting with epoxy resin!

CF7 teacher Ruth said "The restrictions enforced onto us this year, due to Covid, have really made the students get creative with how they market and sell their products. Usually, we sell at fayres and the Catcote Metro, but this year that has been impossible. However, we do like a challenge and to prove our resilience, the learners created their very own brochure/catalogue to send home to parents and have also begun to use the Facebook page to sell their products. This has meant using a range of IT and communication skills to ensure that orders are not missed and they reach the right person!"

Well done to everyone involved!



TERM DATES 2021-22

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Farewell and Good Luck



Mrs Burns has worked as a teacher at the Academy for 14 years. She has taken up another teaching post in a Special School near where she lives. Mrs Burns has been an exceptional teacher and we will miss her a lot, however, we know she will make a big difference to the learners in her new school. Good luck Mrs Burns.

Mrs Robinson has worked at the Trust for 8 years as our Health Care Assistant.

Next term, she will be leaving us to continue her learning to train as a nurse.

We know she will be an amazing nurse but we will miss her so much. Mrs

Robinson has not only been an amazing Health Care Assistant, but has also been a trusted friend to many students and staff. We wish her every success!





Mrs Simpson has worked as a Teaching Assistant for 11 years and is retiring this week. She has worked in nearly all the classes across the school and will be missed by everyone. Wishing you a very long and happy retirement.

Mr Macaskill has worked as a Teaching Assistant for 4 years at the school and has had a big impact on many students. He has decided to continue his training in Occupational Therapy. Good luck and keep in touch.





Mrs Lamplough has worked at the Trust for 10 years and is retiring this week. She has been an invaluable member of the Senior Leadership Team and has made a huge difference to the learning experiences of our learners. She was instrumental in securing funding for our outdoor fitness and

learning zone and is known throughout the school as 'the best Science teacher ever!' We wish her a very long and happy retirement and we are pleased that Mrs Lamplough is coming back as a Trustee which means she will continue to have an impact on improving the outcomes for our learners.





