



Bushey St James Trust Newsletter

June 2015

Chair of the Trust Sam Russell writes:

As we approach the end of the Summer Term and the chance for a break, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for all of your support and also to show our appreciation to Mr Turner and Miss Simmonds and their teams for all of their hard work over this past Academic Year.

In this edition, you will be able to read many examples of how joint working is bringing a real benefit to the staff and students at both Little Reddings and Bushey Meads. The collaborative working between the schools allows the staff, whether Primary or Secondary, to put a new perspective on what they do in the classroom, better informed by the experiences of their colleagues.

What this means for our students is that the transition from Primary to Secondary can be made as seamless as possible. Inside this edition, you can read about how we are changing the admission rules for Bushey Meads to guarantee a place for all Little Reddings children without the need to take the local Consortium test from the current Year 5 onwards.

As we continue along the path to Outstanding at both schools, we are lucky to have many dedicated staff who want to join us on our journey. This term, I want to extend a particular welcome to the new Deputy and Assistant Heads at Little Reddings, Lisa Evans and Tamsin Giannone. Their impact is already being felt and they will be crucial in continuing all the very positive varied improvements which Miss

Simmonds has introduced. I hope everyone has a peaceful Summer break, ready and refreshed for the next step of our journey in September!



Sam Russell
Chair of Bushey St James Trust

Executive Principal of the Trust Jeremy Turner writes:

It has been another busy and productive term across the Bushey St James Trust. I have been particularly encouraged by the superb staffing appointments that have been made in both schools and the genuine desire to move



towards outstanding in all areas. Literacy and numeracy are two key curriculum areas currently being strengthened and it has been great to see the collaborative work across our schools, which will undoubtedly improve students' achievement and strengthen secondary transition.

Our BSJT Music Coordinator, Sarah Brown, continues to have an impact and is encouraging more students than ever to learn a musical instrument or take part in one of the many musical activities taking place across the Trust.

It was lovely to welcome a number of Little Reddings' parents and pupils to our inspiring Highly Able Evening last term when so much outstanding work was showcased at all levels and clear advice given to enable all students to truly excel.

There is so much more to celebrate and moving forward it is clear to see the huge benefits there are for all pupils in the local area as Little Reddings and Bushey Meads Schools continue to work together to ensure a superb educational provision is maintained and strengthened within our local community.

I would like to thank the Governors of both schools and of course the hard working and dedicated Trustees who are all providing such a strong framework and structure that clearly supports the school improvement agenda across both school settings.

Easing the Transition in English and Maths

Bushey Meads School is working closely with Little Reddings School with the aim of making the transition for Year 6 students into Year 7 a smooth and comfortable experience. It is very important to us that Year 6 students feel confident about their move to Bushey Meads School. Of course, the move to secondary school means a number of major changes for all children and if handled effectively, students can make immediate progress by hitting the ground running in September.

Our focus on the transition from Key Stage 2 to 3 is also giving staff from the two schools the opportunity to work together; learning from each other to develop exciting educational experiences and aiding the development of both student and teacher.

With this in mind, the English and Maths faculties at Bushey Meads School have been closely liaising with their counterparts at Little Reddings, namely Sebastian Gray, the Literacy Coordinator, Lauren Sibuns and Debbie Jackson, the Numeracy Coordinator to ensure that we provide a range of transition activities.

Debbie Jackson spent a day at the end of the spring term with Suresh Varsani, Head of the Maths Faculty, and his team observing various Year 7 Maths lessons to gain an insight into what will be expected in their first year of Key Stage 3 Maths.

The day gave Debbie ideas that she is turning into bridging materials to ensure there is curriculum continuity between the two schools. One area, discussed with the Maths teachers at length, was the importance of multiplication

tables and the need for students to properly know their times tables before joining Year 7. As a result, Debbie is running times tables challenges for all students at Little Reddings to help develop their mastery of this key numeracy skill.

Debbie also listened to Year 7 students tell her about their experiences in the first year of joining BMS across various areas including behaviour standards, homework expectations, and the rewards and consequences system. Consequently, Debbie is now more able to helpfully advise and guide her Year 6s ahead of the transition to BMS.

The next steps to be introduced and implemented during the summer term were also discussed and a range of exciting initiatives are getting off the ground including:

- Year 7 students working with Year 6 students on Maths skills
- Sixth Form students running Maths problem solving workshops for Years 5 and 6 students
- Year 6 Highly Able students joining some Year 7 Maths lessons in the summer term

Similarly, Carla Da Silva, Head of Key Stage 3 English at Bushey Meads, has established strong links with Little Reddings' literacy coordinators. Sebastian and Lauren both twice visited Bushey Meads School in January and February and observed a programme of Year 7 lessons.

One area of focus was questioning techniques and strategies that could be used to encourage students to infer without having to rely on too much teacher guidance. Discussions centred around how students develop

effective strategies to structure their answers using Point, Evidence and Explain as a model. Carla then visited Little Reddings School in May and observed a Year 6 lesson where students were studying a poem with the aim of developing their knowledge of idioms.

She was impressed by the variety of different learning techniques that were being deployed and also the differentiated nature of the learning materials that supported the less able students but also stretched and challenged the more able.

In the most recent meeting, plans were out in place to strengthen the collaborative working through:

- establishing links with the SEN Teams at LRS and BMS to discuss how best to support students with literacy in both schools with a special software programme known as 'Read and Write Gold'
- expand the Trust's sponsored Readathon Scheme that raises money for charity through encouraging reading
- arrange moderation meetings to look at standardising marking and assessment across the transition phase

Overall, it is clear to see that in such a short space of time, great strides have been made which have begun to improve the teaching and learning of literacy across the Trust and share best practice between the two school settings.

There is an exciting future ahead as staff in both schools develop further outstanding strategies and projects and develop and strengthen the links with literacy across the Multi Academy Trust.

New Appointments across the Bushey St James Trust

Since the last newsletter the Bushey St James Trust has recruited another member of staff whose responsibilities span across the Trust. This is of course key in developing our links across the two schools whereby we can achieve continued economies of scale.



**New BSJT Finance
Manager**

We would like to introduce you to Miss Rachael Coombs who joins us as Trust Finance Manager, based in our BSJT Head Office at Bushey Meads School.

Miss Coombs previously worked at Links AP Academy for nine years in a similar role and has managed facility departments so joins us with lots of experience which she will be applying to her new role.

She joined us directly after the Easter break so has been on board for over a month and says she feels very settled in the Bushey Meads community and finds all the staff across both schools very welcoming and friendly. She is looking forward to the exciting developments planned for the Trust. We all wish Miss Coombs every success.

Mrs Armitage
PA to Executive Principal

Superb Outdoor Play Area at Little Reddings



The BSJT Site Team continue to have a big impact across the Trust with many works progressing much more swiftly at Little Reddings. A brand new Early Years play area is already complete and is being enjoyed by the pupils. The newly decorated School Reception entrance is also proving a great improvement to the site. This summer is going to see one of the most impressive programme of works across the two sites within the Trust.

Works at Bushey Meads through the summer holidays include refurbishment of the main Assembly Hall, with retractable seating and a new dance floor. Larger, longer term projects for Little Reddings include re-designing the car park, enhanced external site lighting, and consideration is also being given to the addition of a conservatory on the front of the Main building to enhance the

“The Trust provides a platform for increased collaboration and the chance to build greater capacity across the two unique learning communities.”

Corporate Services Collaborate Across the Two Schools

Reception area. All these projects are now co-ordinated with the assistance of the Site Team.

The Trust IT Department has a major focus on equipping both schools with interactive screens in key staff areas. A large interactive screen has been installed in the staffroom at Bushey Meads and in the Headteacher's office at Little Reddings. In addition, at Little Reddings a new projector and screen has been installed in the Infants' Hall, and new sound systems in both the Infant and Junior Halls.

At Bushey Meads interactive whiteboards are gradually being installed throughout all classrooms, additional Chromebooks purchased for Learning Support and Childcare, and a specific software package called Read and Write Gold has been purchased to aid, in particular, dyslexic students.

This has all been installed between the day to day trouble-shooting and help desk facility this team provides to all staff. They never know from one hour to the next what staff may be demanding of them!

Sixth Form Community Service at Little Reddings

As Sixth Form students currently studying Physical Education, Emily and I have been volunteering weekly at our partnership primary

school Little Reddings.

We coach and get children involved within sporting activities such as basketball, football and other various playground activities.

We believe in encouraging a younger generation, and by doing this we are showing how important everyday physical activity is.



Both Emily and I would like to become sport coaches/teachers for our careers and this volunteer work will give us great experience for the future.

Working with a variety of ages and abilities enables us to enhance our skills and develop our knowledge.

Not only has this experience benefited us but we have enjoyed the company of Little Reddings students and teachers and we hope that they have benefited from our visits.

**Megan and Emily,
Year 13 Bushey Meads School**

Guaranteed Secondary School Places at Bushey Meads School!

The consultation process with regard to the admissions criteria for Bushey Meads School has been completed and a clear benefit to all pupils at Little Reddings is now in place.

Any current pupil in Year 5 at Little Reddings who wants to come to Bushey Meads School in 2016 can now gain a place at the school without having the need to take the SW Herts Consortium Test. As long as you are not applying to any other Consortium school you do not need to sit the test.

Parents and carers will know how stressful secondary transfer time can be, particularly when you live in the South West Herts region. Most secondary school places in the local area are only secured by sitting the local South West Herts Consortium Test and, even when your children have sat the test, the places at the secondary schools not being guaranteed.

Parents and Carers will hopefully appreciate the work of the Trustees of the Bushey St James Trust and Governors of Bushey Meads School who have now ensured that the admissions criteria for 2016 strongly favours the pupils within our Trust – currently pupils at Little Reddings Primary School.

Year 11 Ex Little Reddings Student writes.....

I'm Joshua Harford and I am at Bushey Meads School and currently in the midst of my GCSE exams, revising hard and remaining determined to do my very best. I believe I am on track to achieve some excellent results this summer. If I do, I can honestly say that it will be in large part due to the experience I had at Little Reddings School. I joined Little Reddings Nursery in 2002 and



benefited immediately from the hard work and commitment of all the teachers. This continued throughout my time at Little Reddings where I honestly cannot remember an instance of bullying or a case of learning being disrupted in the classroom. Everyone, staff and students alike, were so supportive of each other.

I remember the school having a great reputation even back then. Students didn't only come from the local area. In fact many students travelled to Little Reddings from further afield - so it must have been a good school.

English lessons at Little Reddings were always enjoyable. I particularly remember a teacher called Mr Preskey who made all lessons fun. He was firm but fair.

I also remember studying "Goodnight Mr Tom" by discussing its themes in groups. I feel this helped bridge the gap between primary school English lessons and secondary English lessons. We had "Mental Maths" tests every half term and this turned out to be very similar to the kind of Maths lessons I received at Bushey Meads School.

When I finally made the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 joining Bushey Meads, I remember being nervous, but I had many friends making the same journey as me and we looked after each other. In fact the switch was smoother than I ever anticipated. Okay having homework on a daily basis was a shock, but we soon got used to that.

And now, once I have completed my GCSEs, I plan on staying on in the Sixth Form here at Bushey Meads. I wouldn't want to go anywhere else as I know I will get the best support going from teachers who really know me. I really feel comfortable here but at



the same time I also feel challenged by the teachers to always try harder and I appreciate that. I plan on studying Politics, English, History and Biology and maybe one day I will realise my dream of becoming a politician or perhaps a special advisor to a politician.

Little Reddings School Governors' Away Day

On Saturday 13th June the Governors from Little Reddings School gathered to meet and spent time reflecting on the strategic direction of the school and the continued vision to ensure that the school becomes an outstanding hub of the community; a truly welcoming safe, learning environment that enables all pupils of whatever background to become happy, effective, lifelong learners

achieving at the highest level. The day was led superbly by one of the LRS Parent Governors, Alexis Boo, who is a Learning and Development Consultant and Cognitive Behavioural Coach. Thirteen staff and governors attended the day and actively took part in a whole host of different sessions.

These centred around:

- agreeing principles for how the governing body would work together
- deciding personal objectives for the day
- discussing and agreeing a vision for the school
- completing a 'Stop, Start, Continue' exercise to decide action points for the future

It was a very effective time that enabled all governors to get to know each other and form a clear way forward to support the school in its journey to becoming an outstanding learning community.

The photo below shows the group of governors who attended the day and, as you can see there were lots of smiles, indicating the effectiveness of the day. It really helped to strengthen the vision for the future and develop more ways to effectively support the Headteacher and the wider staff of Little Reddings School with their ongoing superb work. It was agreed to hold another day soon!



Little Reddings
Governors Away Day

**Headteacher of Little Reddings Primary School
Carly Simmonds Writes**

The last few months have seen an increased collaboration between the schools of the Bushey St James Trust. As Headteacher at Little Reddings, I am proud to see the staff here being able to support their colleagues at Bushey Meads and vice versa, clearly impacting on the performance of the staff and the lives of the children and young people involved.



The art project organised by Miss Moses has been a huge success this term and she was delighted to be able to invite some students from Bushey Meads to join in the fun! Mrs Jackson has worked with Mr Varsani in order to raise the attainment of pupils at both schools in Maths and Mr Gray has worked closely with Ms Da Silva to improve the Literacy transition between the two schools.

Other Subject Leaders are also continuing or beginning working partnerships with a view to supporting each other by sharing good practice and offering advice on resources etc.

There are many exciting opportunities for further collaboration next academic year and we are excited here at Little Reddings to continue having a positive influence on the lives of so many children, young people and families throughout the local community.

BMS and LRS Students Meet Cutting Edge Art

On Thursday, 4th and Friday, 5th June, four hard-working members of Ms Waring's Ceramics Club, in Years 7 and 8 at Bushey Meads, were chosen to join our Little Reddings colleagues and pupils, to work on Little Reddings' art and sculpture project. The project was organised by Little Reddings' Year 5 teacher, Laura Moses.



The workshops, for the children, were based on the extensive work of Anish Kapoor a British Indian sculptor, who has graced the international stage with his work since the early 1990s. You may remember one of his most recent pieces 'The Arcelor Mittal Orbit, which is a permanent structure completed

for the Olympic Park in 2012. BMS students, Christian Okeke, Ellie Curnow, Bethany Trickett and Cormac Coyle worked with both Year 3 and Year 5 over the two days.

Year 3 focused on Kapoor's work with highly reflective surfaces. With paper, fashioned to look like glass, they created a mirror which distorted the viewer.



You will see from the pictures, what a wonderful experience it was for our Bushey Meads artists to join Little Reddings and work with them on creating such wonderful pieces of work. We look forward to our next project with them.



BSJT Music News.....

Year 5 present a special performance of
“Archie Dobson’s War”
 a musical commemorating World War I
17th July at 9:15am in the Junior Hall



The musical tells the story of one family’s experience of World War I. Starting with the outbreak of war, we hear about how children and families were affected by war on the home front and the battlefield. We are delighted to bring you this poignant musical that will be both entertaining and thought-provoking. Year 5 have been learning lines, rehearsing songs and developing dance sequences over the past few weeks. We are very proud of how the students have risen to the challenge and demonstrated maturity and professionalism in the run up to the show.

We will be performing for KS2 students and parents on 17th July and we hope that you are able to join us in celebrating the students’ achievements.

Inspirational Collaborative Art Project Across the BSJT continued...

On completion of these wonderful sculptures and mosaics, children from each year group, from Little Reddings will be chosen to visit Anish Kapoor in his studio, where they will view his interesting art installation called ‘Bold Tendencies’. Recently, Beyonce and JayZ visited Mr Kapoor’s studio to purchase some work. We wish Little Reddings’ pupils and staff a very enjoyable visit and wonder if they will return with any original pieces! Many thanks to Ms Moses for organising this event and to Little Reddings for welcoming Ms Waring and our students to enjoy such an exciting workshop.



Thursday 2nd July at 5pm at St Albans Cathedral St Albans, Herts, AL1 1BY.

Our professional singer and choir leader is Rufus Frowde who studied music at Oxford University and is an accomplished pianist, organist, violinist and conductor with many professional choirs. I do hope that you will be able to attend this very prestigious concert. Admission to the cathedral and concert is free and you are welcome to visit the other parts of the Cathedral before the event. Due to limited space, there is strictly no parking at the Cathedral. Full information on City Centre Car Parks can be found at: www.stalban.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/parking

Chorister Outreach Project....



LRS is one of only 3 primary schools who have been invited by Hertfordshire Music Service to sing with professional singers and choristers as part of a special outreach project taking place on

Future Plans across the Trust

Future plans to build further capacity and facilitate a more streamlined operation across the BSJT include:

- continuing to streamline the finance and HR team to share best practice and improve efficiencies
- building on the existing collaborative work in many subjects areas across the Trust and continue to support the teaching and learning and progress and achievement of all

BSJT Trustees

Both schools have recently improved their Reception Areas and at Bushey Meads School this area now boasts some staff welcome boards.

The boards contain photos of all the staff, Governors and Trustees and also outlines their key roles.



Do feel free to pop in and take a look and also go onto the Governors area of both schools' websites for more information:
<http://littlreddings.org.uk/about-us/governors/>
and
<http://www.busheymeads.org.uk/governors/>

Supporting the Year 6 – 7 Transition Process

BMS Pastoral Manager Mr Malik has expertly recruited and trained a welcoming band of Year 7 BMS Buddies to provide the friendly faces to support transition up to secondary school. Senior staff at Bushey Meads have added to our extensive programme of transition events a new initiative; delivering individual welcome interviews to all 200 families of our new September intake. The parents and carers of new students have all been coming in



BMS Buddies get ready to welcome the new students and their families

according to a schedule of interview times. They are first met by the BMS buddy team, who talk to the new students about our school and prepare them for the activities we want to challenge them with. Then senior staff get to really know the new students and their families through an individual welcome interview.

Myfanwy is one of our top BMS buddies. She is very well placed for the position, since most of her entire family have been educated all the way through the Bushey St James journey from reception at Little Reddings, through to graduation from Bushey Meads. Myfanwy is currently in Year 7 at Bushey Meads, having already spent 7 years in The Trust's schools since starting at the Little Reddings nursery.

Myfanwy is a fabulous exemplar for the school. Like her auntie, she is a sports enthusiast and regularly trains with the Watford Harriers, with which Bushey Meads has strong links. Since moving up to BMS she has played for our netball team and taken part in House sports competitions - now that summer has finally arrived she is taking part in our athletics too, specialising in sprint and hurdles.



that from September she will have weekly Dance lessons on the curriculum and will be able to study Dance as well as PE to top GCSE levels when she transfers to Key Stage Four.

For Myfanwy the transition from Little Reddings to Bushey Meads has been a singular joy. Many of her friends have come here too and she has met new friends as well. While at Little Reddings she benefited from the weekly English Literacy Masterclass, held at the Bushey Meads site, as well as coming up for the Science and Healthy Eating events, the Technology day, the Language Olympics and the Transition events. Bushey Meads felt like a home from home by the time she arrived here.