



Welcome from Dan Morrow, Trust Leader and Chief Executive Officer

A belated Happy New Year to you all! I hope you were able to enjoy a holiday with family and friends this Christmas.

As the encouraging signs of early spring emerge, I hope that you are feeling hopeful about the year ahead and the positives it can bring. We are working hard at the Trust to ensure that a return to normality is cherished whilst embracing some new ways of learning which have been introduced in these last challenging years. I know that all schools have really missed the visitors and volunteers back onto their school sites and hopefully this term and the next, we will be permitted to widen this more and more.

As we progress with our civic work in our local communities, we are pleased to develop our partnerships with organisations such as Citizens UK, Voices Foundation, Devon Wildlife Trust and Exeter Chiefs (see information later in the newsletter).

We are a strong family of schools but each school is individual and unique and we must always respect and promote that; ultimately you choose a school not a Trust but I strongly feel that we are now in a position to honour both aspects.

Dan Morrow, Trust Leader

Leadership Announcements

We are delighted to announce the appointments to the following posts:

Principal at Tavistock College - *Tristan Muller Forster*



These colleagues have been acting in these roles as Associate Principals, and we are excited to see them made permanent.

Principal at Okehampton College - *Craig Griffiths*



In addition, we have appointed *Rebecca Mullins* (above) to the post of Associate Lead Principal.



Principal at Holsworthy Community College - *Gareth Smith*



DMAT students partner with Citizens UK to inspire communities

Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust (DMAT) has embarked on an exciting partnership with Citizens UK to deepen its civic work and to ensure that children, families and staff have a say in terms of what happens in the areas they live.

This work kicked off with 'listening campaigns' at Tavistock College, Okehampton Primary School, and Bridgerule Primary School. The sessions, in part led by enthusiastic children, were designed to encourage people of all ages across the community to discuss what is great about the places they live and what could be done to improve these areas.

As well as fostering a sense of pride in their communities, children are learning invaluable skills through the process, such as leading a meeting, listening and discussing the themes which are important to them. This process has built up childrens' confidence and increased their belief that they can be a positive force for good in their community.

Dan Morrow, CEO and Trust Leader for Dartmoor Multi-Academy Trust, said:

"We are always aware of and thankful for the positive and proactive role our schools play in their local communities, and I am hugely excited to expand this through our work with Citizens UK. The skills which the children are learning through being part of these 'Listening Campaigns' are invaluable and are also transferable to their everyday life".

"It's so important for children to feel empowered and confident in their opinions, and to believe that they can be a force for good in their community. I'm therefore hugely excited to see this project develop, and what ideas they come up with!"





St James Primary School

At St James, we have been over-joyed to welcome children back into our library to borrow, explore and enjoy books. We have made one corner of our library into our 'Topical Corner' where a calendar event is explored through different books for all children access. So far this term, we have invited the children to learn more about World Religion Day and Chinese New Year. Children's responses have been:

"Look at the pictures!" - Year 1 child

"I like that you can choose books to take and bring back again" - Year 2 child

"It's really calming" - Year 2 child

"I like that there are so many books I like" - Year 3 child

North Tawton Primary School

North Tawton have fabulous new decking joining the Nursery and Reception classes. This has enabled us to provide lots of additional learning opportunities in a safe and engaging space.



South Tawton Primary School

Children at Little Beacons Preschool love visiting the school to take part in outdoor learning activities. Recently, they visited the outdoor education area and enjoyed following their maps to find wild animals hiding on the trail, cooking in the mud kitchen, driving to the 'beach', climbing and making music.



Chagford Primary School

There is a brand new mural brightening up the school hall at Chagford Primary.

Painted by artist Anna Higgle, the mural picks up colours from the moorland environment and brings them into the school. The mural also features the three hares that are found in ceiling bosses in moorland churches and which give their name to the Three Hares schools - Chagford, North Tawton and South Tawton.

The mural was paid for by the schools' art fund which was created from the successful auction of promises held prior to the pandemic. The mural is a great way to show how we want to have colour, art and life at the heart of everything we do.

Holsworthy Community College – Sports Round Up

Year 7 Netball

The Holsworthy Community College Year 7 netball team have got off to a flying start with four good wins in their first four matches. They are now looking forward to the North Devon tournament in March.

Year 7 and Year 10 County Cup Football

The Holsworthy Community College Year 7 and Year 10 football teams attended the County Cup which was held at the Queen Elizabeth School in Crediton. It was a very wet day and the pitch was difficult to play on. Both teams played excellent football and although it was not their day with both teams losing, we can be very proud of their efforts.



Work starts on the Promise School, Okehampton

Work on our new £10.7 million school for children with special needs in West Devon is underway.

The new school on the Okehampton East Business Park will cater for up to 100 primary and secondary pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

The new building is expected to be completed in the spring of 2023 but the school will open to its first pupils in September 2022 using temporary accommodation.

Presently pupils from the wider Okehampton area who need special education often have to travel to North Devon or Exeter.

Devon County Council's Cabinet member for schools, Andrew Leadbetter, said: "Devon supports a higher than average number of children with special needs in our mainstream schools. But some of the most vulnerable children need to be educated in a special school.

"Our paramount concern is obviously to provide the best possible education and care for them. That's why we are expanding the number of places we have available for children with special needs so they can be educated close to their homes and communities."

Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust Chief Executive, Dan Morrow, said: "The new free school will have a positive impact, not just on the learners and young people who access it, but the schools and communities from which they are drawn".

"We're excited to get this process underway and continue to expand our family of schools."



DWT partnership in action

We are well underway with our 3 year partnership with Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT). In our journey towards 'Natural Literacy', Devon Wildlife Trust are working alongside outdoor learning leads and school leadership in each of our Trust primary schools. The aim is to further strengthen our outdoor learning provision as well as co-create new ideas to enhance children's understanding of their place in the natural world. Wildlife Champions are in action at every school in our Primary hubs, championing pupil voice and caring collectively for our local environment. Our Wildlife Champions have been thinking about how they can better connect with their social and environmental world. Grounds mapping, the importance of trees to humans and wildlife, identifying birds, insects and invertebrates are all areas of learning this term so far!

At Chagford, a successful tree planting day in the school grounds was extremely rewarding for adults and children alike - every child in the school planted a tree to form a new hedgerow.

Principal, Ed Finch noted "Our young people enjoyed working with DWT very much. The sessions prompted great thinking." KS1 pupils this term will be engaging in 'Winston the Woodlouse' inspired learning, based around developing scientific enquiry, skills and knowledge, linking to the Science curriculum as well as encouraging curious minds.



Tree planting at Chagford C of E Primary School

In Highampton and Exbourne Church of England Primaries, work is underway in grounds development and developing natural literacy. Although limited for green space at Exbourne, the children have come up with some wonderful ideas on how to bring wildlife into the school playground, through vertical gardening, building bug hotels and taking ownership of planters and a pond!

Last term's work at Okehampton Primary School (OPS) on wellbeing was valuable and rewarding – Emily stated 'Towards the end of the sessions, children were more willing to take risks, work with new children and reflect deeper on their understanding of Natural Literacy.' Positive

feedback on the increased sense of wellbeing following DWT sessions at OPS illustrates how learning in and about our outdoor spaces is so valuable for positive thinking and how we perceive ourselves as learners.

Research suggests that outdoor learning experiences enhance many areas of development, including personal and social communication skills as well as increased physical, spiritual and mental health.

We look forward to seeing our children's resilience grow through this AWE and WONDER inspiring work with DWT. www.devonwildlifetrust.org

Deirdre Petersen Trust lead, *Learning Outside the Classroom*





TRAIN LIKE A CHIEF THIS FEBRUARY




 @COMMUNITYCHIEFS

MON 21 - CALLYWITH COLLEGE
TUES 22 - DMAT TRUST CAMP OKEHAMPTON COLLEGE
 (COST SUBSIDISED BY DMAT TO £14.40 PER PERSON)
WED 23 - BRIDGWATER & TAUNTON COLLEGE
THURS 24 - EXMOUTH COLLEGE

9:30AM - 3:00PM
COST - £32.50 PER DAY


 Elysium
 Healthcare
 PRINCIPAL PARTNER





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OKEHAMPTON RFC GIRLS TASTER EVENING







Date - Wednesday 16th February
Time - 4:30pm - 5:30pm
Location - Okehampton RFC
Age Groups - U13 and U15 girls




 @COMMUNITYCHIEFS

Are you committed to your community?

- Do you feel you know the rhythm of life within your community?
- Are you inspired by the creativity and wonder of Children?
- Do you have the inquisitiveness to question and analyse?

If you've said Yes any of the questions above, have you considered being a Trustee or school Governor?

Our Trustees bring professional skills and experience to the table to set our strategic direction, manage resources and hold managers to account

Governors on our Local Stakeholder Boards represent our parent and staff voice, the economic and cultural diversity of the community and listen to our pupils

The benefits are mutual!



To find out more to find out more visit our website: <https://www.dartmooramt.org.uk/> or to ask for an application form: j.hooper@dmatschools.org.uk

We are always keen to hear your **feedback** about our Trust newsletter.

Please email news@dmatschools.org.uk with any of your comments and/or suggestions.

