



# Autumn Term 2025 Newsletter

## Welcome to the Autumn Term Newsletter!

The autumn term is always a favourite of ours, filled with energy and excitement. From seeing new faces settle happily into their schools to enjoying the festive activities that bring our communities together, this season truly showcases the spirit of our academies.

What you'll find here is just a snapshot of the incredible learning and achievements happening every day across our schools. For even more highlights, please visit each academy's website.

As we wrap up this term, we'd like to thank you for your continued support and commitment. Wishing you a joyful festive season and a successful year ahead!

Phil Willott  
Director of Education

# Together We Are Stronger

## Collaboration Driving Innovation

This term has showcased the power of collaboration across Raleigh Education Trust. Here are just a few highlights:

- **Deep Learning & Development Framework:** Colleagues from across the Trust and our partners worked together to shape the next phase of the Deep Learning Development Framework, focusing on aligning assurance activities with a culture of professional learning and trust.
- **DSL Development Day:** Senior DSLs united for a development day on online safety and the growing influence of A.I. in education, a vital area of safeguarding. These sessions reinforced our commitment to keeping children safe in a rapidly changing digital world and ensuring our curriculum and interventions stay ahead of emerging challenges.
- **Strengthening Operational Excellence:** Senior Administrators from across the Trust, alongside colleagues from the central team and Ash Lea School, met to support our mission to deliver high-quality education through effective and efficient school operations.



## Collaboration Beyond the Classroom

One of the most inspiring examples of collaboration this term came from pupils at Denewood Academy and Westbury Academy during a weekend at Ullswater with The Outward Bound Trust.

Pupils from both academies, built friendships, supported one another, and tackled exciting challenges that pushed them well beyond their comfort zones. Their resilience, determination, and teamwork shone through every activity.

The encouragement they gave each other was outstanding, and instructors praised not only the pupils but also the incredible support provided by the team of adults who gave up their weekend to support this experience for children. It was a truly positive experience for everyone involved.

The Trust's partnership with The Outward Bound Trust is a powerful example of our commitment to providing life-changing experiences for every child aligned with our values. Through opportunities like these, we help pupils build confidence, resilience, and teamwork skills that will stay with them for life.



# Empowering Through Education

## Celebrating Writing Success at Ambleside Academy

This autumn, Ambleside celebrated the fantastic progress of Mrs Connell's Year 4 class in Writing. The pupils have worked hard on developing transcriptional fluency, mastering letter formation, spacing, and punctuation.

Collaborating with colleagues from Woodlands Academy, the class incorporated elements of the innovative Colourful Semantics approach into the Authors in Training scheme.

The results have been incredible, thanks to the dedication of Mrs Connell and her pupils.

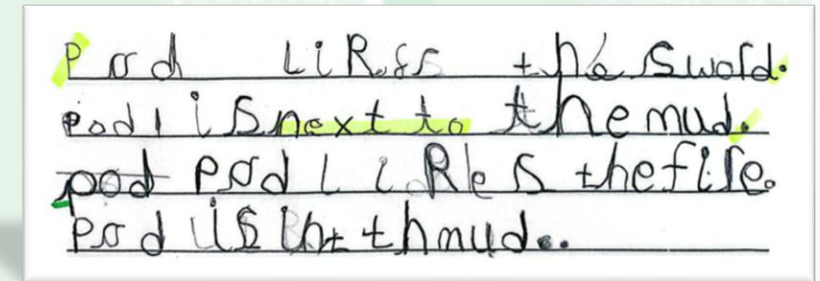
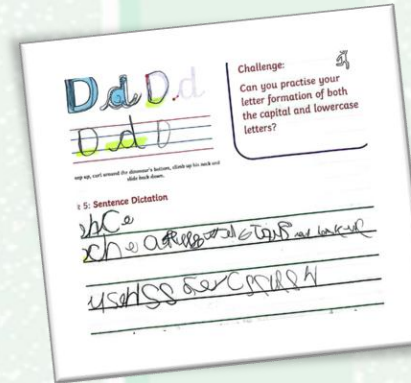
Take a look at one of our superstars' work to see the amazing progress made from October to December, a true testament to hard work and collaboration!

## It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas

Ambleside Academy's Key Stage One pupils wowed audiences with their delightful nativity performance, Whoops-a-Daisy Angel.

The children were confident speakers, singers, and dancers, bringing festive cheer to the whole school community and creating memories that families will treasure for years to come.

Here are some of our talented pupils busy at work preparing for the big day!



# Teamwork makes the Dreamwork!

## Lady Jane Grey Academy's First Autumn Term

We are passionate about continuous professional learning and its impact on teaching excellence and pupil outcomes. This term, Ambleside Academy and Lady Jane Grey Academy have built strong connections, sharing expertise and best practice.

The collaboration launched with Lady Jane Grey's Inset Day at Ambleside on 17th October, introducing the Authors in Training Writing Programme. Since then, colleagues have engaged in live, in-the-moment observations and weekly team teaching, a fantastic example of professionalism, kindness, and commitment across our Trust.

We are proud of this incredible work and grateful to all involved for driving improvement and innovation!

## ***"It's Behind You!" – A Festive Treat at Lady Jane Grey***

Lady Jane Grey Academy was filled with laughter as a travelling pantomime troupe performed Little Red Riding Hood, funded by the PTA.

The lively show featured colourful characters, catchy songs, and plenty of audience participation, booing the Big Bad Wolf and cheering for Little Red Riding Hood.

Pupils called it *"the best show ever,"* with some inspired to become actors!

A huge thank you to the LJG PTA for making this unforgettable afternoon possible and for providing snacks enjoyed during the performance.



## Learning In Our Community

### Denewood Academy

A visit to the newly reopened Nottingham Central Library had a remarkable impact on Denewood Academy's Panthers class. Pupils explored the impressive new space and discovered a completely different way of learning.

The highlight was the Immersive Storytelling Room, where pupils stepped into a World War One trench brought to life through interactive touchpoints, answering questions, exploring information, and even launching a virtual tank! This hands-on experience captured their imagination and sparked deep engagement.

The trip also promoted reading for pleasure. Every pupil signed up for a library card, borrowed books, and has since visited another Nottingham library independently.

Their enthusiasm for returning to the Central Library shows how powerful these experiences can be in inspiring curiosity and confidence beyond the classroom.



### Denewood Pupils Take on FreeG!

This term, KS2 and KS3 pupils from Denewood Academy have been heading to Alfreton for exciting FreeG (Freestyle Gymnastics) sessions led by a fully qualified British Tumbling coach.

Pupils have mastered travel techniques, precise foot placement, and enjoyed training on the air track, learning flighted moves like round-offs and rolls, and even progressing towards somersaults! One of the highlights? Somersaulting into the foam pits!

These sessions have been a fantastic way to boost confidence, coordination, and creativity in a fun, supportive environment

### Westbury Academy

#### Year 8 Step Back in Time at the National Civil War Museum

Year 8 pupils brought their history lessons to life during a visit to Newark's National Civil War Museum. After learning about the English Civil Wars, they explored the town's turbulent past through hands-on activities, reenacting Charles I's trial and execution, handling replica weapons, wearing armour, investigating battlefield injuries, and even simulating pike fights with foam tubes! It was an action-packed day of living history the boys will never forget.



# Skills that last a Lifetime

## Unity Academy

### Future Chef Success

On 3rd December, Denewood Academy proudly hosted the AP final of the national Springboard Future Chef competition.

Sixteen pupils from Unity Academy, our Trust schools, and providers showcased their culinary skills, following on from an incredible 60 pupils who competed in their school heats, a fantastic increase in participation this year!

A huge congratulations to Kaidan (Unity Academy), who has secured a place in the East Midlands regional final and will compete for a spot in the Grand Final in London next year. We are so proud of every pupil who embraced this challenge!

### Street Doctors: Life-Saving Skills for Pupils

During the term, pupils from Venture, Lilya Lighthouse, Real Education, SHAPE, TBAC, and CAST took part in sessions delivered by Street Doctors, learning vital emergency first aid skills. These workshops not only build confidence but also empower young people to make life-saving decisions in real situations.

One hard-hitting discussion asked, *"Is there any safe place on the body to be stabbed?"* Sparking meaningful conversations and challenging misconceptions.

A huge thank you to Jesse and his team for delivering such impactful sessions to our pupils!



## Celebrating Creativity



### **Creativity Unleashed at Woodlands Academy**

In October, Woodlands Academy was alive with creativity as the Pupil Council launched a fang-tastic Halloween Poster Competition.

Pupils from all year groups submitted incredible designs, from spooky ghouls to vibrant pumpkin patches, showcasing imagination and effort.

After much deliberation, four standout posters were crowned winners!

This event was more than an art competition; it celebrated pupil voice, leadership, and community spirit. A huge well done to the Pupil Council for leading such a fantastic initiative!

### **Christmas Creativity at Westbury Academy**

We're delighted to share the fantastic designs from our recent Christmas Placemat Competition!

A special congratulations to Rico Lewis, whose winning design will feature on Christmas Dinner day.

Huge well done to runners-up Tyler Preston and Jason for their brilliant contributions.

Thank you to all three for bringing festive cheer to our celebrations. Your creativity will make Christmas Dinner extra special this year!



## New Ground Celebration at Nottingham Contemporary

This term, pupils and colleagues from across the Trust gathered at Nottingham Contemporary to celebrate creativity, reflection, and collaboration as part of the New Ground partnership project.

New Ground, supported by the Freelands Foundation, has been a two-year creative learning initiative bringing artists and teachers together to co-design inspiring workshops for pupils, professional development for staff, and shared reflection across our schools.

The celebration showcased pupils' artwork through interactive activities, giving them a platform to share experiences, express ideas, and celebrate their achievements.

We are incredibly proud of pupils and colleagues from Westbury, Woodlands, Ambleside, Denewood, and Unity Academies, whose energy and imagination have shaped this remarkable partnership.



# Recognition of Outstanding Practice

## Westbury Academy Awarded Music Mark

We're thrilled to announce that Westbury Academy received the Music Mark of Recognition for 2025–26 this term, celebrating its dedication to high-quality music education.

This achievement reflects Westbury's commitment to:

- Championing music within the curriculum and school culture
- Providing equitable, diverse, and inclusive music opportunities
- Expanding horizons through partnerships with Nottingham Music Hub, Education & Bass, and Freedom Foundation

Music is a powerful tool for inclusion, confidence, and wellbeing, values that align with the DfE's The Power of Music to Change Lives (June 2022).

A huge well done to everyone at Westbury Academy, and thank you to Nottingham Music Hub and Music Mark for recognising this incredible journey!



## Woodlands Academy Wins International School Award

We're proud to announce that Woodlands Academy has been awarded the British Council's prestigious International School Award, recognising its outstanding work in bringing the world into the classroom.

Woodlands' international initiatives include partnerships with schools in Poland, India, and Sri Lanka, enabling pupils to share ideas and learn about different cultures. The academy also hosts international celebration days and has taken part in visits to Egypt and Poland.

In October, Woodlands welcomed four delegates from its partnered Egyptian school to discuss SEND support and inclusion. The visit ended with a warm afternoon tea hosted by the Pupil Council, complete with scones baked by Beech class!

## Governor Development Day: Reflection, Learning & Connection

In October, we were delighted to host our Governor Development Day, dedicated to strengthening governance across our Trust.

Highlights included a Safeguarding Refresher led by Ki Addis, Trust Safeguarding Lead, and strategic discussions with Sean Kelly, CEO, reinforcing our shared commitment to effective leadership.

Morning sessions explored key themes of strong governance: Effectiveness, Strategy, Accountability, Engagement, and Impact, while the afternoon focused on purposeful governor visits and best practice.

A special moment was recognising Sue Thornton, our Founding Member and Chairperson, with a Lifetime Patronage of the Trust for her outstanding service and dedication to education.



## Farewell and Thank You, Debbie Walker

This term, we say a heartfelt thank you and farewell to Debbie Walker, who retired on Friday, 17th October 2025, after an incredible 44 years of dedicated service to Ambleside Academy.

Debbie was an integral part of the school community, inspiring generations of pupils, supporting colleagues, and embodying everything that makes Ambleside special.

We are truly grateful for her unwavering commitment, kindness, and passion over the years. Wishing Debbie a wonderful retirement filled with happiness and new adventures!



# Raleigh Education Trust – Supporting Our Communities

The Trust is committed to helping local and wider communities thrive, ensuring every child grows up in a safe and supportive environment. This autumn term was no exception, with initiatives across our schools focused on making a positive impact beyond the trust.

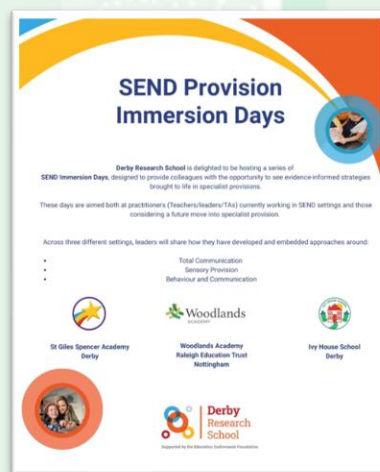
## Supporting Colleagues Beyond Raleigh

In November, Woodlands Academy, in partnership with Derby Research School, hosted its first immersive day focused on Total Communication.

Colleagues from mainstream schools joined to explore and share best practice in:

- Total Communication
- Sensory Provision
- Behaviour & Communication

This collaborative event highlighted Woodlands' commitment to inclusion and innovation, supporting not only our own schools but the wider education community.



## Building a Bold Social Impact Model for Nottinghamshire

Raleigh Education Trust has joined forces with the PCC, VRP, and It's In Nottingham to create a pioneering social impact model for Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire. This term saw major progress with the launch of the Challenge Board, appointment of an independent chair, focused working groups, and approval of a 'backbone' organisation.

This model builds on the incredible work already happening in our communities, shifting from short-term fixes to a 10-year vision that aligns efforts across sectors to better support every child and young person (0–25).

The goal? A safer, healthier, more inclusive Nottinghamshire where every child thrives.

Now is the time to start thinking and doing differently.