

## A word from our CEO...

As Easter approaches and we reflect on the values that unite us as a Trust, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the dedication and commitment to our children and young people from each member of our community.

At Esteem, our core values of celebrating difference, working together, being brave, enjoying learning and ultimately recognising that we are 'stronger together' continue to guide us in all that we do. These values aren't just words, they shape our interactions, decisions and aspirations.

Collaboration is key to our success. Within our Trust, we are fortunate to have a network of passionate educators, support staff, parents and community members. We also extend this network to support other schools, Academies and MATs in the pursuit of excellence for the education sector and we value these partnerships.

In the spirit of celebrating excellence, I am delighted to announce that our second annual Awards Gala is fast approaching, scheduled for 12 July 2024. This gala serves as a testament to the outstanding achievements and contributions within our trust, honouring those who embody our core values and go above and beyond in their pursuit of excellence.

Thank you for your continued dedication.

Warm regards

Julian Scholefield - CEO



## Careers at Holbrook

Holbrook School for Autism are very proud to announce that they have been awarded the 'National Quality in Careers Standard'. This is an excellent achievement, recognising the quality and breadth of the careers provision at Holbrook. In the final summary and judgement, The Quality in Careers Standard wrote: 'Holbrook School for Autism caters for a broad range of learners. It has a good quality career programme that supports its personalised approach to ensuring all learners are equipped to make successful transitions to an as independent and fulfilling life as possible.' The Careers team have worked tirelessly to ensure the Gatsby Benchmarks (GBM) are met 100%, and that they are giving the pupils opportunities to reach their full potential. Well done to all involved at Holbrook!



## Silver Success at Stanton Vale

Stanton Vale have achieved their MOVE Silver Quality Mark for providing purposeful, functional movement opportunities for children and young people using the MOVE Programme. Staff at Stanton Vale prioritise functional opportunity and have ensured that this mind set and approach to learning has been integrated across all areas of the school. Alison Wilson has played a pioneering role in maintaining the programme at Stanton Vale and her passion is infectious. When asked why the MOVE Programme is doing so well at Stanton Vale, Alison's response was, 'when you know the journey of the children on the programme and you have seen where they started and the progress they are making, why wouldn't you want to use the programme?' Alison's focus

is clearly on the children and their individual experiences and through effective support and guidance to staff, the everyday is wonderful for children at Stanton Vale.



A student's progress whilst taking part in Stanton Vale's MOVE programme.

## Bennerley Fields Goes Outdoors

Bennerley Fields School are developing their curriculum using outdoor learning. The research behind this approach shows that learning in the outdoors is beneficial in supporting physical, social, health and emotional well being, as well as improving concentration levels and encouraging independent exploration. Pupils at Bennerley Fields have regular access to a range of outdoor experiences across the curriculum and engagement and enjoyment from the pupils in these experiences have been fantastic to see!



## Flying High with Esteem

This year Esteem have worked in partnership with the Flying High Trust to support our Early Career Framework Tutors and Mentors in ensuring the best possible support, advice and guidance is put in place for colleagues who are in the early stages of their career. Over three sessions at the Trust offices, Lisa Vann from Flying High has provided key content to Esteem colleagues to then practically plan what they can do next to support our ECTs. The feedback has been incredibly positive and we look forward to the impact of this now and in the near future.



## Contributions

If you would like to feature an article in the Esteem Newsletter please email [ebaldwin@esteemmat.co.uk](mailto:ebaldwin@esteemmat.co.uk)



# Head of Centre at Esteem South Published in BJSE

Jolene Carter, Head of Centre at Esteem South Academy, has been published in the British Journal of Special Education via the National Association for Special Educational Needs. Jolene's article reviewed two books on Pathological Demand Avoidance(PDA); a characteristic widely observed in those with autism, but under-researched. Due to this, many aspects of PDA are debated, including strategies to support those who exhibit it. Jolene's reviews highlight the pupil-focused nature of the two books, whilst also praising the practical support strategies and empathy for the reader contained within both works. This is amazing news for Esteem South Academy and Jolene! Congratulations!

**BOOK REVIEW**

**The teacher's introduction to pathological demand avoidance: Essential strategies for the classroom**  
By Clare Truman, London: Jessica Kingsley, 2021. £14.99 (Paperback)

**The educator's experience of pathological demand avoidance: An illustrated guide to pathological demand avoidance and learning**  
By Laura Kerbey, London: Jessica Kingsley, 2021. £13.99 (Paperback)

Jolene Carter  
Esteem South Academy, Swadlincote, UK  
Email: [jcarter@estesouthacademy.co.uk](mailto:jcarter@estesouthacademy.co.uk)

If you would like to read Jolene's article, please click below:  
<https://nasenjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/14678578/0/0>

**BJSE**

**nasen**  
Helping Everyone Achieve

## Esteem Director of Provision Elected Regional Lead at PRUSAP

Karen Hayes, Director of Partnerships and Provision at Esteem, has recently been elected the East Midlands Lead for PRUsAP, [the National Association for PRUs and Alternative Provision](#). PRUsAP provide a voice for AP schools, challenging stereotypes and encouraging the success of both the schools and their pupils. They also work alongside politicians, the media and other school leaders to help them understand Alternative Provision and the impact it can have on a young person's life. Karen is "honoured to be working with a great team of professionals giving their time freely alongside their main role to support this very important sector". Congratulations Karen!

**PRUsAP**



## New Library at Stanton Vale

Previously, students at Stanton Vale Special School, located in Long Eaton, had their library situated in a corridor. However, the school seized an opportunity to transform an area into a fully accessible library, prioritising inclusivity for all students, including those with mobility challenges who use wheelchairs.



## Leaving for Good!

St Clare's School were the only school in Derby City to ensure every pupil who left in 2023 entered education, employment and training. 100% of pupils went on to a positive destination. Well done to all the staff who supported this fantastic achievement for our pupils!



**St Clare's School**  
Where we reach our goals!

## The Esteem MAT Research Fellowship

2024 marks the initiation of the third cycle of Esteem MAT colleagues who have successfully completed the Research Fellowship in collaboration with Nottingham Trent University. The project aims to support our staff to be immersed in evidence-based research, helping to develop a culture of inquiry in the school.

- Who can apply? Staff with a degree
- What will you do? Introduction to MA level; 30 Credit Module of Independent Study where you undertake a small-scale project to investigate an area of practice that is of current professional interest

If you would like to take part, please contact [mlucas@esteemmat.co.uk](mailto:mlucas@esteemmat.co.uk) by **30 March 2024** with a request to join or to find out more.



**Nottingham Trent University**

## Pilot Alternative Provision Music Offer is a Big Hit!

This term at Esteem Valley Academy we launched the EVA x Elementz Studio's 'Music Collaboration Project', a pilot internal AP offer delivered by Esteem Valley Academy's Music department in partnership with The Elementz Studio. Delivered from The Elementz Studio, a leading independent professional recording studio in Nottingham City Centre, the project provides students with a unique opportunity to learn within a commercial environment, working alongside world class music producers and engineers who are actively working at the top level of the music business. Focusing on music production, the project allows students to achieve a BTEC Music qualification at level 1 & 2, gaining an understanding of developing music products through practical application. Students experience 'listening sessions' where they are given professional feedback, have access to lyric writing masterclasses and learn how to mix and master the tracks they produce to a commercial standard. In addition to the in house offer, students are given access and exposure to a range of industry opportunities through the Elementz connections with the Nottingham music scene. Links with the Motorpoint Arena, Rock City, Theatre Royal and other music venues allow students to explore the variety of career opportunities available within the music industry from performing and producing to lighting and sound engineering. The course has been a huge hit with students at Esteem Valley Academy in it's first term with a second day to be introduced in the summer term and a showpiece event in planning . . . watch this space!!



## Esteem Valley Academy have ended the spring term by taking part in the Living Eggs project. Here's what their Head of Primary, Grace, had to say on delivery day...



"We have had an egg-cellent start to the week at Bennerley with the arrival of ten eggs which are currently being incubated at a very precise 37.7 degrees. We have great egg-spectations for the coming days as the pipping starts (where the chicks use a small tooth at the end of their beak to peck through the shell ready to hatch). Both children and adults onsite are super egg-cited to welcome the new arrivals that form part of our memorable experience offer that enhances each student's personal development. The chicks are also supporting our Primary Provisions topic about the environment where , in science, we have been comparing the anatomy and physiology of living things on our planet, in RE we have been studying Bible stories including the creation of the world and new beginnings, as well as writing poetry about "One Broken Planet" and the importance of looking after the amazing creatures in our environment. Despite our im-peck-able sense of humour and the development of my inner comedi-hen, we will be sad to see our chicks leave us at the end of term, but I am sure they will have an egg-spllosion of fun in their free range adventures."

## Meet Bella the School Dog

After successfully completing her Therapy dog assessment in September 2020 Bella has gained valuable experience supporting students out of education on a 1:1 basis and continues to do this work alongside her role at Esteem Valley Academy. Bella has been working at Esteem Valley Academy since 4th September 2023, predominantly based at their Sawley site with KS4 but regularly checks in on their Primary and KS3 students at our Bennerley site. Bella has a calm, friendly nature, loves attention and has been a huge hit with both students and staff.

### What can Bella do?

She can give deep pressure therapy (DPT) which relieves stress and anxiety. She can sit, wait, give paw, lie down, fetch, leave, roll over and back up, which is great when the pupils get to go on dog walks down the River Trent. She is a great listener for pupils and they want to read or speak to Bella. Bella has also learnt the 'Flourish' programme which means she can support pupils with emotions, helping them to build trust.

### What are the benefits?

**Cognitive:** companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem-solving and game-playing.

**Social:** a dog provides a positive mutual topic for discussion, encourages responsibility, teaches students empathy and prompts social skills.

**Emotional:** a school dog improves self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts mood, often provoking laughter and fun. Dogs can also teach compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety. Stroking and engaging with a dog can lower stress levels.

**Physical:** interaction with a dog provides tactile stimulation and can promote and encourage physical exercise.

**Literacy skills:** the calming, non-judgemental environment that therapy dogs create, helps to nurture young people's enthusiasm for reading and provides them with the confidence to read aloud.



# Mother's Day at Holbrook

Holbrook School for Autism hosted their second annual Mother's Day Afternoon Tea this term. It was wonderfully received with a performance from Holbrook's very own choir going down a storm with both parents and staff. "The idea came from developing a social aspect for the parents" says Gemma, Family support worker at Holbrook. "They really enjoy the relaxed and informal approach to it and it's been so successful that we now put on a Grandparent's and Father's Day event as well". Congratulations to Jacqui, Gemma and Sarah who organised the afternoon and well done to the students who helped out!



## Steps to Success –

### Fountains Primary School Apprenticeship Story

"Congratulations to Olivia McGibbon who gained QTS in December 2023. Olivia came to our school in September 2014 as a Teaching Assistant Apprentice when she was 18. On completion of her apprenticeship she gained a Teaching Assistant role and then began her Foundation Degree after school at Burton and South Derbyshire College. From September 2018 Olivia started employment as an Unqualified Teacher alongside undertaking her Foundation Degree, GCSE in Human Biology and then a top up Honours degree. In September 2023, following 5 years of successful Teaching and a block Teaching placement in a mainstream school for a term, Olivia underwent the 12 week 'straight to teaching' route, finally gaining QTS in December 2023. During this time Olivia proved to be an outstanding classroom practitioner and had numerous visits by Ofsted in our last two inspections. She has brought pedagogy, tact and hard work to our school team and will no doubt flourish into an exemplar Teacher.

Olivia is a shining example of how the apprenticeship route can help support individuals to achieve a fulfilling career. I am confident that she will lead pupils to become confident, independent individuals, providing a classroom environment that is innovative and inspirational. She has personalised her approach towards all pupils, striving to ensure that all of the children she teaches, reach their full potential regardless of their starting point. She is a firm believer that all children have a right to an exciting and vibrant classroom using confidently the formative and summative assessment in place in school.

Olivia is professional and an excellent team player but also develops others around her well. Although Olivia's journey has been a long one, I know that she will continue to bring hard work, fun and 'sparkle' to any teaching team, whilst fully embracing the chance of developing any whole school initiatives further, to enhance Fountains Primary School for us all."



## Sibling Support Group at Fountains Primary

On Saturday 03 March 2024 Fountains Primary School offered their second sibling support group. After advertising a whole school sibling event, they offered 14 siblings the opportunity to come together at School and take part in a variety of activities (led by their school staff and wellbeing team) including Forest Schools, cooking, craft and sporting activities.

The long term aim of this group, which has been newly set up since October, is to provide pupils' siblings with the opportunity to meet other young people who have siblings with additional needs. This will hopefully enable them to share stories with each other about their own lived experiences and ensure that they do not feel as isolated as a child who has a sibling with additional needs

All of the young people had an amazing time and their positive responses about this event has ensured that Fountains Primary will prioritise these events taking place at least once every half term.



## LGBTQ+ Day at Stanton Vale

Stanton Vale celebrated their first LGBTQIA+ day this term! Students and staff wore their brightest rainbows and had a parade on the playground, waving flags and making lots of noise. They continued the day by learning about different types of families, different types of relationships and exploring music and art by LGBTQ+ people. The day was full of acceptance, tolerance and pride!



# Esteem North Academy Updates

Esteem North Academy continues to grow from circa 80 pupils in April 22 to now 290 – over a 3 fold increase, within their 3 Academy sites. They are working closely with Esteem to source a 4th site to house their additional pupils and staffing cohort, with no sign of numbers slowing down!

As ENA grows, they continue to pursue further opportunities to support their pupils' development and career aspirations, including most recently at their High Peak site, career visits to Y10 and Y11 pupils...

Pupils met Kyle Mellor, a local gym owner and fitness trainer, Mark Dunning, who works at the University of Nottingham as a Professor of small animal internal medicine, and PCSO K Green and PC Podmore who visited to discuss County Lines.

"I really enjoyed delivering the talks" said Mark Dunning after visiting. "The pupils were great, and all showed a clear interest, which was great to see. I was inspired to see that despite many having low self-esteem and challenges in conventional learning environments, they all showed sparks of enthusiasm and triggered discussions around the subject. I haven't enjoyed giving a presentation so much in years!"

Congratulations to staff at Esteem North for creating these wonderful opportunities for their pupils to learn about different career paths and well done to the pupils for representing the school so well!



## Lessons from Auschwitz

Six learners from Fountains post-16 provision, recently took part in the 'Lessons from Auschwitz' project. This involved participating in online seminars with educators and students from many other schools around the Midlands. They then had a really long, hard, but also interesting and educational day trip to Poland. While there, they visited a Jewish synagogue and Auschwitz-Birkenau the former Nazi concentration and extermination camp. They learned about the terrible events of the Holocaust, whilst also focusing on some of the personal stories of the people that were involved, to help them understand that this was a human event, and not something carried out by monsters. At the end of the day, as the sun went down, there was a service conducted by a Rabbi, and each person lit a candle to reflect and remember. After returning, the group attended a further seminar where they heard first-hand from a Holocaust survivor. The students are now ambassadors for the project and are responsible for sharing their learning with others, and to be confident in speaking out against intolerance.



## Stanton on Ice

Last academic year some pupils from Stanton Vale with complex medical needs attended a residential where they experienced adventurous activities including wheelchair abseiling. This was a wonderful experience for the pupils so this term staff arranged for them to visit the Ice Arena. They had an amazing experience being whisked around the ice by Ice Arena staff!



## Esteem South Take Stratford

Pupils at Esteem South Academy were invited to Stratford Upon Avon for a day trip to visit Shakespeare's hometown. The pupils have been studying 'The Tempest' in Key Stage 3 and 'Romeo and Juliet' in Key Stage 4. They explored the town and visited Shakespeare's childhood home, and despite the wet weather, all enjoyed their day out.

