

Tees Valley Education

# TVEd

Magazine - Autumn 2024

**Trust Vision**  
*To transform children's  
life chances.*

What's inside:

**Diamond Standards** P6-7

**Unveiling the magic of Shrek** P15

**Support with the cost of Winter** P22-23



# Welcome...



**MISS K MORLEY**  
CEO  
TEES VALLEY EDUCATION

Dear parents, carers and the community,

As the Autumn term draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on what has been a truly inspiring and heartwarming first term across all of our Tees Valley Education academies.

This term has been filled with moments of joy, connection and achievement. Our Harvest Festival was a beautiful reminder of the power of community, as we came together to celebrate generosity and gratitude. Our Christmas Carol Service was equally uplifting, where the talent and spirit of our children shone brightly, filling the air with festive cheer and hope. Especially when the surprise donkeys arrived!

Throughout this term, our academies have been buzzing with engaging curriculum-based learning and activities. From creative art projects and science experiments to sports and technology events; the dedication and enthusiasm of our staff and students has been nothing short of remarkable. These experiences not only

enrich learning but also bring joy and a sense of belonging to everyone involved.

A special congratulations goes to this term's Diamond Standard winners. Your hard work, determination and TVEd spirit embody the very best of what it means to be part of the family. We are incredibly proud of your care, courage, commitment, creativity and curiosity.

As the year draws to a close, I want to thank you all, including parents, carers, staff, and the wider community, for your unwavering support. Together, we continue to build a nurturing and vibrant environment where all of our children can thrive.

May this season bring happiness and harmony to your homes, and may the New Year ahead be filled with healthy hope and success.

Warmest wishes  
**Katrina Morley**



## Christmas closure

Whilst the two-week Christmas holiday period is the only holiday period the Trust and all of its Academies close completely, we realise that for some families, there may still be a need to access emergency provisions, funds and services. Below we have signposted some useful contacts for you:

Website: **Turn2Us**  
<https://advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk>

This is a one stop webpage offering contact details for a wide range of support providers.

### Telephone contacts (by Local Authority)

#### Middlesbrough LA

Social Care first contact team  
**01642 726004**

SEND Team - single point of contact  
**01642 201831**

Middlesbrough Foodbank  
**07954 131337**

Middlesbrough Citizens Advice  
**01642 802282**

Middlesbrough Welfare Rights Unit  
**01642 729242**

#### Redcar & Cleveland LA

Social Care first contact team  
**01642 130700**

SEND Team  
**01642 304503**

Redcar Foodbank  
**01642 484842**

Redcar Citizens Advice  
**01642 030000**

Redcar Welfare Rights Unit  
**01642 771166**

**Remember** - the above contacts are not intended to be used instead of the emergency services. Always dial 999 if you feel a person or people are in immediate danger.



## YOUNG JOURNALISTS

# TVEd Young Journalists

We now have a group of children who are TVEd journalists. Please enjoy reading their write ups on events that have taken place in each academy. Our journalists will feature regularly in your Trust magazine in the future.



## Discovery report



A few weeks ago, we moved into our new Sandy Flatts site. Things are going brilliantly! Everyone was feeling a bit nervous for their first day but it all went really well. We were welcomed with a grand entrance into our new site by watching one of our journalists, Lexi-Mae, and another pupil, Charlie, cut a purple ribbon.

We have a lot of new facilities on our new site, including sensory integration rooms and soft play. These provide a great opportunity for children to access therapeutic time. When we are doing sports, we have a brand-new hall and we also have our own changing rooms with lockers! Our school also offers after school clubs, such as our sports club which everyone is welcome to join! During lunch time, we offer different clubs like art, Lego and sports! We really enjoy this as it gives each one of us different options to do at dinner time. Our new building is called the "Pioneer Building". It has a range of classrooms with some extra ones ready for when we expand! The classrooms are fantastic – they provide us with plenty of space and are full of light, with big windows and interesting displays. We have lovely furniture and new storage spaces for our classroom resources. We also have a new cooking room and an arts and creativity room.

Being together, on one site, means that we get to join primary for lunchtimes and Friday assemblies. When it is lunch time, everyone from each class gathers

to have their dinner before going outside for break. We thank the lunchtime staff for cooking our dinner and the other staff around the hall.

To support with our new site, some of the Year 9 pupils now have jobs. These jobs include yard supervisors, librarians, technicians, farm workers and PAs to SLT. Did I mention that the new Mugga has been opened in our playground? We have enjoyed playing football and other team games in here – it's a fantastic space and gives us plenty of room to run around and get active.

We are looking forward to welcoming some new animals into our school including fluffy, cute rabbits. Stay tuned for them to arrive in a couple of weeks' time.

On Wednesdays, we have music assemblies. Each class can gather to have a fun time to sing different songs, especially for members of the choir! On Fridays, we have a celebration assembly where we celebrate work that each class has done. If you do something impressive, you might have the chance of being rewarded with Explorer of the Week!

We have a choir group of pupils from Year 6 to Year 9. We regularly get together to practice or rehearse songs for up-and-coming events. We recently went to Guisborough church for a carol service and have more plans, like 'Shrek the Musical', in the Summer. We are currently

auditioning for roles of Shrek which we are thrilled about. Good luck to everyone involved!

As a thank you to Portakabin, we have made cards for the builders who built our school and had a celebration assembly just for them.

At Discovery we appreciate our outstanding staff, each one has unique strengths. They're kind and are always there if we need to talk to someone! The fact that we are all on one site is truly incredible!

Journalists: Lexi-Mae Spradbury, Sunni Calliste and Ronan Bullock.





# Brambles believers



It began as a normal assembly on a normal day, and as always, we headed into our Core Value Champion assembly. Everything seemed the same, until our headteacher, Mr Mayle, started playing music on the piano and one thing was certainly not normal- he had turned into the one and only Shrek!

Suddenly, from out of nowhere, bursting through the door, was... Donkey (Mr Baker)! Donkey was dancing around the hall making the children go wild with excitement while Shrek continued to play the piano. It was hilarious. Not only that, but more characters also joined in: Puss-in-Boots (Miss Begloo), Fiona (Miss Gaskarth) and the Gingerbread Man (Miss Howard). The hall erupted as some of the teachers joined in too. As laughter filled the room, it was announced that the 2025 TVED musical would be Shrek! We cannot wait for opening night!

by Confidence Omovbude and Ethan Godswill-Oguzie (Y5)



*Ethan Godswill-Oguzie*

*Confidence Omovbude*



# Dormanstown report

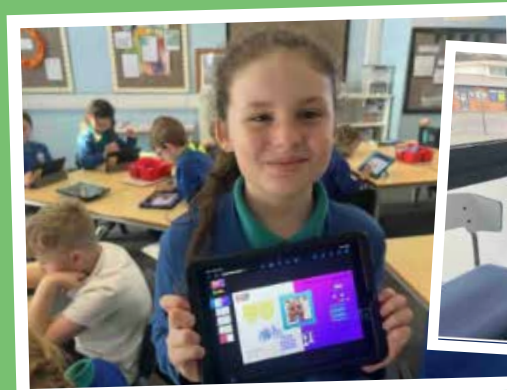
Power of Women (PoW) was set up because Teesside was named one of the worst places to grow up in because of the lack of opportunities for women to work in industry and to be paid equally. Every member of our class was shocked to hear this - especially the boys!

This stark piece of information made us feel scared for our futures, but instead of allowing this statistic to continue, at Dormanstown Primary a small group of us have become PoW ambassadors and we have a passion for making change and our work with PoW is the beginning of our journey.

PoW is a great thing to be part of, it gives us a platform to make our feelings heard. We were chosen by a selection panel and it was our first time being interviewed! It was scary but it was such a good experience.

The work of PoW links with our school value of 'Aspiration'. We hope that as part of our work we can promote equal opportunities more widely. By recognising the importance of equal opportunities, we can create a fairer, more inclusive community in Teesside.

Written by: Alisha, Bonnie, Mark and Jorgia.





# Pennyman report

On Wednesday 9th October we went with the rest of our year group to the Princess Alexandra Auditorium to meet author Cressida Cowell. We went by bus and there were lots of other schools there.

Cressida told us about her new books; The Wizards of Once, Which Way to Anywhere and Which Way Around the Galaxy? We are really looking forward to reading these.

Cressida told us about a legend in Scotland about a mountain shaped like a dragon. Rumours say that at night the mountain comes alive and even starts walking and stomping around! She got us to imagine seeing a dragon and what it would look like, we are hoping our hills don't come alive.

Hiccup is in Cressida's new story and he is from How to Train a Dragon, we like how

she links her stories together with her characters.

She wanted us to think about what our superpowers would be if we had them. *'I would want waterpowers to lift me up into thin air'* – Lucia.

The best part of the day was when we got to buy a book that had been signed by Cressida Cowell.

*'I was so excited to meet a real author of a book'* – Lucia

*'I was so happy because I got to buy one of Cressida's books, signed by her'* – Nico

*'I was amazed because I had never met an author before'* - Ollie

We would definitely like to meet an author again!

Nico Taylor, Lucia Condratov, Ollie James. Y3



Nico Taylor

Lucia Condratov

Ollie James



# Wilton report

The play leaders at Wilton Primary Academy come from the Y5/6 class, and they work extremely hard to make the younger children happy at lunchtimes. These play leaders try their very best to keep Wilton's sports program running, and the games are becoming more creative and successful each week. The idea for this came from the school council, and we all enjoyed being trained on how to lead games. The children attended a specific training session to learn the games and how to involve the younger children. The amazing Y5/6 children are deeply enjoying the concept of being play leaders and shared very positive comments when asked about the role. The children playing these interesting games are showing respect to the leaders, and no teacher has ever had to step in.

Some of the play leaders said to us: *"I really enjoy sport and am excited to continue next year!"* *"I find play leading fun, but sometimes it can be a bit chaotic!"*

*"I enjoy playing the games and leading them, but sometimes the games can get a bit old, so we change them a bit."*

These events happen at Wilton Primary Academy's school playground at lunchtime outside. Games include Andy's Coming, a game that involves lying on the floor; Treasure Chest, which involves running to get equipment; Lion King, which is a bit like Bulldog; and dodgeball, with much softer balls so the children don't get hurt.

Written by: Sophia Hassan and Alice Tibbett.







# Diamond Standard Awards

## AUTUMN TERM 2024

 **Courage**
 **Commitment**
 **Curiosity**
 **Care**
 **Creativity**

In this edition of our Trust magazine, we are thrilled to highlight the exceptional achievements of our pupils and staff in the Diamond Standards section. We celebrate those who have truly embodied our core values of Care, Curiosity, Commitment, Courage, and Creativity in remarkable ways. From acts of kindness and innovative thinking to unwavering dedication and fearless ambition, these individuals continue to inspire us all. Congratulations to everyone featured! Your efforts shine as a beacon of excellence in our community, and we are incredibly proud of all you've accomplished. Keep striving, keep shining!



### Brambles Primary Academy



**Courage**  
**Alfie Roberts**



**Commitment**  
**Shane Swales**



**Curiosity**  
**Evan Powel**



**Care**  
**Florence Morley**



**Creativity**  
**Abbie Suffell**



### Discovery Special Academy



**Courage**  
**Amy Lawson**



**Commitment**  
**Zoe Barnes**



**Curiosity**  
**Benny Richards**



**Care**  
**Hayley Thompson**



**Creativity**  
**Jenni Fydler**



### Dormanstown Primary Academy



**Courage**

**Kesav Vishnu-Nair**



**Commitment**

**Mrs Antje Kell**



**Curiosity**

**Isaac Walker**



**Care**

**Mrs Kelly Jackson**



**Creativity**

**Luke Mathie**



### Pennyman Primary Academy



**Courage**

**Lacey Galloway**



**Commitment**

**Sarah Cummings**



**Curiosity**

**Isaac Morgan**



**Care**

**Mrs Tracy Hanger**



**Creativity**

**Ava Fagan**



### Wilton Primary Academy



**Courage**

**Ebony Walker**



**Commitment**

**Winnie Naisbitt**



**Curiosity**

**Wyatt Walker**



**Care**

**Aria Riseborough**



**Creativity**

**Charlie Cook**

# Carol Service at St. Nicholas' Church



## ***More than a musical event***

The festive season began on a joyful note as our academies gathered for a heartwarming carol service at the historic St. Nicholas' Church. This much-loved event brought together pupils, staff, and families to share the magic of the season through song and reflection.

Singing together is a powerful way to connect, and this service beautifully captured the togetherness of our communities. With voices from all five academies blending harmoniously, the church was filled with music that celebrated the joy and hope of the festive season.

The church provided an excellent setting for our service. Parents, carers and families filled the church seats, their company making the event even more special. Watching them join in the singing or simply share in the moment was a reminder of how the festive season brings us all closer together.

Highlights of the service included a touching group rendition of "O Holy Night" and an energetic, joyful performance of "Joy to the World," both of which had the congregation singing along. A reflective reading from one of our pupils added a moment of thoughtfulness, reminding everyone of the deeper meaning of the season whatever their religious beliefs or background.

For our academies, the carol service is about more than music; it is about connection. It offers an opportunity to come together as one community, celebrating not just the festive season but the values we share such as creativity, care and curiosity.

To all who joined us, thank you for being part of this special event and for supporting our communities.





# Harvest

As part of Harvest celebrations at Pennyman Primary, Dormanstown Primary and Wilton Primary, each academy collected donations for local food banks. Thanks to the generosity of staff and families, we were able to donate a large amount of food, helping the food bank continue to support local families in need.

At Dormanstown, we marked Harvest Festival with assemblies for year group. Families were invited to join us in this special celebration. We learned about the history of Harvest, which goes back to the Old Testament, when Jewish people gave thanks to their God for the crops that they had grown. We took a moment to thank God for all the good things we have, while also thinking about those in our local community and around the world who do not have enough. The assemblies were filled with beautiful singing from our children, with music played by the talented Mrs Norris. One of our pupils even treated us to a wonderful glockenspiel solo!

The assemblies finished with the announcement of the winners of our new Harvest fruit and vegetable competition. The entries were fantastic and very creative.



At Wilton, we held an assembly with the theme of 'being thankful for farmers' and the wide variety of foods we can grow and eat. The children also gave thanks for the people who grow, harvest, produce, and deliver their school lunches. They showed appreciation for the hard work that goes into providing the food we enjoy.

At Pennyman, we celebrated Harvest with assemblies, focusing on the amazing donations from staff and families, as well as the fun activities and songs each class had worked so hard on. In our Key Stage 2 assembly, we explored how different countries celebrate Harvest. The children loved learning about the Harvest traditions in various countries. It was lovely to hear all the children singing our Harvest songs and coming together as a school during this special time.

A big thank you to all the families who contributed to our Harvest collections.



TVEd CAREERS RELATED LEARNING

# Classroom to Careers



## Casper Shipping:

Each term we will be shining a spotlight on a local business and one of its employees to show you what real-world careers are all about.

In this edition, we're diving into Casper Shipping to learn about what they do and the different kind of jobs they offer. We got to sit down with Nikki Sayer, the Managing Director, who told us all about her job and what its like working at the company.

### What does a typical day at Casper Shipping look like?

Nikki: Every day at Casper Shipping is unique! Our Port Agency team is on the ground whenever a ship arrives. We coordinate loading and discharging operations, manage crew needs, and ensure everything runs smoothly. Imagine being the vital link connecting various elements of maritime logistics—it's a fast-paced and fulfilling environment!

### How did you get into this type of work, Nikki?

Nikki: I actually fell into the maritime industry! I started on a youth training scheme at British Steel in the 80s and was drawn to the shipping department because they seemed to be having so much fun. I applied for a job, not knowing much about shipping, but it turned out to be the best decision of my career. I've worked all over the world, and now I'm

proud to be the Managing Director of Casper Customs, focusing on strategy and innovation.

### What are the highlights and challenges of doing a role like yours?

Nikki: The highlights include building a fantastic team that supports each other and celebrating our successes, like landing big contracts. It's incredibly rewarding to see everyone work together towards common goals. However, recruiting talent is a challenge. Many people aren't aware of the benefits of working in the maritime industry, and the hiring process can be tough because we often rely on personal networks. Plus, we need to be mindful of evolving job roles in our sector.

### How can others get into this type of work and industry?

Nikki: Getting into the maritime industry can be challenging, but it's not just

about having formal qualifications. At Casper Shipping, we value character and teamwork. We actively work with the High Tide Foundation and the North East School of Shipping to provide educational resources and awareness about career opportunities in our field. There are plenty of roles available, whether you enjoy hands-on work, logistics, or even digital innovation.

If you're curious about joining us, come visit and explore our website! There are exciting paths waiting for passionate individuals ready to embark on a career in the maritime world!

Website Link  
<https://www.casperltd.com/>

tel: +44(0)1642 243662

Email Shipping:  
[commercial@casperltd.com](mailto:commercial@casperltd.com)



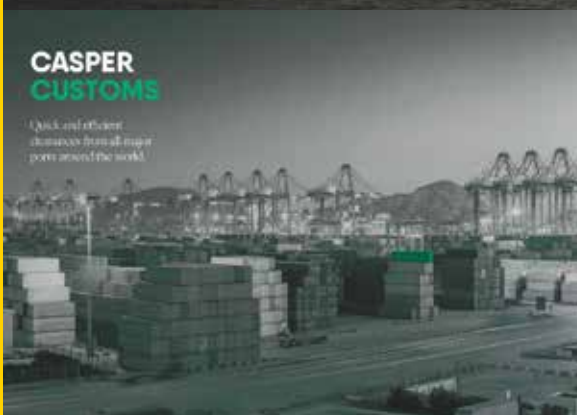


## Casper Shipping Wins Prestigious UK Business Award

Congratulations to Casper Shipping on receiving the esteemed King's Award for Enterprise. This prestigious honor is a testament to their outstanding achievements in international trade and their significant contributions to the UK economy.

Group Managing Director Michael Shakesheff said the award celebrates the hard work of their team.

Casper is also focusing on eco-friendly practices and innovative technology as they continue to grow and lead in the shipping industry.



# Discovery Special Academy: Secondary New Build







On 16th October, the Discovery community, from nursery to Year 9, were together on one academy site for the very first time.

This was a special occasion that gave everybody immense pride. This achievement was only possible thanks to a remarkable team effort to complete the new academy building on time. The dedication of staff, pupils, contractors, site managers, administrators, and many others played a vital role in bringing this project to life. The team commitment was reflected in the joy and excitement on the faces of the young people as they cut the ribbon and stepped into their new academy classrooms for the very first time.

It is difficult to put into words what this building represents and the profound impact it will have on so many lives, both now and for years to come. We are incredibly grateful to the Portakabin contract teams, whose work turned our dream into a reality. They became part of our community during this project, and we look forward to our ongoing partnership with them.

Young people expressed their enthusiasm through writing letters sharing what they love most about the new building, with one young

person even saying they would like to live there! Others wrote about how they were eager to use the new sports hall, cooking room and art space. The outdoor area was also a favourite, as young people look forward to spending time together in this wonderful new environment. Their words capture the joy and anticipation that this new space has already begun to inspire.



# Real World Careers at Discovery



At Discovery Special Academy, we believe that preparing our pupils for adulthood involves equipping them with the skills, independence, and confidence to take on real-world responsibilities. This term, we're excited to introduce an innovative career initiative that gives our Year 9 pupils the chance to apply for real jobs within the academy, providing them with valuable life skills and a sense of agency.

## Building agency through real jobs

From an early age, we encourage our pupils to think about careers and contribute to the community. This year, we've taken this a step further with a formal recruitment process for Year 9 pupils. They had the opportunity to apply for key roles such as PA to the Head, Art Technician, PE Technician, Cooking Room Technician, Dining Hall Assistant, Yard Supervisor, Dinner Hall Logistics Operative, Farm Worker, and Librarian.

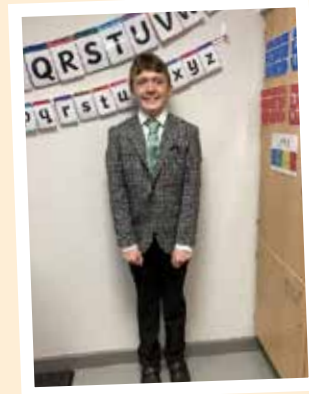


Each role was selected for its importance to the academy's daily operations while offering pupils the chance to build practical skills and explore career interests. Pupils applied for the roles, completed application forms, attended interviews, and underwent training before taking on their new responsibilities. This process helps develop a sense of agency, encouraging pupils to take ownership of their roles and contribute meaningfully to the community.



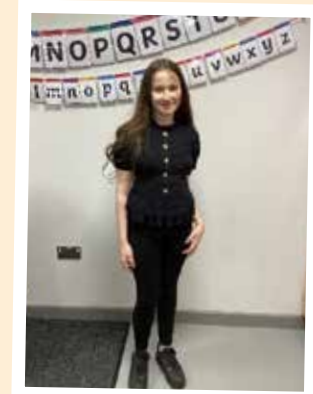
## Cultivating independence and responsibility

These roles offer pupils a chance to develop important life skills, such as time management, teamwork, and communication. They gain experience in workplace protocols, from signing in and out to following health and safety guidelines, preparing them for future employment and adulthood.



Importantly, the initiative helps pupils become more independent. They are given real responsibilities, which teach them to be accountable. By working with staff and classmates, they learn to manage tasks, keep their promises, and work in professional settings—skills they will use throughout their lives.

Moreover, each pupil is recognised as an important member of the academy community. They are not just completing tasks—they're actively contributing to the academy's success, whether it's running the library, overseeing the farm, or ensuring smooth dining hall operations. This strengthens their connection to the community and reinforces the idea that everyone has a role in making the school a better place.



## Looking ahead

We are incredibly proud of our Year 9 pupils for their enthusiasm, professionalism, and commitment throughout this process. Their dedication has been inspiring, and we're confident this experience will have a lasting impact on their development.

By providing real-world career opportunities, we're empowering our pupils to take charge of their futures, build independence, and aspire to meaningful roles within the community. This initiative is just one way we are preparing them for the challenges and opportunities ahead.



# Unveiling the Magic of **SHREK**

Excitement and creativity are at the heart of the Trust's 2025 theatrical production, and this year's choice is nothing short of magical—Shrek! On 15th November, the curtain of mystery was lifted as all five academies united in a special assembly to reveal this year's show. The announcement was met with cheers, laughter, and a wave of enthusiasm from children, parents, and staff alike.

The build-up to the reveal was as thrilling as the announcement itself. Throughout the term, each academy teased the production by hiding creative clues about the chosen performance. From cryptic hints in classrooms to playful nods during school activities, the clues sparked curiosity and encouraged collaboration as pupils and families tried to piece together the puzzle. The grand reveal was a moment of joy and connection, celebrating the community spirit that is so central to our Trust.

The choice of Shrek—a tale of self-discovery, friendship, and embracing individuality—feels especially fitting. Its humor, heart, and timeless message resonate with audiences of all ages, making it the perfect centerpiece for our Trust-wide production. The story's themes also align beautifully with our values, reminding everyone of the importance of acceptance and working together.

Preparations for the production are already in full swing. Across all five academies, pupils and staff are pouring their energy into rehearsals, set designs, and costumes. The creativity on display is truly inspiring—children are

stepping into roles with confidence, learning lines, practicing choreography, and discovering their own unique contributions to the show. Behind the scenes, staff members are working hard to ensure every detail is perfect, from constructing sets that bring the swamp and Duloc to life to organising vibrant costumes that capture the characters.

This production is more than just a show; it's a celebration of talent, dedication, and collaboration. It's an opportunity for pupils to shine, for families to come together, and for our Trust to share the magic of the arts with the wider community.

Mark your calendars and spread the word—this is a performance not to be missed! With its delightful mix of comedy, music, and heartwarming moments, Shrek is set to be a highlight of the year. Keep an eye out for updates, behind-the-scenes sneak peeks, and ticket information as we count down to opening night. One thing is certain: Shrek will be an ogre-the-top experience that leaves everyone smiling!



# Sustainability in our Academies



Tees Valley Education Trust is committed to sustainability, focusing on creating a positive future for the children, families, and communities we serve. Our strategy is centred around environmental, social, and economic responsibility, with a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability. We are dedicated to reducing our impact on the planet by promoting eco-friendly practices in all our activities.

One of our key priorities is reducing the Trust's environmental footprint. We are developing an action plan to improve energy efficiency, minimise waste, and source environmentally friendly products and services. This includes working with partners who share our commitment to sustainability.

Our goal is to ensure that the children and young people we support grow up in a world where sustainability is at the heart of their communities. By acting now, we aim to leave a positive legacy, creating a healthier, more sustainable environment for future generations. We will be sharing more plans with children and families next term, inviting feedback and ideas to ensure we are working together with our communities towards a greener future.

We believe that by embedding sustainability in everything we do, we can inspire children and young people, as well as the adults they work with, to take small steps towards making a big difference. Together, we can build a better, more sustainable world for all.





# Reflections on Remembrance: Sacrifice and stillness



On 11th November, we paused together across our Trust schools to honour the bravery, sacrifice, and service of those who have fought in conflicts throughout history. Remembrance Day is an important occasion that allows us to reflect on the courage and commitment of those who have given so much for our peace and freedom. This year, our academies took part in a range of activities that allowed children and staff to reflect together.

At 11:00 AM, our academies observed a two-minute silence. This moment of stillness was observed by pupils, staff, and visitors alike, providing a quiet opportunity for reflection and respect. The stillness was a powerful reminder of the importance of remembering those who have served and continue to serve in the armed forces today. Pupils engaged in a range of activities designed to deepen their understanding of Remembrance Day. In lessons, they worked on projects that explored the stories of soldiers, the significance of poppies, and the values of peace and respect. Younger pupils created beautiful poppy artwork, while older pupils researched and presented on historical events related to wartime, including the significance of the Armistice and the role of the Commonwealth forces.



Whether in classrooms, assemblies, or in a shared silence, the day reminded everybody of the importance of coming together to remember the sacrifices of others. For our pupils, it was a powerful opportunity to develop a deeper appreciation for the care, courage and commitment that so many people give during times of conflict.



# Power of Women

Across the term, POW sessions were held across all Tees Valley Education schools as part of the Primary School Ambassador Program, working with Key Stage 2 pupils on the POW Ambassador Programme. These sessions were designed to foster ambition, promote equal opportunities, and break down gender biases. Now, after months of exciting collaboration, four exceptional ambassadors from each school have been chosen to represent their peers.

their future dreams and career possibilities. We created an inclusive environment where every child had the chance to explore the concept of equality—especially gender equality—while thinking about how their choices today will shape their futures. The energy in the room was electric as some of last year’s POW Ambassadors returned to offer advice and showcased what lies ahead for this new group of young leaders.

The selection panel—which included influential figures like Jill Fiden, Aaron Walker, and Julie Hollis from Thirteen Group, Lisa Tipton from New World Financial Group and Abigail Howey from PX Group—were blown away by the enthusiasm and confidence of the pupils during the interview process. The commitment and passion they displayed, from their application forms to their interview performances, made the selection process both exciting and incredibly tough. Each ambassador proved themselves to be a true leader in the making!





# Let's Craft Project

One of our Diamond Standards is creativity. So we are very proud to take part in the Let's Craft campaign. This initiative, supported by our wonderful partners at the charity Children North East and Hobbycraft, has made an incredible impact across the Tees Valley region. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to this meaningful project.

Through 'Let's Craft', we distributed hundreds of craft boxes this year packed with over 1,000 creative materials—scissors, glue, paint, pom-poms, glitter, and more—directly into the hands of children and families. These kits provided children with the tools they needed to unleash their creativity, express themselves, and find joy in making.

Crafting is about more than just fun; it nurtures essential skills. From boosting brain development and hand-eye coordination to enhancing self-confidence and emotional well-being, the benefits of creative activities are big. We also know that the cost-of-living and the cold winter months may mean that many families are choosing to stay indoors more over the winter months. So, we know that these boxes will be a big help.

At Tees Valley Education, we believe that every child should have the opportunity to discover and nurture their creativity. The success of the Let's Craft campaign is a shining example of what can be achieved when we work together as a community.





## COMMUNITIES & FAMILIES

There are lots of important activities happening at Tees Valley Education that are designed to support our communities and families. In this edition we are sharing some examples from Dormanstown Primary Academy.

# Connect Event

Dormanstown Primary Academy continues to create strong links with many different charities and organisations to support communities and families. In September, the academy held their first 'Connect Event' and welcomed over 40 different organisations and community groups to the academy. Each organisation shared some of the work that they are doing and explored ways that they can work together to support even more families. Our next event will take place early in the Spring term.

We are using the phrase 'Better Living' to help our academies and community groups think about the ways in which we can support more families.



# Farm Shop

The academy have also been successful in applying for some funding to help set up a community farm shop in the academy. Thank you to Tees Valley Community Foundation, Beyond Housing and Travis Perkins for their generous support with this.

Staff at Dormanstown Primary Academy have begun working with Fareshare to prevent food being wasted in local supermarkets and support our families with low-cost food options. Families and staff at the academy are able to purchase items at a much lower cost than their retail cost. Money is then used to buy more essential stock to support families.

The academy have also signed up to FareshareGo so that we can collect food from other suppliers throughout the week. After only 6 weeks, many families each week are visiting the farm shop. Alongside the pastoral team, the year 6 Junior Leadership Team stock the farm shop each week and work in the shop which gives them valuable work experience. They have worked with a Yorkshire-based artist to design a logo for the farm shop and are planning a special launch of the shop with families soon.





# Celebrating excellence

## **Pennyman Primary Academy's Nomination for the PTI Primary Impact Award**

We are delighted to announce that Pennyman Primary Academy has been nominated for the prestigious PTI Primary Impact Award in the category of Computing. This award celebrates excellence in primary school leadership, recognising schools that prioritise high-quality subject teaching.

Pennyman Primary Academy earned this recognition for its outstanding work in coding and computing. The school has developed an excellent computing offer and made great use of technology in primary lessons, ensuring that learning is relevant, engaging, and accessible to all pupils.

Staff at Pennyman have gained a deeper understanding of the computing curriculum through dedicated staff training too. They have introduced a variety of tools and resources into classrooms, providing hands-on opportunities for pupils to explore coding and how to use it in careers. These experiences are supporting children to be 21st century learners and ready for jobs in the modern world.

Teachers and leaders have adapted the national curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, ensuring every child can access and benefit from the opportunities offered by modern technology. This is important in all of our academies because we believe that every child should be included and be able to thrive!

By embracing innovation and promoting a hands-on, inclusive approach to computing, Pennyman Primary Academy is preparing its pupils for a digital future. This nomination for the PTI Primary Impact Award shows the academy's commitment to excellence and its vision of inspiring a love for learning through technology.

Congratulations to the entire Pennyman Primary team for this well-deserved recognition. Your hard work is making a real difference, helping to shape the digital leaders of tomorrow!







# Support with the cost of winter

We know that winter and Christmas can be a difficult time for many families. The rising cost of living has affected everyone, and with the Christmas season, it's understandable that families might be feeling anxious about money.

We've put together some ideas on how families can find support over the winter months.

## Supporting each other

Talking openly with friends and family can make a difference. It might be that others are facing similar struggles. Here are some ideas for how communities can support each other:

- **Spending limits:** Agree on a set budget for presents to avoid putting pressure on yourself and others for spending too much.
- **Clothing and toy swaps:** Share items like outgrown children's toys or clothes your children no longer wear—these might be a big help to another family.
- **Shared meals:** If you are hosting Christmas dinner or a party, ask guests to contribute food or drinks. It spreads the cost and takes the pressure off having to cook everything.

## Gifts on a budget

Younger children are usually thrilled with any gift, but as children get older, they might ask for something specific.

Be upfront with your children about what you can afford, and if others want to buy them presents, let them know what your child would appreciate. You might even suggest that they contribute money towards a bigger item your child is saving up for.

Here are some cost saving gift ideas:

- **Charity shops:** Check out local options like the British Heart Foundation in Middlesbrough for great finds.
- **Pay It Forward schemes:** Drakes Bookshop in Stockton offers a scheme where families can request new books that have been donated. You can contact them through their website at <https://www.drakethebookshop.co.uk/contact>
- **Online marketplaces:** If getting to the shops is difficult, try online charity shops like Oxfam or Facebook Marketplace for low-cost or even free items.





## Food on a budget

Planning meals ahead of time is a great way to manage your food spending. A weekly meal plan can help you avoid unnecessary purchases and make the most of what you have.

Here are some ways to keep Christmas food costs down:

- **Budget Christmas recipes:** Look for inspiration from people like Jack Monroe, who shares great ideas for cooking on a budget.
- **Cooking on a Boot Strap:** Jack Monroe is known for creating affordable recipes that focus on using everyday ingredients. <https://cookingonabootstrap.com>
- **Love Food Hate Waste:** This site offers great recipes and tips to reduce food waste while saving money on groceries. <https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com>
- **Budget Bytes:** Budget Bytes focuses on affordable, simple, and tasty meals, with a breakdown of costs per serving. <https://www.budgetbytes.com>



## Household Support Fund (HSF) for struggling families

This winter, extra help may be available for families in Teesside through the Household Support Fund (HSF). The HSF provides financial aid to help cover essential costs like food, heating, and electricity. Each local council runs its own version of the scheme, so the amount of support available may vary.

You'll need to apply through your local council, and each application is assessed individually.

Most councils will require you to show that you're struggling to afford essentials. Some may begin offering payments in October, while others will distribute funds closer to Christmas.

- **Middlesbrough:** <https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/support-payments/household-support-fund/>
- **Redcar and Cleveland:** <https://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/household-support-fund>

## Other support

- **Cost of living payments:** If you're entitled to certain benefits, you may be eligible for a one off payment to help with rising living costs. Learn more [www.gov.uk/guidance/costoflivingpayment](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/costoflivingpayment)
- **Grants for energy bills:** Citizens Advice has a helpful summary of grants and benefits available for families struggling to pay energy bills. You can find it at <https://bit.ly/3BIRoHe>
- **Universal Credit:** If you're on a low income or out of work, check whether you're eligible for Universal Credit at [www.gov.uk/universalcredit](http://www.gov.uk/universalcredit)
- **Trussell Trust:** The Trussell Trust can help with emergency food support. Find your nearest food bank at [www.trusselltrust.org/gethelp/findafoodbank](http://www.trusselltrust.org/gethelp/findafoodbank)

While the challenges of this winter can feel overwhelming, remember that there are resources and support available to help you and your family manage.

## Online Parenting Courses - Family Lives

Being a parent has never been easy. There are no manuals for it, and previous generations may not be able to provide the insight you're looking for. The family unit is more dispersed than ever, with some families existing hundreds of miles from what may be called a 'core unit'. The rapid pace of societal change in the UK rapidly outstrips the knowledge of the immediate past. The result is that many parents may find themselves lost in a maelstrom of contradictory advice. For adults, time has never been more compacted. Family Lives has produced a series of online parenting courses, to make this challenge a little easier. If interested please follow the link below:

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/online-parenting-courses>

Family Lives offers a confidential and free\* helpline service for families in England and Wales (previously known as Parentline). They can be contacted on 0808 800 2222 for emotional support, information, advice and guidance on any aspect of parenting and family life. Their website is also a rich source of useful support and advice.

(\* Free from landlines and most mobiles)

# The Christmas *Express*

*It was a frosty December morning in Middlesbrough, and Sophie was excited. Every year, the Christmas Express train travelled from Middlesbrough to Redcar, bringing festive cheer to everyone. Sophie and her best friend, Jack, had been waiting all month for this magical journey.*

*Bundled in warm coats, scarves, and hats, Sophie and Jack dashed out the door, their breath making puffy clouds in the chilly air. As they reached Middlesbrough Station, they saw the Christmas Express waiting on the platform. The train was decorated with glittering lights, shiny tinsel, and a giant golden star on the front.*

***“All aboard the Christmas Express!”** called the conductor, a jolly man with a red coat and a fluffy white beard. Sophie and Jack climbed into the train. Everyone was excited for the journey to Redcar’s big Christmas market. As the train chugged out of the station, the children gasped in delight. Snow had begun to fall, covering the rooftops of Middlesbrough in a soft white blanket. Along the way, they saw the famous Transporter Bridge glistening with frost and twinkling Christmas lights. The conductor appeared in their carriage with a big silver tray. **“Hot chocolate for everyone!”** he*

*announced. Sophie and Jack each took a mug, which was topped with whipped cream and marshmallows. **“This is the best Christmas ever!”** Jack said, his face glowing with happiness.*

*The train slowed and out of the window snow-covered fields stretched out like a winter wonderland. Sophie pressed her nose to the window. **“Look! Reindeer!”** she exclaimed, pointing to a group of deer playing in the snow. But suddenly, the train came to a stop. The conductor hurried through the carriages. **“Everyone, stay seated. We’ll be moving shortly,”** he said. Sophie and Jack looked at each other. They were curious about what was happening.*

***“Let’s see what’s going on,”** Sophie whispered. The two friends tiptoed to the front of the train. Outside, they saw a tiny red fox stuck in a snowdrift. **“Oh no! The poor fox needs help,”** Jack said.*





Sophie didn't hesitate. She grabbed a blanket from the train and carefully stepped into the snow. Jack followed, and together, they courageously helped free the little fox. The fox wagged its bushy tail gratefully and dashed off into the woods. As they climbed back on the train, the conductor smiled. **"You two have big hearts showing care to others,"** he said. **"That fox might have been Santa's helper. You've just saved Christmas magic!"**

The train started moving again, and passing the beacon, they safely arrived in Redcar. The town square was glowing with thousands of lights, a tall Christmas tree stood in the centre,

and the air was filled with the sound of carols and laughter. Sophie and Jack left the train and ran to the market, where they found stalls selling candy canes, toys, and gingerbread.

That night, as they rode the Christmas Express back to Middlesbrough, Sophie and Jack couldn't stop smiling. The fox they had helped seemed to wink at them from the trees, and the conductor gave them a special Christmas bell as a keepsake.

**"Best Christmas ever,"** Sophie said as they stepped off the train.

Jack nodded. **"Let's ride the Christmas Express again next year!"** From that day on, Sophie and Jack knew that the true magic of Christmas wasn't just in lights and gifts - it was in kindness, friendship, and the joy of helping others.





## FUN ACTIVITIES

# Christmas Shortbread

Christmas Shortbread. A holiday treat everyone will love, made to share with the whole family



We would love to see any photos of your Christmas Shortbread. If you would like to share them with us please email to [info@TVEd.org.uk](mailto:info@TVEd.org.uk) - they may appear in the next magazine!

### Ingredients

125g unsalted butter, softened

55g caster sugar, plus extra to finish

180g plain flour

### Method

#### STEP 1

Preheat the oven to 190C/170C Fan/Gas 5.

#### STEP 2

Beat the butter and the sugar together until smooth.

#### STEP 3

Stir in the flour to get a smooth paste. Turn on to a work surface and gently roll out until the paste is 1cm / 1/2in thick.

#### STEP 4

Cut into shortbread rounds or fingers and place onto a baking tray. Sprinkle with caster sugar and chill in the fridge for 20 minutes. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes, or until pale golden-brown. Set aside to cool on a wire rack.

# Family Creativity Section

## Christmas 1 Spy

Can you spy all of the Christmas objects hidden throughout this magazine? Write everything you can spy below...

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## Christmas Wordsearch



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| J | E | L | O | P | H | T | R | O | N | F | A | M | N | S |
| B | F | G | T | I | S | N | O | W | B | A | L | L | M | T |
| Q | L | N | E | W | L | E | S | N | I | T | D | S | S | H |
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- CANDY CANE
- CHIMNEY
- COOKIE
- DECEMBER
- EGGNOG

- ELF
- FROSTY
- HOLLY
- LIGHTS
- MISTLETOE

- MITTENS
- NORTH POLE
- PRESENTS
- REINDEER
- RUDOLPH

- SANTA
- SNOWBALL
- STOCKING
- TINSEL
- TREE



# BRING IT ON!

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\* for children and young people in receipt of benefit related free school meals. If your child is not in receipt of the above and would like a place please contact the number below.

For more information call 01642 728888.

MIDDLESBROUGH



SCAN ME

REDCAR & CLEVELAND



SCAN ME

For more information about what services are available over the Winter holidays, please scan either of the following QR codes:

