

Transforming LIVES



December 2021
‘Reconnecting’



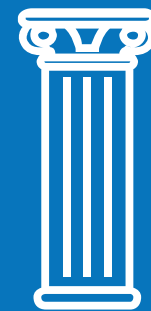
Highlights include a **CSI tour** that has led to me visiting **21 academies across 21 days, 3 Ofsted's**, and training events which have provided the chance to work with some exceptional colleagues across all phases of education. I've witnessed the opening of our fantastic **new building at Mildenhall**, after years of planning and delivery, and marvelled at the **dedication of ATTFE colleagues**, who have made a tremendous impact maintaining a vital lifeline for their vulnerable learners throughout lockdown.

In my first term as NED I have been suitably educated on the challenges of primary phase,

I feel there has been a significant shift this term in the way in which we have operated as a trust- we have developed our cohesiveness and consistency. We no longer feel like a trust of two regions or three phases, but rather a **homogenous, living, breathing family of academies**, full of leaders and colleagues with the same common goal in sight: to **transform the lives of all our learners** by providing top-quality education and serving the local communities of our academies.

Derek Trimmer
National Education Director

Impetus for Improvement



ATT
Institute

The ATT Institute

The ATT Institute (ATTI) was launched with great expectations in 2019- and we're proud to say that we're **exceeding those expectations** every year!

ATTI focuses on providing **high quality professional development** for our colleagues, allowing them to reach their full potential as educational professionals. Nurturing and supporting our staff in their careers is hugely important to our trust, as we understand the **knock-on effect this has on our pupils**. The best, up-to-date training ensures every ATT colleague can be the **best professional version of themselves**, helping them to **transform the lives of our young people**. All people development is focused on helping to **remove barriers to success**, so teachers can plan responsive and ambitious lessons, ensuring that learners across our trust receive the highest quality of education that we can provide.

Here's a look at just a few of the most exciting courses that our colleagues at ATTI have worked hard to provide for us this term.

DNA Teaching- Our Flagship Course

DNA Teaching imparts key knowledge we want all our staff to know, giving them a solid base from which to provide high-quality education.

NPQs

National Professional Qualifications are Government-backed courses in leading teaching and behaviour development, with extra support for leadership staff. This is delivered in partnership with the Teacher Development Trust.

Early Career Teachers

Early Career Teachers are supported in their career journeys by knowledgeable mentors and high-quality resources, in partnership with the Ambition Institute.

Our Webinars

Regular web conferences on a range of topics are available for all colleagues to sign up to. Webinars feature expert speakers from Ofsted and other institutions to provide staff with up-to-date knowledge and access to the very best practice nationally.

Regenerating, Reevaluating, Reconnecting.

Starting afresh this term, our learners have been returning to normality in their education; as they do, we've been supporting them in catching up with not just academics, but the social and cultural experiences they've missed out on during lockdowns.

With over **13,000 pupils** across our trust from a wide range of backgrounds, we know that each of them has had a **very different experience** with the pandemic. Our academies recognise the need to provide **strategic, targeted support** for our young people as we help them build their resilience during these difficult times. While many of our academies have done excellent work **addressing digital poverty** and helping pupils access online resources to enrich their home learning, others have been looking into how best to support the **physical and mental health needs** of their learners.

Here, our academies benefit from being a part of the **ATT family**; they're working not just as a close-knit team, but as part of a much wider community. Our trust aims to provide a **network of support**, allowing academies to share their brilliant initiatives and best practice with colleagues and pupil throughout the UK.

Transforming Lives is ATT's trust magazine, which allows us to share with our local communities all the most impressive events, initiatives and accolades our academies have been working towards this term. Read on to find out about the excellent work they've been doing.



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Academy
Improvement





Kully Uppal (back, fourth from left) and Mandeep Kaur (front right) collecting the Gold ERS Award amongst other VIPs.

This November, our colleagues from **Bristnall Hall Academy** received the **Gold ERS Award** on behalf of ATT, in an impressive ceremony at HMS Cambria in Wales with the Welsh and West Midlands divisions of the Reserve Forces and Cadets Associations (RFCAs).



Kully Uppal and Mandeep Kaur collected the accolade, which recognises our trust's **exemplar commitment to supporting employment of veterans and reserve forces**, as well as our membership to the **Armed Forces Covenant**. We place great value in our relationship with the armed forces, the opportunities that they offer to our staff and young people; we're especially proud that the West Midlands RFCA recognised our '**outstanding work**' for the real difference it makes in the communities we serve.

ATT is one of **only 140 organisations** in the public and private sectors to be awarded Gold status this year, having been recognised especially for the strong CFF presence across our trust, knowledge and support of staff who are CFAVS, as well as for supply chain advocacy and single service engagement.

On **11 November**, our 21 academies fell silent alongside the rest of the country. Remembrance services and events across our trust included the laying of wreaths, visits to community memorials, the creation of poppies and markers, and of course, two minutes silence in respect of all those who have lost their lives fighting for our country.

Our academies hold an **extensive presence in the cadet forces**; hundreds of our students are cadets with the Armed Forces, and many of them turned out in uniform to pay their respects. At **Pool Hayes Academy**, a number of students were chosen to help lay a wreath as part of the local community parade at short heath. At **Bristnall Hall Academy**, West Midlands Police cadets joined the force in visiting a local memorial. Other academies hosted their own ceremonies on-site. Students at **The Queen Elizabeth Academy** laid tributes at the base of their memorial tree, whilst cadets across our trust saluted as the last post was sounded.



Our Trust

Celebrating Diversity



The Hathaway Academy, Grays



The Queen Elizabeth Academy, Atherstone



Bristnall Hall Academy, Oldbury

Over the last two years, our young people have missed out on social development and experiences that we would, in normal times, have been able to offer them. Our fantastic academies are doing great work to make up for this though, organising hands-on events to get children involved in culture.



ATT's 13,000 learners come from a **huge range of backgrounds**, which makes it all the more important to us to **celebrate diversity** and ensure our students gain practical understanding of our cultural differences. Many academies have been celebrating the Hindu festival of Diwali, trying Indian foods and creating decorations as part of their learning.



Kingsmoor Academy also celebrated their annual carnival in October. This fun-filled event brings together members of the community from diverse backgrounds, with musical performances and tasty foods, so pupils can try experiences from all over the world. The children are also encouraged to dress in traditional clothing from across the globe, **bringing the whole world together in the playground!**

Better with Books!

Many of us take reading for granted, but you might be surprised by the very tangible impact it can have on a young person's development. According to **Scholastic**, a child who reads for one minute a day is exposed to 8000 words every year and scores in the bottom 10% of standardised tests- if they increase their reading time to **just twenty minutes a day**, they encounter a **whopping 1.8 million words in a year**, and score, on average, in the top 10%.

We know that the fallout from the pandemic has limited reading opportunities for some of our pupils; some of the most disadvantaged young people have struggled to **maintain access to books**, and have fallen behind. ATT believes that the best way to support them in catching up is to **foster a lifelong love of reading**, from as young an age as possible. Colleagues across our trust have been devising and implementing ingenious initiatives to support and encourage reading in their academies.

We're particularly amazed by **Jubilee Academy's** efforts; pupils can get cosy with a good book in fun environments like their under-the-stairs, Harry Potter themed reading corner, or find book suggestions written across the stairs they climb every day. To top it off, pupils can now also pick out a literary snack in their **new book vending machine!**

North Walsall Primary Academy have been encouraging their pupils' love of literacy with **Dress as a Word Day**, helping to expand their young readers' vocabulary in a very visual way. They also hosted a video talk with Matt Haig, author of *A Boy Called Christmas*, which has just been made into a hit film for the festive season. **Ravens Academy** has made reading fun with their **Breakfast Reading Cafe**, where pupils can settle in on a bistro table in the sports hall to enjoy a good book with their breakfast.





The Harry Potter themed reading space at Jubilee Academy, Walsall.



Two boys choose between books such as Roald Dahl's *Fantastic Mr Fox* and Judith Kerr's *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*.



Bristnall Hall students reading through their published story in *Spine Chillers*..

Our secondary academies have been working **just as hard** to encourage reading for fun- many of them have had **visits and talks from well known authors**. In addition to a visit from *Diary of A Wimpy Kid* author Jeff Kinney, **Pool Hayes Academy** has also introduced a '**reading advent**', where pupils are recommended a book every day in the run-up to Christmas. At **Sutton Community Academy**, pupils can pick a festive-wrapped book to take home for the holidays, with their choice based only on the opening lines of the novel displayed on the gift tag!

Students at **Bristnall Hall** have gone a step further than just reading- by becoming **published authors!** A mini saga co-authored by a group of pupils was chosen to be included in this year's edition of '**Spine Chillers**', a competition hosted by **Young Writers UK** that aims to get pupils interested in creative writing with tension, suspense and atmosphere. Well done to all the pupils involved on this fantastic achievement!

Pupils from **The Dukeries Academy** have also been flexing their writing muscles, with years 9-10 taking part in **First Story Connect** at Nottingham Trent University. This event encourages young people to connect with each other and higher education providers as a network of writers. We look forward to seeing what these pupils put together!

Taking Care

The last two years have been difficult for many of us—we know that the mental health of some of our young people has taken a knock too. That's why we're incredibly proud of our academies that have put a focus on learning about wellbeing.

Pupils at **Caldmore Primary Academy** participated in **#HelloYellow**, an initiative run by the charity **YoungMinds** which encourages young people to wear yellow in support of destigmatising mental health issues. Donations to the cause help assist those struggling with problems such as depression and anxiety. **Westbourne Academy** celebrated World Kindness Day in November, encouraging students to create a positive world around themselves through their interactions with others. **Great Heath Academy** and **Star Academy** recognised Anti-Bullying Week with an 'odd-sock day', showing how each of us is unique and highlighting the importance of supporting and treating others with kindness, no matter their differences.

ATT Further Education College is keeping up with the incredible work they do to support young people's mental health, organising a 'Wellbeing Advent' throughout the month of December. The advent includes festive gifts, Christmas jokes and a *Postbox of Happiness*, where learners can leave messages of kindness to lift each other's spirits.

The Queen Elizabeth Academy has also been focusing on student wellbeing, organising extended mindfulness sessions. Students learn to manage negative thoughts and feelings through creative, therapeutic outlets, such as doodling and colouring. **Phoenix Academy** takes a similar approach with their lunchtime art club. Their very own art therapist guides the children to be creative while feeling calmness and a sense of achievement.



Nottinghamshire MPs participating in ATFE & SCA's Ready Steady Cook challenge.



Star Academy kicked off Anti-Bullying week with Odd-Sock Day on 15 November.



Caldmore pupils dressed in yellow to raise money for YoungMinds.

For many, physical health has also been impacted by the effects of lockdowns, and our academies have been working to address the importance of health and nutrition in their curriculum.

ATTFE College organised two **'Ready, Steady Cook'** competitions in September and November. The events included local MPs participating in challenges to demonstrate how **delicious, healthy meals can be created using ingredients from a typical emergency food parcel, on a budget of £50**. A professional chef was on hand to help both teams with cooking skills and to share budgeting ideas, suggestions and tips. Observing students watched the challenge while receiving tips on how to **reduce food waste and perfect their cooking techniques**.

Through its community organisation *Let's All Eat*, ATTFE College has delivered over **12,000 emergency food parcels** since the start of the pandemic. Director Liz Barrett says "the emergency need for food parcels isn't going away; instead, in Sutton-in-Ashfield, the need is increasing. During the past 18 months we have developed a very strong approach to supporting this need which now allows us to focus on teaching cooking skills to food parcel recipients to help them eat well on a budget".

ATTFE has also been working to offer a free *Meet, Cook and Eat* course, giving learners the chance to complete a catering and hospitality qualification.

Happy Holidays!

ATT are excited to announce the winners of our **2021 Christmas card design competition!** Each earns £25 of book vouchers and has their artwork featured on our **official Christmas e-card**.



Primary Winner
Charley, Year 1, Iceni Academy



Secondary Winner
Emily, Year 12, Sutton Community Academy





Mildenhall College Academy's new building.

Building the future

As you might have guessed from our name, it's ATT's mission to transform academies into the best versions of themselves, helping them bring the highest quality of education to our learners. Often, this involves the creation of fantastic new buildings and improvements to existing facilities.

This term, the team at **Mildenhall College Academy** has been settling into their site at the **Mildenhall Hub**, newly constructed and opened in June this year. The state-of-the-art building provides students with access to top quality facilities and equipment, such as brand new computer rooms, while the range of public services that the Hub offers helps increase community engagement and outreach.

At **Sutton Community Academy**, upgrades to the humanities and performing arts departments have been finished this term, with modern, open plan spaces offering access to a contemporary style of learning. There are plans to soon use Government funding to transform the drama studio into a public theatre, for use by the academy and local community.



Sun pupils dress as medieval kings and knights...



...and construct WW1 trenches.

Our **National Education Director Derek Trimmer** was particularly impressed by **Sun Academy's immersive learning environment** when he visited this term. Full length decorative murals allow pupils to step back in time while traversing the corridors. Facilities like this allow Sun Academy to engage learners in an interactive method of learning; they recently hosted a ***history immersion day*** where pupils were taken on a journey through history. Using their corridor as a 'wormhole', the children were transported into live re-enactments of various time periods in different classrooms, taking part in themed activities.

Digital Skills

Over the past 18 months, the emergence of online learning has made the importance of teaching children digital skills abundantly clear. During lockdown, many of our disadvantaged students received devices to allow them to continue their learning at home, and our academies have done amazing work in facilitating the knowledge they need to excel.



Mildenhall's computing workshop in progress at Icení Hockwold.

Being a part of the ATT family allows our academies to network, sharing knowledge and resources to provide the best possible outcomes for our learners. Colleagues from **Mildenhall College Academy** have been supporting children at **Icení Primary Academy**, running Digital Schoolhouse activities and inspiring their pupils to learn more about computing.

Mildenhall's *Business, Health and Computing Faculty* has been living up to ATT's commitment to serving local communities and sharing best practice. They've invited multiple primary schools and academies from other trusts in their area to similar digital skills workshops, making use of their brand new IT facilities.

In the Community

We're proud that young people across our trust are eager to get involved in helping out in their local communities. At this time of year, there's no shortage of volunteering and charitable work to be done, and our learners have stepped up to the task.

At **The Nicholas Hamond Academy**, the pupil carol-singing choir has been spreading festive cheer throughout the local area. Recent highlights of their work include visits to the Swaffham Cottage Hospital, Icení House and The Paddocks care home, bringing not just Christmas songs but 'Christmas Cheer Boxes' full of seasonal treats for the residents.

For World Food Day in October, **Icení Academy** organised a food collection. Students donated generously in support of the **Brandon Harvest Centre**, which provides emergency food parcels to the local community.

Some academies, such as **Hathaway** (pictured below), have taken part in the nationwide **Christmas Jumper Day** to raise money for the Salvation Army, who work hard to help the disadvantaged and homeless during the winter months.





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