

Introduction

Richard Chapman, CEO



As another school year draws to a close, I want to thank everyone for their hard work and dedication to our learners and their families. Your efforts have made a tremendous impact, and I am deeply grateful.

This has been a year of great achievements across the Thrive Education Partnership. We've welcomed new learners, new colleagues, and even a new academy into our community. The growth we've experienced is a testament to our shared commitment to providing exceptional education and support.

Our May conference was a highlight, and now is the perfect time to apply the wellbeing techniques our brilliant speakers shared. Please take some quality time for yourself and enjoy the holidays.

With our increasing staff and pupil numbers, transitions are inevitable. I extend my best wishes to those moving on from the Thrive family and look forward to welcoming new members next term.

Thank you again for your incredible contributions. Enjoy the well-deserved break.



Thriving at Thrive Annual Conference 2024

Thank you to everyone who attended our annual conference, 'Thriving at Thrive,' held on 3rd May at the Coventry Building Society Arena. It was a fantastic day where we all came together to network, learn, and build stronger connections across our six schools and partners.

The fun, competitive activities saw schools going head-to-head to win prizes. Keynotes from Professor Steve Peters and Dr Nerina Ramlakhan were inspiring and practical, offering insights on mind management and achieving balance. The workshops provided useful strategies for our daily work. Thank you to everyone involved, your participation helped foster a spirit of collaboration and learning.

Scan the QR code below to relive the moments and see the best bits of the day. Let's carry forward the learnings and connections we made as we continue to thrive together.





Katie Greenwood Head of Therapeutic Services

How is it summer already? It feels like I blinked, and another term has flown by! This term, I've been continuing my understanding of the mental health and wellbeing landscapes across our school communities, with a view to develop projects and training for next year. I've built partnerships with organisations like The Compassionate Mind Foundation and Innovating Minds, to collaborate on future work across the trust. I have been working with Professor Kathryn Riley, a leading expert in the field of 'belonging in schools' who is keen to work with Thrive over the next couple of years. I've established a networking group for our Mental Health Leads, to promote a whole school approach to positive mental health and wellbeing. I've gotten to know more of you, and more of you more(!), which, for someone who is fascinated by people, is always the best part of any job for me. I've had conversations that have moved me, made me laugh, made me think, stopped me in my tracks, humbled me, and helped me understand more. As Dan Siegal says, "Where attention goes, neuro-connection grows!" So, literally, every interaction has shaped my brain – thank you!

In June, I attended the Action Trauma Summit, where I heard the likes of Dan Siegel, Gabor Maté and Stephen Porges speak. They discussed how our understanding of mental distress is changing, and how this informs therapeutic approaches. Repeatedly highlighted were two things: relationships and authenticity. The importance of relationships reinforces the idea that it's not our actions but our way of being that counts. Just one consistent and supportive relationship before the age of 18 can reduce the impact of early adversity and help foster resilience. The importance of authenticity – the power of being our true selves – promotes, unequivocally, positive mental health and wellbeing. So, with that in mind, let us embrace the summer in our own unique ways. Whether you walk, trot, run, tumble, skip, dance, slide, glide, race, plod, roll or shimmy into the summer holidays – do it as only you can, and let's celebrate our uniqueness.

Nicolas Hamilton inspires students at Corley Academy

We were thrilled that British racing driver and Evttec ambassador, Nicolas Hamilton, visited Corley Academy to inspire our students. Overcoming cerebral palsy to succeed in motorsport, Hamilton's story is a testament to resilience and determination.

His visit is part of our programme to prepare students for the workforce, showing that special educational needs do not limit potential.

Hamilton shared his journey, emphasising perseverance: "Inspiring others through my experiences is important to me. If I can help even one student believe in their potential, then it's worth it."

Brother of F1 legend Lewis Hamilton, Nicolas' success in the British Touring Car Championship and as a published author reinforces that our students can achieve great things with determination and support.

Evttec's inclusive employment, with 40% of its workforce having disabilities, exemplifies the impact of our partnerships. We urge all staff to support our students' ambitions and encourage local businesses to offer work experiences.

The Warwickshire Academy launches KS4

We are thrilled to announce that, starting this September, The Warwickshire Academy will welcome Year 10 students for the first time, introducing Key Stage 4. This is a significant milestone for the school in its third year.

Year 10 students will study a broad range of qualifications, including core subjects like Maths, English, and Science, alongside exciting vocational courses such as Digital IT, Music, Food Technology, and Sports Leaders.

The school is also opening two new specialist rooms, an IT suite and a music room. This expansion represents a big step forward for TWA, bringing new opportunities and challenges as it begins offering exams and new courses.

All current Year 9 students will move into Year 10, joined by any new students starting in the upcoming academic year.

Aimee Prentice published in PMLD Link Journal

We're proud to share that Aimee Prentice, PMLD Extended Lead at Calthorpe Academy, has been published in the PMLD Link journal. Her article, "The Importance of Promoting Relationships for Learners with PMLD," explores how our Engagement for Life curriculum supports the development of meaningful relationships among learners with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

Aimee emphasises that fostering relationships is integral to well-being, as outlined in the Core and Essential Service Standards. Our curriculum includes a dedicated strand called Making Relationships, which focuses on developing social communication skills, encouraging interactions, and forming special friendships. Key approaches include Intensive Interaction, turn-taking games, and cross-curricular opportunities for skill development.

Aimee's work highlights the necessity of creating a supportive environment where learners can actively engage and form connections, not just with staff but also with their peers.

You can read the full article, here: <https://buff.ly/4d1BhV7>



Paul Crooke joins Thrive as Strategic Estates Lead

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Paul Crooke as the Strategic Estates Lead at Thrive. Paul joined us in May from the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership, where he managed estates for 24 schools. With over 20 years of experience delivering large-scale consumer exhibitions at the NEC and a background in education since 2018, Paul brings a wealth of expertise.

At Thrive, Paul aims to enhance the quality and coherence of our school sites by further developing the estate strategy. This includes achieving efficiencies, measuring quality, and improved supply chain management. Paul will work collaboratively with headteachers to ensure continued improvements, manage complex projects, and ensure all schools operate seamlessly while fulfilling compliance requirements.

Over the next 12 months, staff can expect significant enhancements in school conditions and operations. Paul expressed his gratitude, saying: "Thank you to everyone for making me feel so welcome."

We look forward to the positive changes Paul will bring to our community.



Thrive launches Employability Film

We've created an inspiring employability video that highlights our efforts in fostering partnerships with employers to boost employability for our students. According to recent data, only around 7% of young people with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan secure paid employment after education. We are determined to surpass this national statistic.

The video showcases our commitment to providing students with quality curriculum, effective provision, and ambitious opportunities. Bebeanna Woo, our Head of Careers & Partnerships, plays a crucial role in ensuring our students have realistic and ambitious prospects within the community. Our ultimate goal is to equip students with the skills and opportunities needed for employment or independent living.

We encourage you to watch the video using the QR code below and see firsthand the positive impact of our initiatives in preparing our students for successful futures. For more information or to find out how you can get involved, please contact Bebeanna Woo.



Constructability Day at Baginton Fields Academy

Baginton Fields Academy recently hosted a highly successful Constructability Day, providing students with practical experiences in construction and engineering. Organised by Victoria Hingley from EKFB, a joint venture involved in the HS2 project, with support from Tarmac, Enva, and Arcadis, the event aimed to address skill shortages in the construction industry while offering our students valuable, hands-on learning experiences.

Assistant Headteacher Sean Noone said: "The Constructability Day was a phenomenal success, boosting our pupils' skills and confidence." Headteacher Alison Francis added: "Engaging with industry professionals through initiatives like this not only enhances our students' learning experiences but also prepares them for real-world opportunities."

The event included sensory-oriented and interactive activities designed to be fun and educational, such as building walls with foam bricks, operating miniature diggers, and 'demolition' using wheelchairs.



New coffee shop to open at Corley Academy

Corley Academy has announced the opening of a new coffee shop at the school, with building work now underway. The cafe has been designed to provide valuable work placements for students, including hands-on experience in catering, hospitality, and enterprise projects, fostering social skills and practical learning.

Supported by Nespresso, which generously donated a coffee machine, and EVTEC, which is providing furniture, the coffee shop will be run by parent volunteers and students, including post-16 learners. It will feature a sensory pod for children with autism, complete with ear defenders, and sensory tools, and toys, ensuring a safe and inclusive environment.

The coffee shop will serve as a meeting space for parents, students, trust staff, and the local community. The project aims to provide on-site work placements, minimising transport issues and enriching the educational experience for students.



Rebecca Davies leads change at Mary Elliot

We're excited to announce Rebecca Davies as the new Headteacher of Mary Elliot Academy. This appointment marks a new chapter for our school, which joined Thrive Education Partnership in 2023.

Rebecca, who has been with the school for over a decade, previously served as joint leader with Rachael Bowen. Rachael will now be Deputy Headteacher, and we thank her for her invaluable support in this transitional period.

Rebecca said: "Our students are remarkable, and I am committed to making the academy a cornerstone of the community once again. Together with our talented staff, we are determined to drive the academy forward and ensure our students have even more opportunities to become active, engaged members of society."

Additionally, we congratulate our two new Assistant Headteachers on their appointments; Katie Rogers joins Mary Elliot having recently completed her secondment role as PMLD Lead for the Trust, while Grace Murphy joins from Calthorpe Academy where she held the role of Curriculum Lead.



Lord Mayor visits new Kingsbury Academy playground

Kingsbury Academy proudly unveiled its new sensory-regulating playground to an audience of students, parents, colleagues, and the Lord Mayor of Coventry, Councillor Mal Mutton.

Thanks to the support of donors and Thrive, this playground is now a crucial part of our 'Learning for Life' curriculum. Headteacher Amjid Zaman said: "Our learners are benefiting greatly from the new equipment, aiding in sensory regulation and skill development."

Generous contributions from parents, local businesses, and community organisations made this project a reality. PTA leader Jo Le Poidevin said: "The new playground has made a huge difference, offering a fun and dynamic learning environment for our students."

Councillor Mutton commented: "This is a fantastic facility that was enabled by people and organisations coming together to raise money for the benefit of the school community. Not one person could have done this, it takes a whole community approach."



Calthorpe Academy maintains IQM Flagship School Status

We are proud to announce that Calthorpe Academy has retained its prestigious IQM Flagship School status, continuing to set high standards in inclusion. This recognition celebrates exceptional education and fostering an inclusive environment for all students.

The Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) is awarded to schools that demonstrate excellence in inclusion, ensuring all students, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities, receive high-quality education and support. Congratulations to the team at Calthorpe for creating the vibrant and inclusive culture that continues to make it a fantastic school.

The school was recognised for its diverse and personalised curriculum, enriched with state-of-the-art facilities, ensuring that each learner receives the support they need to thrive. It was also commended for its continuous improvement and collaboration with local, national, and international partners to maintain and enhance inclusive practices.

