

From **Richard Chapman, CEO**

As we close the school year, I want to thank everyone across Thrive for your care, energy and commitment. Whether you work in a classroom, kitchen, office or on the road, getting our students to and from school, your efforts are at the heart of what we do, and you continue to make an extraordinary difference.

And also a warm welcome to everyone joining **Thrive** this September – if you're starting school, stepping into a new role, or beginning your career in education. We're proud to be a trust that brings together people at every stage of life – a sentiment perfectly captured this term as we celebrated the 80th birthday of **June Fletcher**, one of our longest-standing colleagues at **Kingsbury Academy** and a true inspiration to us all. Showing that age is just a number!

We've had plenty to celebrate this term – from **Corley Academy** teams doing us proud at this year's STEM On Track | Espire Grand Finals, demonstrating incredible resilience, to inspiring enterprise days at **Mary Elliot**, fun-filled sports days at **Calthorpe**, and student-led school councils at **The Warwickshire Academy**.

Our students are thriving, and we couldn't be prouder.

A final thank-you to our governors, trustees and volunteers, whose time and expertise, always given on an unpaid basis, are vital to the strength and direction of our schools. Your guidance and support make a real difference, and we are incredibly grateful.

Thank you for everything you've done this year. I hope the summer brings rest, sunshine and time to recharge.



That's a Wrap on the **Thrive Conference 2025!**

Our annual **Thrive Education Partnership Conference** is complete for another year – and what an energising, thought-provoking day it was.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the event such a success. We were privileged to hear from **Jaz Ampaw-Farr** and **Dave Whitaker**, whose powerful stories moved and motivated us all.

Melanie Franklin brought incredible insight with her training on leading change, while **Adam Wright**, who spoke at last year's conference, continued our journey into Chimp Management with humour and heart.

To all our brilliant workshop leads and the central team – thank you for your hard work and dedication behind the scenes.

And most of all, thank you to our incredible staff. You are the reason we do what we do – and the reason Thrive continues to grow, challenge, and inspire.



Sustainability in Action Across the Trust

Since launching our Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy in December, Thrive has made strong progress towards embedding sustainability across the Trust.

We began with a benchmarking survey, which found **80% of staff view environmental responsibility as a priority**. Many schools already have eco-committees, student-led projects and curriculum links in place, alongside clear requests for support with training, planning and infrastructure.

Every school now has a **Sustainability Lead**, with the first Trust-wide network meeting held in June. We've joined the Let's Go Zero campaign, completed Greener Schools Index assessments, and introduced energy tracking, holiday switch-offs and site surveys to identify efficiency improvements. Draft Climate Action Plans are now with schools, ready to launch next term.

We were also proud to contribute to the **National Network of Special Schools** for School Business Professionals, where **Zoe Allcott** co-led a session on using the Greener Schools Index to drive practical, measurable climate action.

There's still more to do – but we're well on the way to creating greener, fairer schools that lead by example.

Katie Greenwood Therapeutic Services

As part of us leaps towards the summer, whilst the other mops up the end-of-term task list, I'm reflecting on our mental health and wellbeing journey. As Mr. Miyagi says (for you Karate Kid fans!), "First learn stand, then learn fly." This work takes time. It's not always flashy or instant. But it's in the steady, daily showing up that long-term change happens.

In March, our **Mental Health Champions initiative** launched, offering a layer of support that bridges the gap between informal chats and specialist services. Our Champions continue to access training through Self Space and help shape emotionally safe cultures. Thank you to every Champion who holds space and notices what others might miss.

We've also focused on training and culture change. Schools have accessed CPD on trauma-informed and relational approaches, and mental health awareness. Our SLTs have undertaken a year-long Compassionate Leadership programme.

Our trust conference, 'Leading with Kindness', celebrated of the value of connection and compassion. I want to thank our Mental Health Leads – **Rachael Bowen, Alison Francis, Laura Williams, Berni Winterburn, Clair Nutt, and Charlotte Brookes**.

We meet half-termly to share ideas and lead whole-school strategy. These fantastic people work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep mental health and wellbeing central to the conversation. And now we're seeing tangible shifts.

If there's one theme emerging, it's this: people want to know more. More about the young people we work with, their stories, and uniqueness, to better support their emotional needs.

Mental health and wellbeing aren't extras — they are the foundation. We can't learn, lead, or teach if we don't feel safe, seen, and supported.

We're on a long journey but an incredibly meaningful one. Together.

Corley Academy at the Espire Grand Finals

Corley Academy teams did us proud at this year's **STEM On Track | Espire Grand Finals**, demonstrating incredible resilience, teamwork and true race-day spirit from start to finish.

Corley Kart 22 stormed to an impressive 5th place finish in the Enduro race, climbing two spots from their qualifying position thanks to their focus, determination and driving skill.

Meanwhile, Corley Kart 59 faced unexpected mechanical setbacks mid-race – but took it all in their stride, responding with maturity, calmness and unwavering support for their teammates.

These students didn't just compete – they collaborated, problem-solved and adapted under pressure, showing what real-world learning looks like in action. From the pits to the podium, they embodied the values of perseverance, teamwork and pride in their achievements.

A huge thank you goes to **Stellantis Performance Academy** for their continued partnership, and to the dedicated staff, families and wider community whose fundraising efforts and encouragement made the day possible.

What a powerful reminder of what hands-on, practical learning can achieve when young people are given the tools and trust to thrive.



A Star for All Seasons: June Turned 80 (in June!)

In June, we marked a very special milestone at **Kingsbury Academy**, as the wonderful TA, **June Fletcher**, celebrated her 80th birthday.

June's journey is nothing short of remarkable. From a vibrant career in entertainment – including Opportunity Knocks and pantomimes with Barbara Windsor – to nearly two decades as a teaching assistant and sensory specialist, she's brought creativity, warmth and energy to everything she does.

At Kingsbury, June supports pupils with additional needs through music and sensory-led communication, helping create a calm and expressive environment where every child feels seen and supported.

Her dedication continues to make a lasting difference – and her story is a powerful reminder that lifelong learning isn't just something we encourage, it's something we embody.

Happy 80th, June – and thank you for inspiring us all.



Curtains Up: Calthorpe's Pathway to Performance

An exciting new chapter has begun at **Calthorpe Academy** as our Post-16 Learning for Life learners took part in the launch of Pathway to Performance - a national pilot project in partnership with **Birmingham Royal Ballet** and their inclusive dance company, Freefall.

The high-energy introductory workshop was a huge success. Led by staff and dancers from Freefall, the session brought joy, creativity and connection to the classroom, giving our learners a unique opportunity to explore professional inclusive dance in an accessible, inspiring way.

Responses from students was incredible. With confidence, curiosity and smiles all round, they threw themselves into the experience - showcasing just how powerful inclusive arts can be in unlocking potential.

Pathway to Performance will run throughout the autumn term and culminate in a live performance at **Birmingham Hippodrome** in November.

We're proud to be part of a project that celebrates creativity, builds cultural partnerships, and empowers every learner to shine.

Mary Elliot Goes Country for Prom

This year's Prom Day at **Mary Elliot** was a rootin'-tootin' celebration with a Country and Western twist.

As always, Prom was a whole-school affair, with the day packed full of activities for all learners to enjoy. From line-dancing beats to cowboy hats and check shirts, the school came alive with country spirit.

The morning kicked off in true farmyard fashion with a special visit from some very important guests - including a therapy pony and a few furry (and feathery!) friends who brought smiles and calming cuddles to all.

Later, the school was treated to a live Country and Western performance, bringing Nashville vibes to Bloxwich and getting everyone clapping, singing, and dancing along.

And of course, no Mary Elliot Prom would be complete without a little horsepower of a different kind - our traditional display of supercars rolled in for students to pose with and enjoy, adding a touch of glitz and glamour to the day.

A big thank you to the Mary Elliot staff and everyone involved to make this such a special day for everyone.



Baginton Fields Explores Architecture with RIBA

Students from the Discoverers and Venturers pathways at **Baginton Fields Academy** recently took part in a two-day workshop with the **Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)**, exploring architecture through sound, touch and creativity.

Led by musician **Luke Crookes**, the sessions used music to help our PMLD learners engage with architectural ideas. Students explored sensory materials like sand, straw and soft bricks, responding to rhythms inspired by construction.

Their vocal responses were recorded, turned into immersive audio stories, and played back as part of the final piece.

Venturers students also explored textures outdoors, creating collages using rubbings and photographs back in class.

With a major school expansion ahead, the workshop offered a timely, meaningful way to explore architecture – it also gave students a voice in imagining and understanding the spaces around them.



Digging Into the Future at Corley Careers Day

Corley Academy students took part in a brilliant Apprenticeship Careers Day, delivered by **Balfour Beatty Vinci** in collaboration with **Tarmac, McGinley Support Services, and Flannery**.

The event gave students a real taste of life in the construction industry, with hands-on activities designed to inform, inspire, and ignite new career ambitions.

From testing their skills in the “tallest and strongest tower” straw challenge to exploring real-life tools, PPE, and rock samples, students discovered just how varied and exciting careers in construction and civil engineering can be.

One of the biggest hits of the day was the construction simulator, where students had a go at driving a virtual digger – though they had to compete with a few eager teachers lining up to show off their ‘operator skills’ too!

Thank you to all the volunteers from Balfour Beatty Vinci, Tarmac, McGinley and Flannery who gave their time and energy to make the day so memorable.

You’ve helped open our students’ eyes to new possibilities and shown just how rewarding the apprenticeship route can be.



Council, Canines and Community at TWA

This term saw the relaunch of the **TWA School Council**, with fresh elections held across every class. Learners gave short speeches to nominate themselves before voting took place – part of the school’s wider Personal, Social, Health, and Citizenship Education curriculum on voting, rights, responsibilities, and how democracy works in practice.

The new Council has already made an impressive impact, contributing to staff recruitment by taking part in interviews – a challenge students met with maturity, confidence and professionalism. Their input played a valuable role in shaping decisions.

Meanwhile, two much-loved team members have been making their own mark. **Fudge**, the school’s **therapy dog**, has been spreading calm and comfort across the school, becoming a favourite with both learners and staff (especially during daily briefings!).

Learners love helping to care for him, and his gentle presence supports emotional regulation and wellbeing.

Ralph, the school’s **therapy rabbit**, has made his home in Year 5 but is a hit with everyone.

Curious, friendly and full of character, he’s another reminder of the joy, connection and support animals bring to the classroom.

Sports Day Joy at Calthorpe

June saw learners from **Calthorpe Academy’s** Learning for Life and Engagement for Life pathways take part in their Sports Days – filled with activity, enthusiasm and team spirit.

Learning for Life learners headed to **Norman Green Stadium** in Solihull, where they took part in a range of track and field events, proudly representing countries from the Women’s Rugby World Cup. Custom t-shirts, medals and plenty of cheering made it a day to remember.

Back at school, the Engagement for Life Sports Day brought colour and excitement to the sports hall, with learners enjoying activities like basketball, skittles and target throwing.

Calthorpe was also delighted to welcome learners from Oakland and Foundation for Life, with fantastic support from volunteers at Lighthall School. A brilliant celebration of movement, participation and fun.

Well done to all involved - these moments help prepare our learners for life beyond the classroom and remind us of the power of meaningful, hands-on learning in the community.



Enterprise Day Sparks Skills and Creativity at **Mary Elliot**

Mary Elliot's Enterprise Day was a brilliant success, bringing together employers and volunteers from a wide range of sectors to work with students across the school.

With representatives from a number of businesses, learners had the chance to explore different industries, take part in hands-on activities, and build their 'skills for success' – a key part of our careers programme.

From creative projects to vocational tasks, students threw themselves into every challenge with enthusiasm.

It was fantastic to see their confidence grow and their talents shine through in the products they produced.

A special highlight of the day was each employer selecting a student to receive a certificate of appreciation – recognising their hard work, creativity and positive attitude. Well done to all involved!

A big thanks to **West Brom Building Society, Urban Hax, Colas Highway Maintenance Taste for Life, PLT Dentistry, National Trust, RicNic** and **Tesco** for supporting this day.



Silver Success for **Corley Academy** Post-16 Students

A huge congratulations to Corley Post-16 students who successfully completed their Silver **Duke of Edinburgh's Award** Qualifying Expedition this week!

With the aim of creating a Visitor's Guide to the **National Memorial Arboretum**, students drew on a previous visit and worked together to produce a brilliant visual guide – meeting the goal of their expedition and showcasing fantastic teamwork and creativity.

Some students also chose to camp for two nights at Corley, taking full responsibility for setting up tents, cooking their own evening meals, and, of course, washing up!

Their evenings were filled with campfire chats, games of Uno, and watching the sunset – a well-earned reward after a busy day.

Well done to everyone involved for completing both the Skill and Expedition sections of their award.

With only the Physical and Volunteering sections left to complete, they're well on their way to achieving their full Silver Award!

Healthy Living Week at Baginton Fields

June ended on a high at **Baginton Fields Academy** as students and staff celebrated Healthy Living Week with a joyful breakfast picnic, bringing the school community together to focus on wellbeing, nutrition and connection.

In the afternoon, the academy proudly took part in Relay Your Way – a national campaign led by **Cerebra** to honour the 1.5 million young people in the UK with disabilities, including those living with brain conditions.

The Student Council welcomed the baton in style, leading a colourful parade around the school field. As one of only two Coventry schools involved, it was a moment of real pride, made even more special by whole-school participation and a strong sense of unity.

The relay spans 2,500 km from Glasgow to Windsor over 33 days, and Baginton Fields has pledged to walk the full distance in solidarity. It's a powerful way of championing inclusion, encouraging movement, and showing that every step counts.

Relay Your Way celebrates accessible sport, adventure and play – and Baginton Fields is proud to be part of the journey.



Kingsbury Learners Support Local Heritage

Learners at **Kingsbury Academy** recently enjoyed a special visit to **Charterhouse** in Coventry, celebrating a growing partnership between **Historic Coventry Trust** and the **National Trust**.

Earlier this year, as part of their career-related learning, learners put their creativity and enterprise skills to the test by designing and handcrafting Christmas cards and baubles to sell at **Coventry Arena Extra**.

Their hard work paid off, raising an impressive £200 to support community initiatives at Charterhouse – helping more children access enriching activities during term time and the school holidays.

Charterhouse is a place close to the learners' hearts, having previously visited during the school's Eco Week.

Keen to say thank you for their efforts, the National Trust team organised a fun-filled day packed with activities including rock painting, bubble making and a lively scavenger hunt around the historic site.

It was a joyful celebration of community spirit, creativity and giving back – and a fantastic example of how young people can make a real difference locally. Well done to all involved!

TWA Pupils Grow Through Farm & Garden Adventures

Year 5 pupils at **The Warwickshire Academy** have been embracing hands-on learning this term, taking their classroom knowledge into the real world with two exciting trips.

As part of their ongoing secret garden project, pupils visited **Hilltop Garden Centre** to choose and purchase a selection of plants and greenery.

The experience gave them the chance to apply skills in planning, budgeting and plant care – with plenty of enthusiasm and teamwork on display as they began shaping their garden vision back at school.

The class also spent a day at **Ash End Children's Farm**, exploring animal lifecycles as part of their science learning. From feeding animals to asking thoughtful questions, pupils deepened their understanding of nature while developing confidence and social skills in a new environment.

Staff were incredibly proud of how pupils represented the school – showing respect, curiosity and kindness throughout.

Whether selecting plants or stroking a sheep, Year 5 embodied the values of TWA and made a lasting impression on everyone they met.



A Week of Creativity and Connection at Mary Elliot

Arts Week at **Mary Elliot** was a vibrant and inspiring celebration of creativity, giving learners the opportunity to explore new forms of expression, communication and connection through the arts.

Throughout the week, pupils participated in a series of workshops delivered by the fantastic **Open Theatre** group and **Big Top**. These sessions introduced students to Non-Verbal Interactive Drama and Sensory Music and Drama – creative approaches designed to engage every learner, regardless of verbal ability or sensory preference.

Non-Verbal Interactive Drama encouraged pupils to express themselves through movement, gesture and play, building confidence and encouraging connection without the need for words. The sensory sessions, meanwhile, invited students to explore sound, rhythm and texture in a calm and engaging way, supporting both emotional regulation and creative development.

Our learners engaged brilliantly with visiting practitioners and their peer groups, showing real enthusiasm, curiosity and creativity throughout.

As well as developing their artistic abilities, pupils also built important communication, social and motor skills – all while having lots of fun.