

# Wellsway Multi Academy Trust Parents and Carers Newsletter

1 April 2021



## Welcome from our Chief Executive

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach our second Easter in lockdown, it is with a sense of cautious optimism. The re-opening of schools has gone very well indeed and it has been a joy to have pupils and staff back in school. We are very mindful that some members of our community continue to isolate and our thoughts are with them. We hope it will not be too long before they too are back with us in person.



We know that we still have some way to go before the pandemic is behind us and recognise the critical role we, as schools, have to play in getting there, in particular by remaining vigilant and continuing to stress the importance of lateral flow device (LFD) testing for students in secondary schools and for all education staff. Across the country there has been a tremendous response to this and it is impossible to overstate how impressed health colleagues are with the way education colleagues, students and parents/carers are carrying out LFD testing. As a result, the education sector has contributed hugely not just to testing in schools but to reducing transmission of the virus. To this end it is absolutely critical that the result of each test is logged on the NHS website, whether it is negative, positive or void, so it contributes to the overall picture of transmission across the region and country. Testing and logging should continue over the Easter holiday and the Department for Education has asked us to convey these key messages about home-testing:

- Testing twice a week should be a routine and ideally become embedded in home life – consider building this into your household routine by testing on the same two days each week
- A key message is that people should not stop testing over Easter
- It's particularly important to test before staff and secondary students come back to school after the Easter break, ideally the night before term starts
- Tests should be logged on the NHS site, regardless of whether they are positive, negative or void to help track the virus and understand patterns of transmission.

**‘The re-opening of schools has gone very well indeed and it has been a joy to have pupils and staff back in school...’**

The NHS Test and Trace has reintroduced confirmatory PCR testing for positive LFD tests conducted at all assisted testing sites, including schools. This means that all staff, students and pupils who get a positive LFD test, whether at home or supervised at their school, should get a confirmatory PCR. The PCR test should be booked immediately either online or by calling 119 and should be undertaken within two days. Staff, students and pupils who had a positive LFD test result, and their close contacts and other members of their household, should self-isolate immediately in line with [NHS Test and Trace guidance](#) and while awaiting the PCR result. If the PCR test is negative, it overrides the LFD test and the staff member or student can return to school, and their close contacts can end their self-isolation.

Across the country, the wearing of masks in secondary classrooms has helped to keep transmission rates in schools low. We would like to say a big thank you to students who have done this and congratulate them for acting responsibly and maturely, with due regard for the health of their classmates. The DfE is reviewing this requirement over Easter but, in a meantime, it continues to be a requirement in WMAT secondary schools.

Last Friday, the Secretary of State for Education wrote all pupils to thank them for the part they have all played in helping us fight coronavirus. In the letter, which is printed later in this newsletter (see page 3), the Secretary of State recognises the significant disruption that children and young people have experienced in their education over the past year and the challenges they have faced as a result. I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Trust, to say how impressed we have been by the positive way our pupils have responded, and continue to do so. They are an absolute credit to their families. Through working together and continuing to be vigilant, we hope we can continue to keep the transmission of the virus in our schools at very low levels so they can continue to be in school, learning alongside their peers.

We hope they enjoy their Easter break and wish the students taking qualifications this summer all the best with their preparations.

With best wishes to all our families,

Andrea Arlidge,  
Chief Executive

## New Trustees

Following an extensive search, the Members have appointed the following new trustees who will join our Trust Board after Easter. This will mean that our Board now comprises of 12 trustees and we are also in the process of appointing two further new trustees with an education background. Strong governance sits at the heart of our Trust and it is essential we have a Board with a broad range of skills and experiences to oversee and guide the Trust's strategy and work. We look forward to welcoming our new trustees and to working with them.

**Malcolm Broad**, Chair of Trustees.

### Michael Flay

**Occupation:** Governance and Risk Manager, Avon and Somerset Constabulary

**Committee:** Audit and Risk

### Deborah Robinson

**Occupation:** Former Director, Legal and Governance, SOAS University of London

**Committee:** Audit and Risk

### John Thompson:

**Occupation:** Executive Director, Wessex Water - Engineering and Sustainable Delivery

**Committee:** Finance and Estates

### Sian Yates

**Occupation:** Global Head of People Services, Computershare

**Committee:** HR

## Aspire Academy

Congratulations to Peter Headeach who has been appointed as the permanent Principal of Aspire Academy, our special school in Bath.



Pete has been leading the school on an interim basis, on secondment from Bedminster Down School. This is an exciting time for Aspire as we are in the process of increasing its capacity from 60 to 120 places. The expansion will see the school providing much needed places for children and young people with autistic spectrum condition in addition to its provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

## Executive Lead for School Improvement

We are very pleased to have appointed Stephen Luke to the role of Executive Lead for School Improvement, with effect from 1 September 2021.



Stephen is a primary expert with substantial experience of school and Trust leadership, having previously been the Regional Lead for E-ACT in the South West. Stephen will add considerable strength to our school improvement capacity and we are looking forward to having him with us as a permanent member of the team.

## Letter to children and young people from the Secretary of State for Education

I wanted to let you all know how grateful I am for the way you have responded to the huge challenges you have all faced throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

Whether this is your first year at school or your final year of college, I know the disruption you have all faced to your education since the pandemic began has been incredibly challenging and has meant completely changing the way you learn – either learning remotely at home or continuing at school or college with fewer of your friends around you and lots of safety measures in place.

Whether you were at home or at school, the disruption last term and throughout last year asked a lot of you and your families. I am filled with admiration for the incredible way you all responded and the resilience you have shown. Not being in school or college with your teachers and friends was a huge sacrifice. Everything you did, with the help of your families and your schools and colleges, and everything you missed out on – time in school, taking exams, seeing friends, playing sport and much more – made such a huge difference to helping us stop the spread of the virus. I want to say a huge thank you to all of you.

Getting all young people back into school and college safely has been my priority throughout the pandemic. I know how vital it is not just for your education but also to spend time with your friends and to feel happy and secure. All our lives have changed a lot in the past year but the challenges that young people have faced have been some of the hardest. I will continue doing everything in my power to make sure that all of you are supported to boost any areas of work you've had less time at school to study, get the qualifications you deserve and have the opportunities you need to succeed.

Continuing to follow all the safety measures your schools and colleges have worked hard to put in place, as well as taking a test twice a week, is so important and helps us to stop the virus spreading. The testing that thousands of you have been taking part in at school and college is a vital part of this. I am so grateful to you and all the staff who have supported you to do this. I know your schools and colleges have worked incredibly hard to prepare you to test yourself at home.

As most of you at secondary school and college move to testing yourself regularly at home, it's vital that you continue to test and report online twice a week through the Easter holidays and after you return to school. Home testing twice a week for you and everyone you live with makes a huge difference and means you are playing a really important role in helping us move back to a more normal way of life. Your school or college will continue to support you and make sure you have tests. You and your family can also find out more about home testing here.

I was delighted to see the enthusiasm with which so many of you returned to school at the beginning of March and I am sure you have had a wonderful few weeks catching up with your friends and teachers. It was fantastic to meet pupils delighted to return to school on my visits to schools like Arden Academy and Bedford Free School and to see so many more of your reunions on social media. I hope that the new term will be just as enjoyable and successful for all of you.

**Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP, Secretary of State for Education**

## Sew talented! Textiles students showcase skills

During remote learning Georgia in Year 10 at Wellsway School designed and made a tailored blazer as part of her extended textiles work. Georgia lined the blazer in purple to represent the jacket worn by the Joker from Batman.

Zoe in Year 9 made a range of face masks in different fabrics. The masks were completed at home as part of the textiles section for D of E.



## Let's grow sunflowers!

Wansdyke Primary School are running a sunflower competition between the Trust's primary schools over the summer term. Some of the children at Wansdyke have organised a bag for each primary class in WMAT, which should include everything needed, with the exception of a pot (they were going to buy plastic pots but the children decided they weren't eco-friendly). The sunflower seeds need to be planted at the start of Term 5 and they are asking schools to send them some photos to share every three weeks. This is linked to the national curriculum with suggested activities for each year group. It's a great idea and we look forward to seeing the photos!



## TV subtitles can boost your child's reading skills

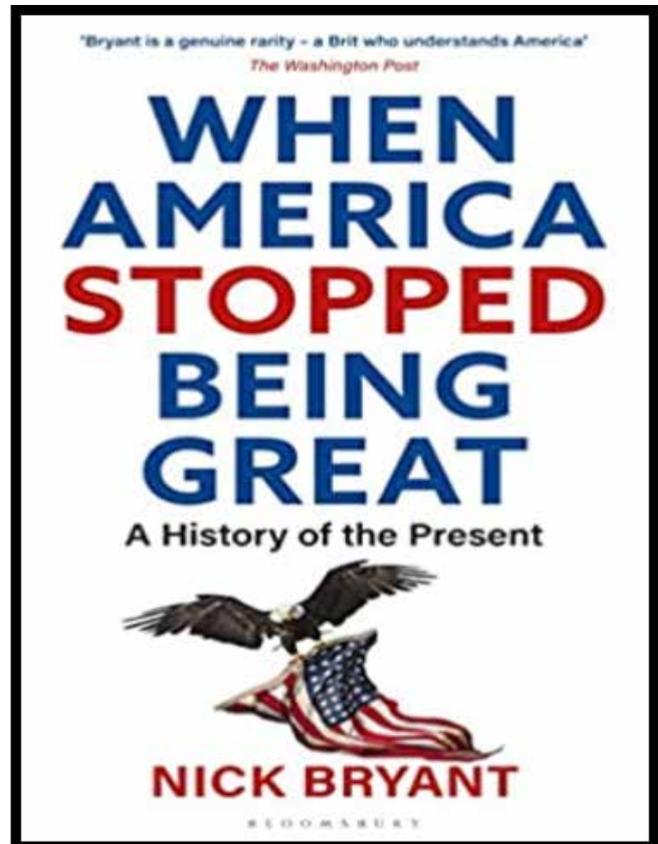
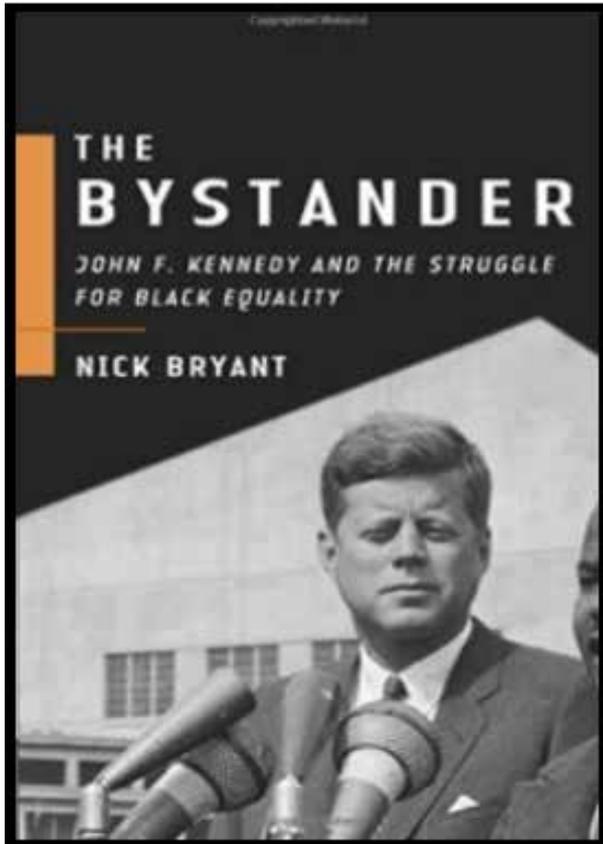
Research has shown that turning on subtitles while children are watching TV can greatly improve their reading skills. It's a quick, simple, free way to make TV time reading time! Celebrities such as Stephen Fry are backing a campaign to raise awareness of this easy way to improve reading. Find information including the research at [Turn on the Subtitles](#).

## Could you make a difference?

The growth of our Trust means we need more inspirational and professional people to join our dedicated and passionate staff team.

If you are planning your next career move, and think you could help make a difference for our students, please take a look at the [vacancies across the WMAT](#).

# BBC's Nick Bryant to give online talk to his old school



Former Wellsway School student Nick Bryant is hosting an online event for students on Thursday April 22.

Nick was born in Bristol and attended Wellsway in the 1980s. He then went on to study American politics at Cambridge, achieving a PhD.

Since then he has worked all over the world including Washington, South Asia and Sydney. He currently lives in the US and is the BBC's New York correspondent.

Nick is not only very successful in his career with the BBC but is also an author of books including *The Bystander: John F Kennedy and the Struggle of Black Equality*. His latest book is *When America Stopped Being Great: A History of the Present*.

Nick would like to share his journey with Wellsway students, especially those in Years 10–13 with a keen interest in history, politics and economics. There will also be time for a Q&A session.

The event will take place at 6.15pm and run for about an hour. If you think this is something you would be interested in please get in contact with the communications team at Wellsway School by emailing: [communications@wellswayschool.com](mailto:communications@wellswayschool.com)



## Red Nose Day activities raise smiles at Two Rivers

**RED  
NOSE  
DAY**



The children wore red, we had a sponsored scooter ride and a competition to design a red nose which raised an amazing £461.

Well done everybody

## Who can make Mr Jenkins laugh most?

This year Saltford Primary asked the children to write down their favourite jokes to tell to their class on Red Nose Day. Our resident joke specialist, Mr Jenkins, had the pleasure of judging the best jokes in the school from the class favourites. The winners were awarded a small Comic Relief prize and a large helping of glory.

Here are the first and second prize winners and their jokes:

**First prize: Jacob in Year 3**

Q: Why can't you give Elsa a balloon?

A: Because she will let it go!

**Second prize: Rosie in Year 1**

Q: What do you call a teacher wearing ear muffs?

A: Anything you like - they can't hear you!!



Children were also allowed to wear their own clothes to school in exchange for a £1 donation to Comic Relief. We raised £412.65 for this good cause.

# Cheddar Grove's £3,000 for Comic Relief

We are totally overwhelmed by the response from our community to our fundraising efforts for this year's Comic Relief. Children in all phases across the school participated in a variety of sponsored activities from Reception's sponsored scoot to Year 3's epic over one hundred jokes joke-a-thon to Year 5's crazy mile with crazy hair.

The generosity from parents, carers, extended family members and colleagues, which brought in £3,000, has been truly heart-warming. A special mention to teachers Miss Alderson, Mrs Cable and Miss Tanner who worked hard behind the scenes to organise and co-ordinate a wonderful week.



Some super pedal and pushing power in Reception during our sponsored scoot!



Year 1 with their amazing art work.



Years 4, 5 & 6 modelling their personally designed masks



Year 6 enjoyed a 2k nature trail walk/run



## Winter's beauty captured by Saltford children



EYFS first place: Annie



EYFS second place: Larissa



KS1 first place: Imogen



KS1 second place: Piper



Lower KS2 first place: Emily



Lower KS2 second place: Cody



Upper KS2 first place: Cam



Upper KS2 second place: Pippa

At Saltford School, we were delighted to announce the winners of our PTA #Winterwatch photography competition which was started during lockdown. We had over 160 photos from which our judge, professional photographer Peter Travers, to pick the winners. The entries were extremely varied and beautiful. They certainly met the original brief which was "to take a photo of something that catches your eye, something of natural beauty" inspired by the BBC Winterwatch programme.

Prizes were awarded to first and second place in categories EYFS, KS1, Lower KS2 and Upper KS2. Each first and second place winner received a certificate and a personalised mug with their image printed on, kindly funded by the PTA.

## GCSE Food candidates cook up tasty treats

Year 11 GCSE Food students at Wellsway School spent the morning cooking two dishes which were designed and made for their final assessments. The students stated they were very proud of their accomplishments and wanted to eat what they had cooked as soon as possible! A huge well done to the students and to Chef Bye for leading the assessment sessions.



## Brambles are banished as students prepare to start vegetable garden

Students involved in Forest School at Wellsway with Richard Gascoyne have been enjoying clearing brambles from behind Kelston House and will be starting their own vegetable garden. A huge thank you to Luke's dad in Year 9 for supplying soil and compost to us. We will send home some fresh vegetables for you!

These photos show some recent highlights, including

- Bramble bashing in the veg garden
- Plenty of newts
- Toad spawn in the pond





## Trust Improvement Works

The partial closure of our schools during January and February gave our estates team a chance to redecorate classrooms and bring about other improvements, including:

- New doors into the main hall at Saltford Primary
- The refurbishment of a toilet block at SBL that had been closed for 15 years!
- Creation of a new TV studio at SBL using equipment from the former Bath Studio School
- Smart new internal doors at St John's

We are grateful to area estates managers Jordan Shiel and Steve Smith for managing these works along with Richard May, Head of IT Services for his work on the TV studio.

Tim Howes,  
Chief Operating Officer



## Dental hygiene

St John's Year 3 experienced a virtual dental hygiene lesson presented by two nurses. The children engaged in discussion about how to keep their teeth healthy and explored why certain foods are better for them than others. Some children were surprised at the statistics presented and spent time sharing their ideas about how they can improve their food choices and keep a healthy mouth. The children thoroughly enjoyed being able to ask questions directly to the nurses and explaining approaches they take to care for their teeth.

## Year 6 cycling proficiency

St John's Year 6 are really enjoying having the opportunity to ride their bikes in school and are looking forward to learning about how to be safe on the roads. One said: "We are enjoying riding accurately through cones and already feel more confident on our bikes - it's really fun!"

## Sasha's skydive for hospice

SBL student Sasha Dornan is planning to throw herself out of a plane for charity. Sasha, 17, is doing the 15,000ft skydive to raise money for St Peter's Hospice. She has had a Saturday job at the Downend charity shop for the hospice since last summer so has witnessed first-hand how repeated lockdowns have impacted the amount of money the charity makes.

Sasha hopes to raise over £1,000 through fundraising and has paid for the skydive herself so that all the money goes to the charity. She said: "My manager told me that St Peter's Hospice is really struggling because it's lost all the normal income from sponsored walks, marathons, running the charity shops and so on.

"They've had to close some of the beds at the hospice in Brentry because they haven't got enough money to run them.

"I came up with the idea of a sponsored skydive and my manager said, 'But who will do that?'"

"I said, 'I will!'"

St Peter's Hospice is the only hospice in Bristol that cares for adults with progressive life-limiting illness. Last year it missed out on £2 million in funding, with all 52 shops across the city having to close for much of the year.

Sasha's tandem jump will take place on 16 May, having been moved back from this month because of Covid restrictions. She is jumping from an airfield in Salisbury and hopes for a soft landing on nearby fields. She said: "I'm trying not to think about it because I'll get too scared. I started watching some YouTube videos of people skydiving then realised that was a bad idea.

"The only other thing I've done to raise money for charity was a sponsored silence at primary school so this is a bit more dramatic! My mum is a bit worried and would rather I stay on the ground.

"I'm hoping I'll enjoy it on the day."

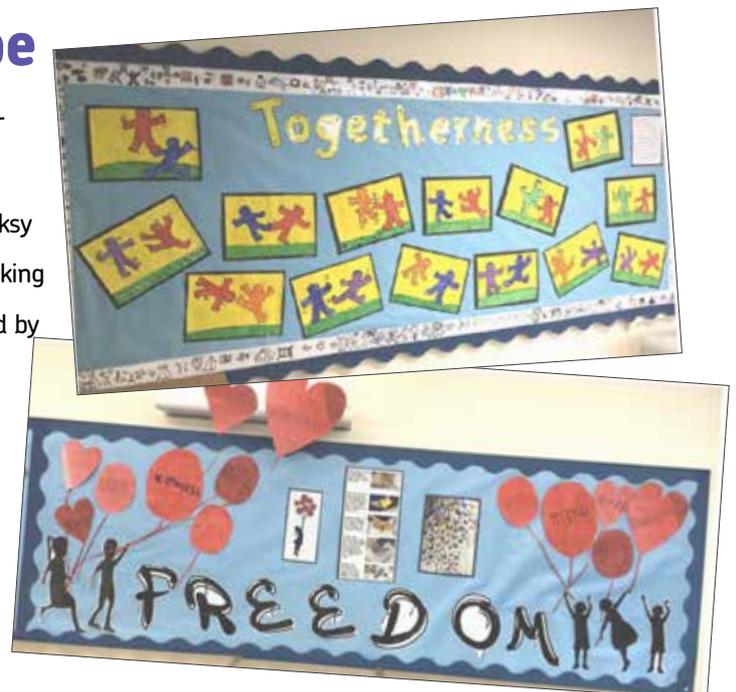
If you would like to make a donation please go to [Sasha's fundraising page](#).



## Looking forward with hope

Children at Chandag Junior School got creative to celebrate their first weeks back together as a whole school after March 8. They used the work of artists including Keith Haring (Year 3) and Banksy (Pod 5) to inspire colourful artworks, based on the theme of Looking forward with hope. Year 4 made their own Tree of Hope inspired by the art of Gustav Klimt, Tree of Life painting and aboriginal art while Year 6 drew on the illustrations from Alice in Wonderland for their creations.

Headteacher Jo Savory said: "We are proud of our work. It really brightens our mood and our environment.



## Kaylub's poem to be published



Many congratulations to Kaylub in Year 10 at IKB Academy who has been selected to have his poem published as part of the Young Writers competition.

Kaylub enjoys writing and finds it a good way to let out his emotions. He would like a career which allows him to be creative with words.

Good work, Kaylub!



## Log cabin and library

The long awaited new log cabin classroom at St John's Primary has now been built. Groups of up to 15 children at St John's can now use this lovely, extra learning area which has freed up space elsewhere in the school to home a woodland themed library, which is being installed over Easter.

In other news, children at St John's have been learning about keeping healthy. This has ranged from dental health in Y3 to cycling proficiency in Y6!

## Our link with Chipata South, Zambia School



St John's parish is currently raising money to help their link parish in Chipata South complete a new church primary school. Once the school has been built, St John's primary are hoping to form an exciting partnership with the school. Over the next few weeks, the children at St John's are going to be learning more about life in Chipata South and the village as well as thinking about further events and activities to get to know the new school.

One of St John's pupils, Izzy Lowe, has been fundraising for this with Sophie, a Year 2 pupil from Chandag Infant School, and Jacob, who is in Year 3 at Chandag Junior School. Izzy completed 100 cartwheels a day for a week and Jacob successfully mastered various "I'm a Celebrity" style challenges – including putting a worm on his forehead and eating two brussels sprouts and three mushrooms! They have already raised an incredible £2000 between them towards the total needed of £7000. If you would like to donate towards this good cause, you can donate through their [Just Giving page](#).

### Department for Education (DfE) guidance for parents

The [DfE has amended and collated guidance](#) providing information for parents and carers of children attending early years settings, schools and colleges during the pandemic. This brings together information and guidance for parents on:

- Essential information for the spring term
- Covid testing
- Clubs and out-of-school settings
- Home schooling and remote education
- Support for children and young people.

## 2for1 Tennis Tasters!

Our partners at TT-Tennis are running two tennis taster days in the Easter holidays at SBL Sports Centre, on Thursday 8th and Thursday 15th April. Tennis is one of the first sports to be allowed back and now you can enjoy a session with family or a friend for half the price! Visit [TT Tennis](https://www.tt-tennis.co.uk) for more information and to book your space.



## BRING A FRIEND FOR FREE! SBL SPORTS CLUB

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WITH OUR EXPERT COACHES  
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For more information  
email: [info@tt-tennis.co.uk](mailto:info@tt-tennis.co.uk)



## Alzheimer's Society

Children at Wansdyke Primary have continued to work with the Alzheimer's Society and this week Year 6 really enjoyed meeting Sally Townsend (Education Community Development Co-ordinator) and Mike (who lives with Dementia). The adults were really impressed with the children. Sally said, '...there was some great learning and it was a really positive experience for all. The children's questions showed insight and consideration. I liked the way they explored the topic of dementia, but also looked beyond this.'



Following the session with Mike, some children made the following comments and are still talking about it now!

Olly - 'It was nice to meet him because I found out a lot of things about different types of dementia. I learned that he was really positive and had a really good sense of humour.'

Krai- 'He was so kind and funny.'

Tallulah- 'Even though he was young when he was diagnosed, he doesn't let that stop him being him.'

## RE day at The Meadows

We had another wonderful RE day across the school. Each class learned about a religion and a different celebration and then spent time reflecting on key messages.



## KS1 sing and sign

Children in Years 1 and 2 at Wansdyke Primary took part in Bristol's, 'Sing and Sign'. They rehearsed three songs during this term and then performed them on Zoom, alongside a large number of other school's across Bristol. Laurie Stewart, from Bristol Plays Music, was delighted with how the concert went and said, 'We could really sense the energy and enthusiasm. Some wonderful singing and signing was happening.'

## FEES Fund Enrichment Challenge



FEES  
FUND



# ENRICHMENT COMPETITION

To enter children are invited to produce and submit one of the following:

- A PHOTOGRAPH (BLACK & WHITE OR COLOUR)
- A SHORT VIDEO CLIP (5 MINS MAX.)
- A POEM (200 WORDS MAX.)
- A STORY (500 WORDS MAX.)



*The competition will be open to children aged 4 - 11 and will be based around the core values of FEES Fund:*

**OPPORTUNITY**

**ASPIRATION**

**KINDNESS**

**COMMUNITY**

**for more information visit  
[www.feesfund.org](http://www.feesfund.org)**

**Closing date Thursday 20th May 2021**

