



The Athelstan Trust

Mid-Year Report to Parents March 2020

Caring, Collaborative and Excellent

SIR WILLIAM ROMNEY'S SCHOOL POISED TO JOIN THE TRUST

The Athelstan Trust is a successful, collaborative family of schools that each have their own individual identity and culture according to the communities within which they are located.

We are delighted that the Governing Body at Sir William Romney's School in Tetbury recently voted to join us. There is a strong mutual benefit both for the schools already in the Trust but also to Sir William Romney's which is a good school with strong outcomes, an excellent reputation as a caring, inclusive school and close proximity to Malmesbury and Bradon Forest. There is already a history of working together through the Avon Teaching School Alliance, the 'Gaining Ground Project' and Model United Nations days.

There has been a process of legal and financial due diligence and staff from all schools within the Trust have been collaborating with staff at Sir William Romney's to identify ways to work together, share resources and learn from each other.

'Sir William Romney's continues to grow in numbers and we are very proud of students' achievements not only in GCSE exams but across all aspects of our curriculum. Staff, governors and leaders across Sir William Romney's are extremely positive about the prospect of joining The Athelstan Trust as it will further enrich the opportunities we can offer students in and outside of the classroom.'

Jon Bell, Headteacher



***We strongly believe that
we are better together***

Welcome to the Athelstan Trust's mid-year report to parents. The aim of this newsletter is to explain a little more about our Multi-Academy Trust which for the last 5 years has consisted of three secondary schools in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire (Malmesbury School, Bradon Forest School and The Dean Academy). However, we are delighted to welcome Sir William Romney's School in Tetbury, Gloucestershire who will join the Trust from April 2020.

UPDATE FROM RICHARD



This has been a momentous and very exciting year so far for the Trust with developments which will affect our students and staff in a very positive way - for a long

time. The Trustees are very conscious that we exist only to help ensure better outcomes for our students: we believe that the selection of Heads is one of our most important tasks and that we must ensure that the Trust is structured in a way which means that our schools can help one and other and that we use our resources to raise standards throughout the Trust.

- New Headteachers have been appointed to Malmesbury School and The Dean Academy. Richard Brand starts at The Dean next term and Rupert Morton at Malmesbury in September. Both were selected after a very rigorous process and were selected in the face of strong competition. We have every confidence that both schools will be in excellent hands and that John Barrett and Tom Beveridge have worthy successors.
- The last steps in the process which will result in Sir William Romney's School joining the Trust next term have now been completed. This is equally good news for the school and the Trust - together we will be able to do more for all our students.
- The Trust has made two important new appointments. We will now have Lead Practitioners in Maths and English: Emma-Jane O'Neill and Michelle Kilburn-Bond. Their role is to share best practice throughout the Trust. No one of our schools could afford to fund school improvement to this extent, but together we have the resources to invest in raising standards.

MEET THE NEW HEADS

We have recently appointed new Headteachers at two of the Trust's schools. Rupert Moreton will be the Headteacher at Malmesbury School from September 2020 and Richard Brand will be the Headteacher at The Dean Academy from May 2020.

Recruiting a new Headteacher is one of the most important aspects of the role of our trustees and there was a rigorous two-day process to decide which candidate would be the right person to safeguard what is special about our wonderful schools and to bring fresh eyes to help us to be even better than we currently are. Both roles attracted a strong, national field of candidates who were asked to give presentations to staff, students, local governors and trustees.



RUPERT MORETON
MALMESBURY
SCHOOL

Rupert Moreton has been appointed as Headteacher for Malmesbury when John Barrett retires.

"I am very honoured to have been appointed as Headteacher of Malmesbury school. The school's reputation has always been one of excellence since I was working in Wiltshire schools over 12 years ago. I am really looking forward to getting to know the students, staff, parents/carers and the wider community.

My first teaching post was in Wiltshire, and I called Malmesbury home for a year prior to moving to Bath over 12 years ago. I have

four children, so I certainly understand the joys and stresses of parenthood! Every parent wants their children to be happy and successful.

I am currently Headteacher of Cheney School in Oxford, a fantastically rich and diverse community of over 1500 students. Prior to this I was Deputy Head of the Bristol Cathedral Choir School which was identified as 1 of the top 100 comprehensive schools in the country. In my opinion, successful school leadership is not complicated and is founded upon strong relationships with staff, students, parents and carers. It requires a very strong value driven culture that permeates everything we do such as Malmesbury's 'Happy', 'Caring' and 'Excellent'. It requires extremely high expectations for all our students and a focus on excellent teaching and learning.

Richard Brand has been appointed as Headteacher at The Dean Academy. Tom Beveridge has been appointed as Headteacher at Alderbrook School in Solihull where he can be closer to his family.

"I am delighted to have been appointed as the new Headteacher of the Dean Academy. Having worked for Oasis as a Vice Principal in a school in Bristol for the last 5 years responsible mostly for raising outcomes for young people and improving teaching and learning I was looking for the next challenge. I was drawn to the Dean Academy, and the Athelstan trust, because of the potential for rapid improvement and because of the clear values it stands for in the education for its young people. I am so excited to be joining The Dean Academy and the trust on the next step of its improvement journey and look forward to working closely with the staff, students and families of the Dean Academy in the near future."



RICHARD BRAND
THE DEAN ACADEMY

HISTORY IS NOT A
BURDEN ON THE
MEMORY BUT AN
ILLUMINATION OF
THE SOUL.

Lord Acton

PICTUREQUOTES.COM

HISTORY HALF TERMS

The Bradon Forest History Department regularly compile a list of interesting historical places and to visit during school holidays in a bid to inspire students and their families to explore topics further. The team have also offered up an extensive list of reading suggestions to get stuck into - particularly useful given the weather we've had to endure this year!

Places of Interest

- ❖ REME Museum, Lyneham
- ❖ Chedworth Roman Villa
- ❖ STEAM Museum, Swindon
- ❖ M Shed, Bristol
- ❖ Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum
- ❖ Dean Heritage Centre
- ❖ Swindon & Cricklade Railway
- ❖ Severn Valley Railway
- ❖ Goodrich Castle
- ❖ The Buscot & Coleshill Estate - Coleshill's WW2 Secrets
- ❖ Warwick Castle
- ❖ Imperial War Museum, London
- ❖ Great Coxwell Tithe Barn
- ❖ Laycock - Fox Talbot Museum (*Harry Potter filmed here!*)
- ❖ Avebury Stone Circle
- ❖ Lydiard Park House
- ❖ Wiltshire Heritage Museum
- ❖ Museum of Computing, Swindon

- ❖ Caen Hill Locks, Devizes
- ❖ American Museum, Bath
- ❖ Jane Austen's House, Bath
- ❖ Stonehenge
- ❖ Salisbury Cathedral
- ❖ Gloucester Cathedral (*Harry Potter filmed here too!*)
- ❖ Trowbridge Museum
- ❖ Swindon Museum and Art Gallery
- ❖ Chippenham Museum and Heritage Centre
- ❖ Ludgershall Castle and Cross
- ❖ Rococo Gardens, Painswick
- ❖ Wilton House, Salisbury
- ❖ Old Wardour Castle
- ❖ Berkeley Castle
- ❖ Clearwell Caves
- ❖ Puzzlewood, Forest of Dean (*location for Dr Who*)

KS3 History Reading Suggestions

- Grandpa's Great Escape - David Walliams
- Once - Morris Gleitzman
- The Book Thief - Marcus Zusak
- Hitler's Angel - William Osborne
- The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips - Michael Morpurgo
- Tamar - Mal Peet
- Hero on a Bicycle - Shirley Hughes
- The Snow Goose - Paul Gallico
- Goodnight Mr Tom - Michelle Magorian
- The Sweep's Boy - Jim Eldridge
- Hetty Feather - Jacqueline Wilson
- Prisoner of the Inquisition - Theresa Breslin

KS4 History Reading Suggestions

- To Kill a Mockingbird - Harper Lee
- The Kite Runner - Khaled Hosseini
- The Glass Collector - Anna Perera
- The Wall - William Sutcliffe
- Dusk - Eve Edwards
- The Time Traveler's Wife - Audrey Niffenegger
- The Boy at the Top of the Mountain - John Boyne
- Henderson's Boys Series - Robert Muchamore
- Salt to the Sea - Ruta Sepetys
- All Quiet on the Western Front - Erich Maria Remarque
- Auslander - Paul Dowswell
- The Silver Sword - Ian Serraillier

SAFER INTERNET DAY AT THE DEAN ACADEMY

Earlier this term, students at The Dean Academy were taught how to safely and positively express themselves online as part of the national 'Safer Internet Day' campaign that helps to raise awareness of online issues such as cyberbullying and social networking.

The Computing Department took part in the initiative run by the UK Safer Internet Centre who aim to educate children and young people across the UK about using technology responsibly, respectfully and creatively. The school marked the day with a special assembly and Computing lessons which were based around internet safety. There was also a tutor challenge quiz about staying safe online.

Mr Martin Warren, the Computing teacher who co-ordinated the events at the school commented *"This year's theme for the Safer Internet Day was 'Free to Be' which is invaluable to us as a school as it helps us to engage and educate our students on how, and why to be safe online. It also ties in very well with our students and their ability to express themselves in whichever way they would like, but always coming back to the understanding of staying safe online."*



EDUCATING THE EDUCATORS AT THE DEAN ACADEMY

The Dean Academy is working with 9 feeder primary schools to raise aspiration and enthusiasm for Science among students while enhancing their teachers' knowledge and understanding of the Primary Curriculum.

This Forest Gateway Partnership Project is funded by a STEM Learning Enthuse Award which runs for another year and covers the cost of activities and training. The role of the Dean Academy is to provide expertise, equipment and facilities in a dedicated laboratory.



The initiative involves running FACT (Families and Children Together) events which are attended by both enthusiastic Primary children and their parents who explore questions such as how strong is your carrier bag? The leader of the project, Maggie Beggs also recently demonstrated a heart and lung dissection.

There are also STAC (Science Teachers and Children) events which bring together Science teachers and pupil premium students. Maggie leads a CPD session for the teachers on the same KS2 topic as the children are being taught in the lab. During the session, the teachers go and observe the lesson so they can see how the topic is delivered. The latest event involved 6 teachers and 28 children.

At the same time as the events, teachers from local schools are trained on the same topic and they have a chance to observe how the topic is taught to the children.

The funding for this crucial project comes on the back of the award winning Enthuse project Maggie led at Malmesbury School last year. Maggie loves giving other Science teachers the tools to make the enhanced delivery of the Science curriculum sustainable. She is grateful to everyone at The Dean Academy who contributes to the success of the project.



SCHOOL REVIEWS

One of key strengths of our Trust is the way staff embrace and welcome the opportunity to collaborate. This year, each Headteacher has chosen a topic which will be reviewed by a team of staff and governors from the different schools.



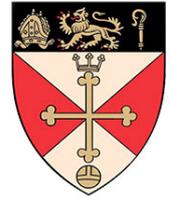
Bradon Forest have chosen Creative Arts (both curriculum and whole school).



- The topic is timely because of the Art Garden.
- The review will include outside space; looking at Pupil Premium engagement and building cultural capital.

Malmesbury School will focus on mental health and student well-being.

- This topic was inspired by comments made by sixth formers being interviewed for senior student positions about the stress students feel these days.
- We want to find out:
 - *what messages are given at school*
 - *what messages are given at home*
 - *what support could be put in place*



The Dean Academy will look at Student Services and our pastoral system.

For the last 18 months The Dean Academy has been implementing a new behaviour policy and more restorative approach. We have also developed the role of Heads of Year to try to bring the whole pastoral team together.

- We want to look at:
 - *what is working well*
 - *progress since change in procedures*
 - *how effective this system is being in supporting the wellbeing of students*
 - *how staff/students are finding the system*
 - *what we can do to develop the pastoral system further*



MUTUAL APPRECIATION



Carly Probert, a Malmesbury Year 8 tutor, asked her tutor group to share their idea of a teacher's typical day.

- 7.30-9.00am tea and biscuits in the staffroom
- 12.35pm more tea and gossip
- 3.30-6.30 pm planning for the next day/ pack up/ more tea and biscuits

She then showed them an example of a teacher's typical day with all their different roles. The class were shocked that she put 7:30am as her arrival time and 10pm as the end of marking books. She then showed them a youtube video featuring interviews with celebrities talking about teachers who inspired them. The celebrities emphasised how important it is to thank teachers. Carly then gave out little notecards. These are some of the things Carly's tutees wrote to their other teachers:

- Thank you for always encouraging me to keep trying until I get it right. I really appreciate it.
- Thank you for always planning excellent lessons for us. We really enjoy them!
- I know that our tutor group can be a pain sometimes but we really appreciate everything that you do for us
- Thank you for teaching me art - I always look forward to your lessons

Carly was pleased that her tutor group took the task so seriously and produced such sincere notes. She also received email responses from some of the teachers who had received the notes which she didn't expect at all...they definitely made more of an impact than she imagined they would. The following Monday Carly told her tutees that they had really made some teachers' days which they loved.

- What a fab way to start the weekend! Thank you
- Lovely idea Carly. Well chuffed with my notes. Thanks very much. Really set me up for a good weekend.
- That is so nice - you've/they've made my day.

CAREERS FAIR

Bradon Forest School held their 2nd annual Careers Fair at the end February. Students had the opportunity to meet representatives from a wide range of organisations including Nationwide, the Fire Service, NHS, Norland Nannies, Mercedes, De Vere Hotel Group, Southern League Football Academy, Swindon Dance, BMW, Oak & Furrows, Army, RAF, Shoebox Theatre, universities and local colleges.



Mr Bray said, "Thank you to all the students who attended, for showing excellent behaviour whilst at the fair and for making the most of the opportunity. The feedback we have received from our visitors has been outstanding."



"The students were really engaged, no matter which year group they were in." - UWE

"Nice to speak to students who were polite and genuinely a pleasure to talk to." - Norland College

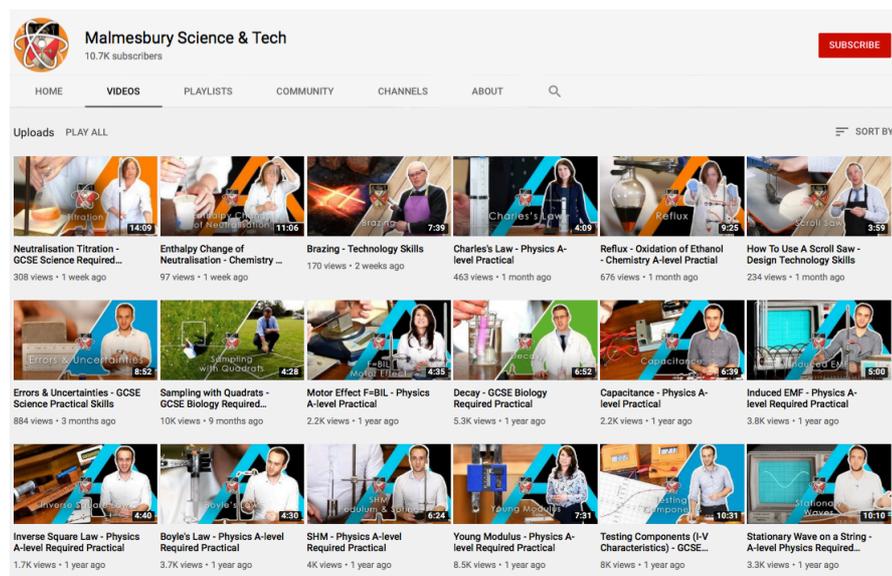
"Your students are good ambassadors for the school, well behaved." - Army

MALMESBURY SCIENCE YOUTUBE CHANNEL HITS 1 MILLION VIEWS!



Malmesbury School Science department are thrilled to announce that their YouTube channel has reached 1 million views.

Gabrielle Peers-Dent (Senior Curriculum Leader) explained that the initial idea for the channel was as a way for Malmesbury School students to revise the required practicals for the new GCSE and help them catch up if they were absent.



“We couldn’t have imagined how successful our channel would become though. Very quickly we started to get messages from students and teachers around the country asking for us to film more. We were complemented on the quality of the videos and the clarity of the explanations.”

Physics teacher, Huw Rees, took on the challenge of producing the videos. *“Our science faculty does amazing work every day due to the expertise of the teachers and it’s a delight to see this work having a wider influence and benefitting young people all over the world.”*

Messages have been received from far and wide including from a project in Zambia. Shulegenie is a solar powered e-learning platform which are now utilising the YouTube videos with the aim to reach 15,000 students who have never seen the inside of a lab before.



Tim Gilson
CEO of The Athelstan Trust



I would like to thank all parents and students for their patience and resilience as we respond to the rapidly changing situation regarding the Coronavirus outbreak. We are following government guidelines and our dedicated staff are doing everything they can to minimise the disruption to students’ learning. We are providing on-line as well as paper resources so that students can continue their studies at home. You will still be able to contact each of the schools in an emergency via email addresses on the schools’ websites. We hope you keep safe and well.