



Welcome from the CEO

As another busy and inspiring school year draws to a close, it gives me enormous pleasure to share just a small snapshot of life across our Epworth Education Trust family.

Reading through the stories in this newsletter, I have once again been reminded that the very best education is about so much more than test results. Of course, we want every child to achieve academically and leave our schools equipped with the knowledge and skills to succeed. But we also want them to discover the joy of learning, to be curious, creative and courageous, and to develop the confidence to embrace the opportunities that lie ahead.

Within these pages you will see children performing on stage, creating music, solving engineering challenges, exploring nature, serving their communities, meeting inspiring visitors and experiencing learning in ways that ignite imagination. These rich experiences do not sit alongside the curriculum - they are an essential part of it. They help children make connections, uncover

talents they never knew they had and develop the resilience, compassion and confidence that will stay with them for life.

I hope you enjoy celebrating these wonderful moments with us. Every achievement reflects the dedication of our staff, the encouragement of families and, above all, the enthusiasm and potential of the remarkable children in our schools.

Thank you for being such an important part of our Trust community.

Warm regards,

Julie-Ann Hewitt
CEO, Epworth Education Trust

Big Serve 2026

We are incredibly proud to showcase the outcomes of a very special initiative that has been taking place across every school in our Trust earlier this year – **The Big Serve!**

The aim of this initiative has been to encourage every child and adult to use their talents, ideas and compassion to support others. The Big Serve saw every school across the Trust taking part in meaningful acts of kindness within their schools and wider communities.

This included activities big and small, such as creating thoughtful cards and gifts for local residents, supporting charities, caring for the environment and spending time with the younger children and members of the community. Everyone has been so thoughtful and creative in coming up with ways to serve others and it has been joyful to see both impact and the ripple effect of everyone's efforts.

Julie-Ann Hewitt, CEO, said: "Kindness is at the heart of everything we stand for as a Trust family. The Big Serve is about empowering our children to recognise the impact they can have

on others and showing them that even the smallest gesture can make a meaningful difference.

"We are incredibly proud of the compassion and community spirit being shown across our schools."

Highlights of activity that has taken place across the Trust includes:

- Visiting care homes and nurseries to spend time with the youngest and oldest in their communities
- Organising fundraising events such as colour runs, cake sales and charity challenges
- Supporting local food banks and community pantries through donations and volunteering
- Taking part in environmental action, including litter picking and planting seeds and wildflowers
- Creating handmade cards, letters and small gifts for members of the local community
- Producing creative resources to promote community safety initiatives, such as neighbourhood watch campaigns
- Assembling Mother and Baby boxes, New Beginnings boxes and care packages for families in need
- Sharing acts of appreciation with school and church communities through small, thoughtful gestures

Together, the Trust and schools completed an incredible 13,418 acts of kindness and raised £10,889.42 for a range of charities and community causes, demonstrating the generosity and community spirit of pupils and staff.

Julie-Ann added: "The Big Serve forms part of our Infinite Eight strategy, which provides our pupils with rich experiences beyond the classroom. We want our children to grow not only academically, but personally and spiritually as compassionate, active members of their community.

"The Big Serve has enabled everyone to really experience the joy that comes from supporting others and see the meaningful impact of actions big and small and I couldn't be prouder of our Epworth family and their efforts."



Sleeping under the Stars

One of the greatest strengths of Epworth Education Trust is the opportunity for schools to learn from one another and create memorable experiences together. A wonderful example of this was the recent 'Sleeping under the Stars' residential, which brought together children and staff from Bakewell Methodist Academy, Hey with Zion CofE / Methodist Primary School and Summerseat Methodist Primary School.

The overnight camp gave pupils the chance to take learning out of the classroom, building confidence as they pitched tents, tackled team challenges and explored the beautiful Peak District. Working alongside children from other Trust schools, they developed new friendships, solved problems together and discovered the value of teamwork in a completely different setting.

The camp was a fantastic example of how our schools work in partnership to create enriching opportunities that bring learning to life in creative and unforgettable ways.

By sharing ideas, expertise and experiences across the Trust, our schools continue to give children opportunities that extend beyond what any one school could offer alone - nurturing a genuine joy of learning.



Summerseat Teacher Wins National Kindness Award

Summerseat Methodist Primary School has had cause for celebration this year, as teacher, Miss Naomi Ward, was named the winner of the prestigious 2025/26 Graham Spivey Outstanding Kindness Award, presented by the 52 Lives School of Kindness Programme.

The national award recognises adults working in schools who demonstrate exceptional kindness and making a lasting difference to the lives of children.

Jaime Thurston, founder of 52 Lives and the School of Kindness, said: "The stories we heard about Naomi were incredibly powerful.

"People spoke about the lasting impact she has on children's lives... not just academically, but emotionally too. She helps children feel seen, supported, and capable of achieving great things.

"It is exactly this kind of kindness and dedication that the Graham Spivey Outstanding Kindness Award was created to celebrate."



The celebrations continued at the award presentation, which Naomi attended in London with her mum.

Clare Mariani, chair of the school's Local Advisory Board, also praised Miss Ward's contribution.

She said: "Kindness and inclusivity is at the heart of everything we do at Summerseat and Miss Ward is an exceptional individual whose impact transforms the lives of our children forever by her ability to inspire them and give them the confidence to succeed."

Investing in inspiring spaces for learning

At Epworth Education Trust, we know that pupils flourish in environments where children feel safe, confident and inspired. That's why we are delighted to celebrate several schools that have secured significant external investment to improve their buildings and facilities for current and future generations.

Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School has been awarded almost £130,000 of funding to carry out essential repairs and improvements to its school buildings. The investment will help ensure pupils and staff continue to learn and work in safe, modern and well-maintained surroundings that support high-quality teaching and learning.

Meanwhile, **Summerseat Methodist Primary School** has secured more than £20,000 to undertake a programme of planned works to remove small amounts of encapsulated asbestos-containing materials from known areas of its historic school building. The materials have been carefully managed through robust monitoring arrangements and do not present an immediate risk to pupils, staff or visitors. Completing this work over the summer holidays will further enhance the building while minimising disruption to children's education.

This latest success builds on previous Condition Improvement Fund projects at Summerseat, which have included replacement windows, heating and boiler upgrades, and drainage improvements, helping to preserve the character of the much-loved village school while ensuring it continues to meet the needs of modern education.

Leyland Methodist Junior School has also secured more than £60,000 of CIF funding to further enhance site security through the installation of additional fencing and a new security and lockdown system. The work, which will take place over the summer holidays, builds on previous successful investment focused on improving security provision at the infant school site.

Additionally, **Westleigh Methodist Primary School** has secured £45,000 of funding from the Local Authority to create a dedicated SEND base for up to eight pupils. The new provision, due to open in September, will provide specialist facilities and support, enabling more children with additional needs to access high-quality education within their local community.

These successful projects reflect the expertise of Epworth Education Trust in securing external investment and our commitment to creating learning environments where every child can thrive.



Now in its second year, our pioneering Infinite Eight programme is firmly embedded across Epworth Education Trust, enriching children's learning through experiences beyond the classroom.

Below are just a few highlights from across the Trust, showing how schools continue to bring their Infinite Eight experiences to life in creative and meaningful ways.



Marvel at the masters

Across our Epworth Trust family, pupils have been inspired to marvel at the brilliance of artistic and historical masters.

Children at **Wesley Methodist Primary School** from Reception to Year 6 were inspired by a live performance from Rocksteady Music School. After enjoying an energetic showcase, pupils had the opportunity to try a range of instruments themselves, with many discovering a new passion for music.



At **Rosehill Methodist Primary Academy**, the school's partnership with Rocksteady Music School has continued to flourish, with five school bands now rehearsing each week. Pupils work collaboratively to develop their musical talents and regularly perform to parents, carers and the wider school community. These performances have become a real highlight of the school year.



Walk a while in someone's shoes

Pupils at **Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School** showed compassion in action by raising money for EduKid in two inspiring ways. Year 4 made and sold bracelets and bookmarks, raising an impressive £309, while the school choir treated families to a special concert that raised a further £200 through ticket sales.



Be a heritage host

At **Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School**, every class takes part in a monthly community coffee morning, sharing their learning with local residents through performances and classroom work.



During their session, Reception confidently retold Little Red Riding Hood before proudly showcasing their writing and artwork, bringing smiles to the audience while strengthening links with the local community.



Be a culture collector

Children across our schools have been collecting cultural experiences that broaden their worldviews.



Pupils from **Leyland Methodist Schools** and **Nutgrove Methodist Primary School** were inspired by visits to the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, experiencing the excitement of live orchestral music and discovering where a love of music can take them.



Be at one with nature

Our pupils have been connecting with the natural world and learning to care for our environment.

Every Friday at **Summerseat Methodist Primary School**, pupils head to the school's forest area for outdoor learning, where they develop a love of nature. These regular sessions have become a highlight of the week, supporting children's wellbeing as well as their learning.



At **Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School**, children discovered the wonder of the natural world through two memorable outdoor experiences. Year 4 enjoyed a camping adventure on the school grounds, while Year 5 explored the Lake District on their residential at Brathay Hall. Campfires, outdoor challenges and seeing a truly dark night sky for the first time gave children the chance to connect with nature and create lasting memories beyond the classroom.



Year 2 pupils at **Westleigh Methodist Primary School** enjoyed an exciting visit to Formby Beach, where they searched for red squirrels before exploring the beach and sand dunes. The trip brought their learning to life as they discovered coastal habitats firsthand.



Be part of a top team

Teamwork and collaboration have taken centre stage across our Trust

Nutgrove Methodist Primary School challenged pupils to become budding entrepreneurs during their exciting PTFA “Pitch for the Pot” event. In true Dragons’ Den style, teams confidently presented ideas to improve school life, pitching projects including new books, football nets, playground markings, French dictionaries, a wellbeing shed and much more.



The PTFA panel was amazed by the children’s confidence, creativity and enthusiasm. After careful deliberation, the wellbeing shed was selected as the winning project, with pupils now working together to choose and order resources using their £1,000 funding.

Recently, **Rosehill Methodist Primary Academy** celebrated the launch of its school football team. Pupils have been training regularly, representing the school with pride, and showcasing excellent sportsmanship. Reaching the Spring Term finals of the Manchester City in the Community Cup was a fantastic highlight for everyone involved.

Year 6 at **Wesley Methodist Primary School** created and ran their own businesses as part of an enterprise project, designing products, managing budgets and selling to customers, while also raising funds for their end-of-year prom.

Be a helping hand

Our school communities continue to demonstrate kindness and compassion in action.

Pupils at **Nutgrove Methodist Primary School** showed incredible generosity by organising a cake sale and a colourful whole-school Colour Run in support of EduKid. Through these fantastic fundraising events, children discovered the importance of helping others while making a real difference to a worthy cause.

Be inspired to aspire

Inspiration has been lighting up our classrooms through real-life stories of perseverance and success.

At **Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School**, pupils explored the life of John Wesley through a whole-school focus day, taking part in worship, reflection and creative activities across all year groups.



A whole host of inspiring visitors helped bring careers and ambition to life at **Nutgrove Methodist Primary School**, including emergency service workers, Andy Reid MBE and Olympic BMX rider Danny Butler, all sharing powerful messages of resilience and determination.

Year 3 and Year 4 at **Wesley Methodist Primary School** took part in an Animal Encounters workshop, meeting many live animals while learning about habitats, lifecycles and food chains through hands-on science.

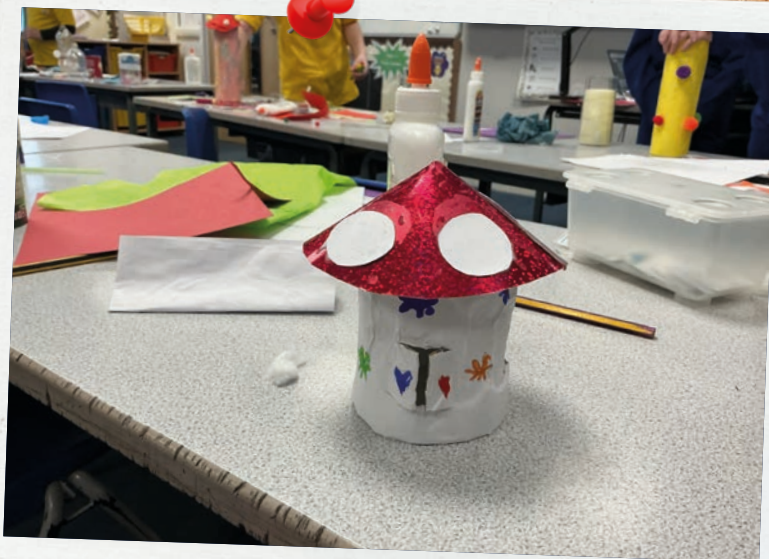


The Noticeboard



At **Bedford Hall**, pupils gave back to their school community by hosting a special afternoon tea for volunteers and supporters. They served homemade treats and celebrated the kindness, generosity and time given by those who make such a difference to school life.

Applause all round at **Bakewell**, where pupils wowed families and the community with their performance of 'Oliver with a Twist'. After weeks of dedicated rehearsals, the children took to the stage with confidence, bringing the production to life with brilliant acting and outstanding teamwork.



At **Nutgrove**, Year 4 designed and built their own bedside lamps after evaluating existing products, then tested how well they worked.



Year 6 enjoyed a special visit from Lancashire Police at **Wheatley Lane**, exploring police equipment, a riot van and meeting the K9 unit, including demonstrations from police dogs Bane, Arty and Casio.



At **Nutgrove**, EYFS children blasted off on a Space Explorers adventure, transforming their Outdoor Classroom into a space hub complete with a rocket launch. They designed rockets with recycled materials and solved the mystery of a strange egg, with every activity bringing learning to life through imaginative play.



At **Leyland**, Year 3 brought Science to life with a visit from Creatures Interactive, getting up close to reptiles, amphibians and exotic bugs while exploring habitats, food chains and life cycles.

Rosehill has invested in a range of exciting new playground resources this year, including a Reading Shed, LEGO, construction equipment, small world play and a new gravel area for designing and building. The new additions have created even more opportunities for pupils to enjoy creative and engaging playtimes.

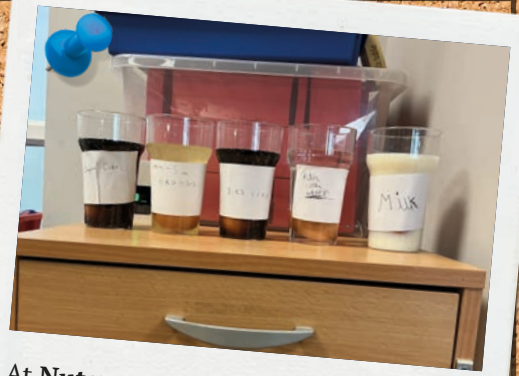


The Noticeboard



Celebrations were in order at **Wesley** as the school's new nursery opened its doors, marking an exciting new chapter in its early years provision. The dedicated nursery team has created a warm, nurturing environment.

At **Summerseat**, a new outdoor garden has transformed part of the playground into a vibrant learning space, thanks to funding secured by teacher Naomi Ward. The garden supports hands-on science learning while providing a calm space for pupils to enjoy throughout the day.



At **Nutgrove**, Year 4 explored human teeth, learning about incisors, canines and molars before designing their own sets of teeth. They tested how different drinks affect teeth using eggs and were fascinated by the results.



The annual Colour Run at **Wheatley Lane** saw children take part in a fun-filled event while raising over £2,100 for the PTFA towards an outdoor classroom and sheltered learning space.

Creativity flourished in Year 5 at **Leyland** as pupils built giant engineering structures with Eric Wright Construction, tackled collaborative Lock Learners challenges and explored printmaking with visiting artist Alan Birch.



At **Westleigh**, Year 4 showcased their musical talents in performances for parents, demonstrating their xylophone and improvisation skills before moving on to drumming with the same enthusiasm and creativity.

Nursery children at **Westleigh** watched caterpillars transform into butterflies before releasing them into the wild, experiencing the life cycle firsthand.



Rosehill's Year 6 pupils enjoyed a fantastic residential visit to PGL, taking part in a wide range of adventurous activities and stepping outside their comfort zones. Throughout the trip, they were praised by PGL staff for their excellent behaviour.

Year 6 stepped back in time at **Leyland** with a History Alive workshop, bringing World War II to life through costumes, artefacts and hands-on activities.

