

Athelstan Argus

Trust Staff Newsletter

Caring, collaborative and excellent

April 2020

LEAD PRACTITIONER ROLES

The Trust has recently appointed Lead Practitioners for Mathematics and English. These are the first Trust central team roles that focus on school improvement. Lead Practitioners will work with staff in all the Trust's schools. The roles will include identifying and implementing strategies for improving attainment, mentoring and working with intervention groups. They will also use their leadership skills to work with faculties outside their own subject areas.

The roles were advertised nationally and there was a strong field of candidates. The Mathematics interviews took place at Bradon Forest School and the English interviews were held at The Dean Academy. Staff, students and trustees were involved in interviewing and observing presentations.



Emma-Jane O'Neill

Candidates were asked to teach a small group of Year 10 students and give a presentation to staff on a piece of up to date research/evidence-based practice within their subjects (Mathematics/English).

After the rigorous process, staff at the schools were unanimous that Emma-Jane O'Neill

(current Head of Mathematics at Malmesbury School) and Michelle Kilburn-Bond (current Assistant Head at Malmesbury and formerly a teacher of English at Malmesbury and The Dean Academy) should be appointed to the roles.



Michelle Kilburn-Bond

David McDonald, Assistant Headteacher at Bradon Forest: *"Each candidate was asked to present their vision of how they would raise standards in maths across the Trust. All presentations were of a high standard, referencing recent research with a big focus on the importance of curriculum. Emma-Jane stood out because she not only has a clear understanding of the challenges facing maths departments at the moment, but she also has a*



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great understanding of how best to implement the solutions within the Trust.”

Alex Collingridge, Head of Modern Foreign Languages: *“In the research panel, a variety of theories were explained and exemplified, but what made Emma-Jane stand out was the range of practical mathematical ideas she presented that were linked to research papers around retrieval, which could easily be used by any maths teacher at any point in their career.”*

Sarah Haines, Assistant Headteacher at Malmesbury School/Deputy Headteacher at The Dean: *“We asked the candidates to complete 3 tasks on the day – a presentation about raising standards across the trust, a discussion about a piece of recent educational research that could inform improved practice in English teaching and the teaching of a small intervention group. It was interesting to reflect on how each candidate approached these elements in different ways but it was clear in the final interview that Michelle’s collaborative approach to school improvement, her impressive knowledge of English teaching and learning and her calm and approachable style pointed towards her being the ideal candidate to develop this new cross-trust role.”*

Tom Beveridge, Headteacher at The Dean: *“Michelle excelled across all areas and I have no doubt that she is going to be a fantastic Lead Practitioner. Michelle has a large range of experience in leadership and is a brilliant English teacher, I wish her all the very best for this exciting and challenging role.”*

WELCOME TO SIR WILLIAM ROMNEY’S

Fascinating facts about Tetbury - the school’s location

Sir William Romney’s School, the newest school to join the Trust, is in the small town of Tetbury, in the Cotswolds. If you are interested in history, geography, and the arts, Tetbury is well worth a visit. There are numerous café’s, pubs and hotels and it is renowned for its antique and bric à brac shops. Homes & Antiques magazine named Long Street one of the UK’s top 10 favourite streets for shopping in December 2018. Tetbury lies on the site of an ancient hill fort, on which an Anglo-Saxon monastery was founded, probably by Ine of Wessex, in 681. The Tetbury Avon, a tributary of the Bristol Avon, known locally as the Ingleburn rises to the north of the town. During the Middle Ages, Tetbury became an important market for Cotswold wool and yarn. The Tetbury Woolsack Races, founded in 1972, is an annual competition where participants must carry a 60-pound (27 kg) sack of wool up and down a steep hill (Gumstool Hill). The Tetbury Woolsack Races take place on the "late May Bank Holiday", the last Monday in May each year.

Notable buildings in the town include the Church House, the pillared Market House, built in 1655 and the late-eighteenth century Gothic revival parish church of St Mary the Virgin and St Mary Magdalene. Much of the rest of the town centre dates from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.



The Tetbury town crest features two dolphins. It is said that a member of the famous De Braose family, who came from Tetbury, had his life saved in the Irish

Sea by two dolphins. When he returned to Tetbury, Dolphins then became part of the town's crest and even now there's a Dolphins running club, a Dolphins dramatic society and even a Dolphins Hall.



Since 1981, Tetbury has been twinned with Zwingenbourg, south of Frankfurt in Germany. Tetbury recently partnered with the charming French town of Châtillon sur Indre.

Who was Sir William Romney?

Sir William Romney (1555 – 1611) was the only son of William Romney of Tetbury and his wife, Margaret. He was the governor of the East India Company and a member of the Haberdasher's Company. He was made one of the sherrifs of the city of London in 1603. Romney married Rebecca, only daughter of Robert Taylor, alderman of the city of London, by whom he had six sons and two daughters.



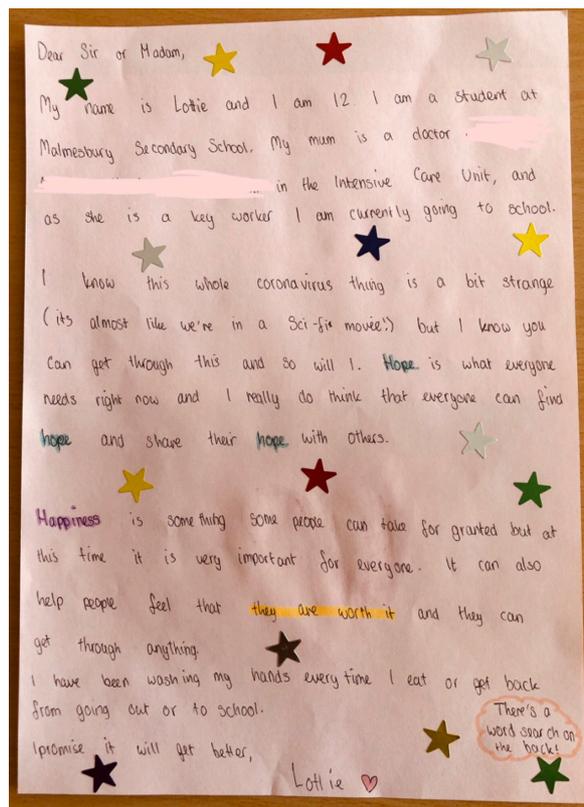
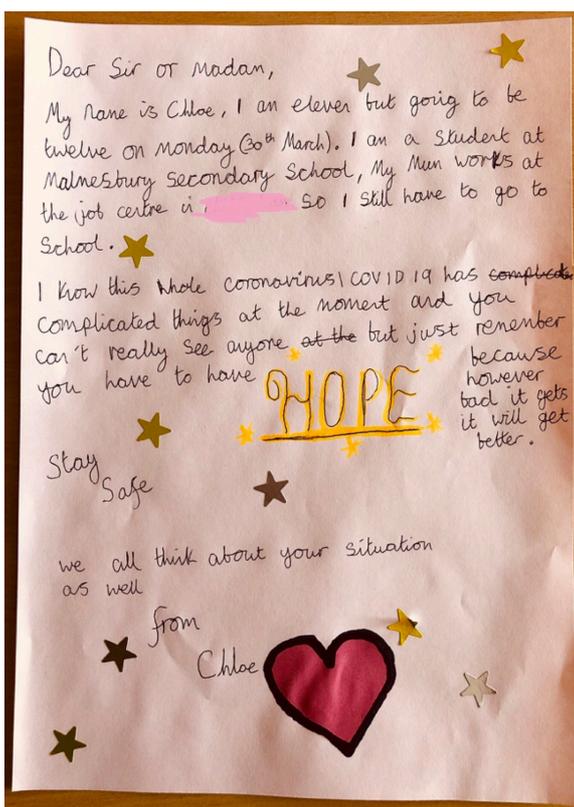
Other notable people associated with Tetbury:

- Jet Black – founder member of rock band The Stranglers
- Charles, the Prince of Wales, lives at Highgrove, near Tetbury
- Jake Meyer, the youngest British person to climb Mount Everest
- Alice Liddell Hargreaves, inspiration behind Alice in Wonderland
- Laurens van der Post, owned a nearby farm in the 1930s, died 1996
- Brian Trubshaw, first British test-pilot of Concorde, died 2001

Famous Alumni of Sir William Romney's School:

Ellie Harrison – Presenter of BBC's Countryfile

ISOLATION, NOT ISOLATED



Here are two examples of letters being sent from our students to elderly people isolated in care homes.

GOODBYE AND THANK YOU PAT!

Pat Wilkinson is a much loved and long serving member of staff at Malmesbury School who is retiring:

Pat joined the school in November 1993 working first on reception then helping with data, assessment, work experience and Sims. In about 2004, Maggie Sutherland asked her to consider becoming Exams Officer, as Pam Carter was due to retire. *“At first I said no, but as she kept working on me, I eventually agreed! I started as EO in 2007. I also continued to deal with data, the school Censuses, setting up report templates on Sims etc. Maggie was also responsible for me helping with 3 trips to the Sondeza camp in South Africa, as well as 2 ski trips to Austria and Switzerland, plus helping with several trips on the fondly remembered Activities Weeks that took place in July. All my children have been at Malmesbury School, and now have their own careers, all, in one way or another, in education! I am very proud of them all. I have loved my time at Malmesbury School and the variety of jobs, and all the staff who are more like family! I have made some good friends, and still keep in touch with many ex-colleagues. Tim and Jane Nicholls were particularly supportive to me when my late husband was ill and when he sadly died in 2009. I could not think of a more special place to work than Malmesbury School and I will miss everyone.”*



These are some messages from colleagues:

“Pat’s knowledge of exams is phenomenal! She always greets you with a smile - even when you know she is super busy. She never says ‘no’ and always does her best to help with any kind of situation that arises. Pat’s kindness and consideration to students when they are at their most anxious has always been a source of comfort to students and parents alike. Pat always tries her best to accommodate everyone - both staff and students. We thank her for her years of hard work with access arrangements and wish her all the best for her retirement. She will be missed by us all. Learning Support.”

“To the lovely Pat, we will miss you so much, you have always been such a caring, supportive colleague and brightened my day every time we have chatted. Thank you so much for all your help and selfless dedication. With much love, Ruth Cole.”

“Pat has been here for 27 years, starting in reception in the old school. She has been a truly remarkable colleague and very good friend. In the years I have worked closely with her we have laughed and cried (mainly tears of hysterical laughter) trying to sort out rooming and invigilation for exams. We often reminisce and especially talk about activities week etc. She has been a wonderful asset to the school and on a personal note, I will miss her so very much.” Chris Westmacott.

We hope you enjoy an adventurous retirement with plenty of time for music concerts, theatre trips and travelling. Keep in touch!



HISTORY HALF

TERMS

The Bradon Forest History Department have compiled an extensive list of reading suggestions to get stuck into – particularly useful given the unexpected extra time indoors.

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

Lord Acton

PICTUREQUOTES.COM

KS3 History Reading Suggestions

WWI Fiction

- Five Children on the Western Front
- Kate Saunders
- Over The Line - Tom Palmer

WW2 Fiction

- 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 Silver Sword - Ian Serailier
- The Sweep's Boy - Jim Eldridge
- Hetty Feather - Jacqueline Wilson
- Prisoner of the Inquisition
- Theresa Breslin
- The Secret Countess - Eva Ibbotsen
- The Poison Diaries - Philippa Gregory
- The Wreck of the Zanzibar
- Michael Morpurgo
- Revolution - Jennifer Donnelly

KS4 History Reading Suggestions

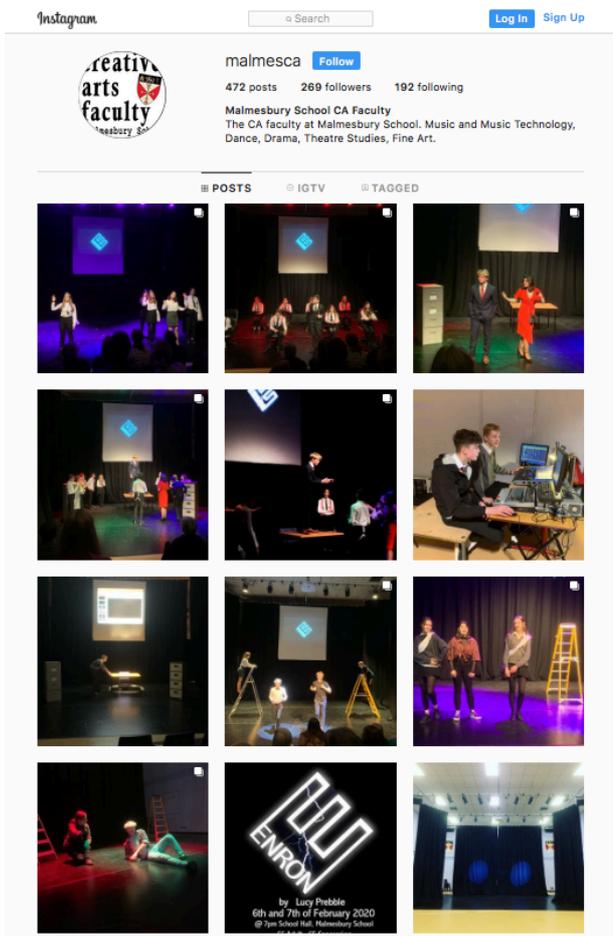
- To Kill a Mockingbird - Harper Lee
- The Kite Runner - Khaled Hosseini
- The Glass Collector - Anna Perera
- The Wall - William Sutcliffe
- Dusk - Eve Edwards
- The Time Traveler's Wife - Audrey Niffenegger
- The Boy at the Top of the Mountain
John Boyne
- Henderson's Boys Series - Robert Muchamore
- Salt to the Sea - Ruta Sepetys
- All Quiet on the Western Front
Erich Maria Remarque
- Auslander - Paul Dowswell
- The Machine Gunners - Robert Westall
- The Nazi Officer's Wife - Edith Hahn Beer
- True Grit: A Novel - Charles Portis
- A Lantern in her Hand - Bess Streeter Aldrich

**A READER LIVES A THOUSAND LIVES BEFORE HE DIES.
THE PERSON WHO NEVER READS LIVES ONLY ONE.**

IN OTHER NEWS...

MALMESBURY ART DEPARTMENT INSTAGRAM

Now is the perfect time to follow the Malmesbury Creative Art Instagram account @malmesca for news on Music and Music Technology, Dance, Drama, Theatre Studies, Fine Art.



SPRING MARKET CPD

Despite the driving rain, staff at The Dean Academy embraced the start of Term 4 with a Spring Market of CPD. Each faculty hosted a market stall sharing resources, ideas and spring themed gifts with the rest of the staff. We focused on filling up our shopping bags with resources for the 3 areas of T&L that we have been improving this year - retrieval

practice, adaptive practice and literacy - whilst also picking up treats such as Easter biscuits, raffle tickets, daffodils and bunches of spring herbs! Special mention to the ADP faculty for creating departmental themed keyrings for everyone!

JOINT SIXTH FORM

Students from Bradon Forest spent a taster day at Malmesbury School earlier this term to find out what life in the sixth form is like. Here are some of the things the Bradon Forest students said about the experience:

- *The opportunity to do practical science experiments was great*
- *Sixth formers in lessons were really helpful*
- *Great discussion and debate in some of the sessions*
- *I liked the fact we spoke about exam technique in some of the lessons*
- *I can't believe I got to do an actual A-level lesson. It was challenging but I loved it!*
- *It was great to get an overview of what the course involves*
- *Honestly, there was not one part of the day I didn't think was good*



wellbeing news

In our new Wellbeing News feature, we will be looking across the Trust for examples of best practice in looking after our staff. After all, if we look after ourselves we are better equipped to look after our students!

Led by Assistant Headteacher, Paul Dipple, Bradon Forest School are currently in the process of boosting their staff wellbeing programme. The Staff Room is getting a complete overhaul as everything work related is getting replaced with Sunday newspapers, plants, soft furnishings and a new coffee machine. As morning staff briefings are being moved to the Library, the new look Staff Room will truly be a place for staff to switch off and recharge during a break.

“...Place the oxygen mask on yourself first before helping small children or others who may need your assistance.”



What do we do at the moment?

- Data drops have been reduced
- No directed time for finish after lessons
- Wellbeing group
- Staff access to a counsellor
- No enforced lunch duties
- Time off for primary school plays
- Marvellous Monday emails that celebrate the impact of teacher's work
- Staff Member of the Week award
- LT take the majority of cover lessons wherever possible
- Some staff socials
- Secret Buddy scheme
- 55 minute lunch break where staff can leave site if they wish
- Thank you letters

What are we in the process of doing?

- More social events
- Staff discount scheme
- LT reacting to Wellbeing Committee minutes
- Re-brand of Staff Room
- Staff briefings to take place in the library

There will also be a 'shout out' board where staff can add a 'thank you' or a 'well done' to anyone who has made a difference to them that week.

Paul has also been working on a staff discount scheme, approaching local and national businesses for offers. Staff can now enjoy discounted cinema tickets, gym membership and restaurant offers to name a few!

Paul said: "Staff wellbeing has to be at the core of a successful school and it is a privilege to be working with the staff at Bradon to mould and bolster our staff wellbeing offer"

Staff across the Trust are being invited to participate in an Athelstan Trust Wellbeing Focus Group. Feedback and suggestions will be used to form a Trust Wellbeing Charter, details of which will be in the next Argus.

Please get in touch if you have any great ideas or stories to share: jcumings@theathelstantrust.org



INSPIRING STAFF

Bath Half Marathon Challenge for Martin

Computing teacher Martin Warren at The Dean Academy recently set himself the challenge to run the Bath Half Marathon to raise money for Prostate Cancer UK. Martin completed the run on Sunday 15th March and in doing so has raised over £500 for the charity.

Martin explained why he set himself the challenge *"I wanted to run the Bath Half Marathon for Prostate Cancer UK as my cousin was diagnosed with it. New nationwide data shows that the number of men dying from prostate cancer in the UK has exceeded 12,000 in one year, so for me, it was about raising awareness of this issue amongst my friends, family and colleagues."*

For men, prostate cancer is a silent killer as it's not something many would go to the local GP about. Men in lots of cases shy away from these kinds of issues until it's too late. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men and in the UK 129 men get diagnosed with it every day and every 45 minutes one man will die from it in the UK. These numbers say a lot and are the overriding reason as to why I opted to run for that charity."

If you have an inspiring story, get in touch with Jo Cummings: jcumplings@theathelstantrust.org

MESSAGE FROM TIM GILSON, CEO

Tim Gilson
CEO of The Athelstan Trust

I would like to thank all staff for their calmness, dedication and flexibility in the current situation. In the days leading up to the closure, staff worked tirelessly to upload resources and support material for students so that they could continue studying at home and the feedback from both governors and parents shows how much this is appreciated. I would also like to take this opportunity to pass on the thanks of Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education, to teaching and support staff who have volunteered to supervise students at school: You are also the reason critical workers across the country can continue to deliver the crucial frontline services that are central to our national effort to tackle Covid-19.

