



Welcome from the CEO

I always enjoy writing this introduction to our newsletter and celebrating the wonderful stories emerging across the Trust. We are incredibly proud of every member of our school communities and all they achieve, both personally and together.

While academic performance matters enormously, we also take great joy in seeing our children grow into compassionate, responsible citizens who make a positive difference not only to their own lives but to the lives of others. As a Methodist Trust, it is inspiring to see how this work reflects the Methodist Church's Good for All strategy: standing up for what is right, improving life for others, and living out our connexional identity through shared purpose.

Across our schools, children have helped ensure pupils in Uganda can access education, with some receiving the Edukid Gold Citizen

Award for their commitment. Others have supported local food banks with generous donations, and many have served their communities through singing at events that lift spirits and build connection.

Recently, we held our Trust Carol Service, a wonderful moment where children from every school came together to retell the story of the first Christmas, sing carols, and reflect on how each of us can be a light in the world. Children from Leyland Methodist Infant School performed a thoughtful drama which reminded us that when we choose to shine light through

kindness, hope, perseverance, peace and joy that the darkness grows smaller. What a powerful message, and a beautiful reflection of the light our children are already bringing into the world and the difference they are making so it is a brighter place.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter. I wish you a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, filled with hope, joy and moments of light.

Warm regards,

Julie-Ann Hewitt
CEO, Epworth Education Trust

Epworth Trust Conference Reimagines Education

On 14th November, the Trust held its annual conference at The Bridge Church in Bolton under the theme Reimagining Education: Endless Possibilities. The conference opened with CEO, Julie-Ann Hewitt, who challenged everyone to think differently by asking, “What’s the best that can happen?” This question set the tone for a day focused on high aspiration for all children, creativity, and the courage to embrace new possibilities in education.

The morning featured two thought-provoking keynote sessions. Mark Unwin, Educational Consultant and former Trust CEO, delivered the first address titled The Future We’re Building: Using AI to Unlock Aspiration. This session explored how artificial intelligence can transform learning and raise aspirations for every child, encouraging staff to see technology as a tool for equity and opportunity.

The second keynote, Inspiring Young Writers: Connecting Reading, Oracy and Purposeful Writing, was presented by English Consultant, Dawn Robertson and focused on strategies for teaching staff to nurture creativity and confidence in writing through strong links with reading and spoken language.

Business support and administrative teams attended a session led by Ben Peck, from Diddu Communication, on Shaping Our Story: Managing Media and Maximising

Website Impact, which provided practical guidance on strengthening the Trust’s digital presence and communication.

In the afternoon, Epworth Specialist Leaders delivered training sessions on mathematics mastery covering Building Strong Foundations in Early Years and Year 1 and Embedding the Trust Teaching and Learning Model in Years 2–6, reinforcing our commitment to consistent, high-quality teaching across all phases.

The day was a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when we come together with high aspiration and creativity. It reinforced our shared belief that education holds endless possibilities, and that by asking “What’s the best that can happen?” we open the door to extraordinary outcomes for every child in our Trust.



EPWORTH

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Celebrating Service

The Trust Conference also served as an opportunity to celebrate dedication and achievement. Long service awards were presented to staff who have served their schools for 20, 25, or 30 years - a testament to their loyalty and impact.

A particularly special moment was the introduction of the Della Bartle Possibilities Award, created in memory of a much-loved leadership coach who worked closely with Epworth over a number of years. Her mantra, “If it’s possible for someone, it’s possible for me,” now underpins this annual award - which recognises individuals who embody our Trust motto: Do All You Can.

This year’s award was presented to Samantha Sumner, Pastoral Manager at Westleigh Methodist, for her exceptional commitment to ensuring every child receives the highest level of care and support - going above and beyond in all she does.

Serving our communities

At Epworth, serving our communities is at the heart of everything we do. Across our Trust, our schools play an active role in supporting, strengthening and learning alongside the communities they serve - helping pupils to understand their responsibilities, develop respect for others and recognise the impact their actions can have.

Here are some of the highlights from across our schools, showing how it comes to life in practice.

This term, **Westleigh Methodist Primary School** was visited by their local police team, who delivered a fantastic 'Actions have Consequences'



workshop to Key Stage Two pupils. Everyone found it incredibly educational and a lot of fun. Pupils and teachers were able to take part in challenges which involved running around the hall to win points! Key Stage One pupils also got involved and visited the police van which they thoroughly enjoyed exploring.

At **Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School**, generosity and kindness were brought to life through the 'Bedford Gives Back' campaign, led by the School Council and head pupils. This came about following a visit to the local food bank where members

of the council got to see The Trussell Trust in action. Pupils interviewed the staff to find out more about who they help, why they need help, and why the volunteers choose to give their time. They came back truly inspired to love and serve their community!

Over at **Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School**, pupils have been encouraged to develop empathy and understanding by walking a while in others' shoes. Children in Year 6 have been working with Rotakids to collect winter coats that were no longer needed and distribute to homeless people in their local area.



Harvest Festival 2025

Across our Trust, pupils, staff and families have once again come together to celebrate Harvest Festival - a time to reflect on gratitude, community and giving.

Our schools marked the occasion with thoughtful assemblies, generous donations and creative activities that helped children understand the importance of helping others.

Here are some Harvest Festival highlights from across our schools.



Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School, celebrated with Year 3 leading the Harvest Service at their local church. The school brought donations of packaged food and toiletries for the local food bank and 'Curry on the Street'.

At **Westleigh Methodist Primary School**, the school came together to celebrate Harvest Festival with shared songs, poems and art that



reminded the school community of the importance of being thankful for the food we eat.

Over at **Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School**, they worked in partnership with Bedford Methodist Church, marking Harvest through a meaningful focus on generosity and community. Led by the School Council, pupils moved beyond a traditional collection, working with the local food bank to gather much-needed food and toiletries and delivering them in person to Methodist volunteers. The celebration continued with a joyful Messy Harvest event and shared meal at church.

Nutgrove Methodist Primary School's Year 3 pupils visited St Matthew's Food Pantry, carrying donated items and helping staff. Pupils also shopped for pantry essentials and made harvest crafts, learning about generosity and community support.



Remembrance Sunday

We paused together this November to honour those who have served and sacrificed in conflicts past and present. Remembrance provides our pupils with the opportunity to learn about our history and consider the world today.

Here are some highlights that show how each school commemorated Remembrance in their own way.

At Nutgrove Methodist Primary School, Year 6 explored Remembrance through poetry and art. Pupils studied 'In Flanders Fields', wrote their own Haiku poems, and created Pointillism-inspired artwork featuring poppies, clouds, and textured backgrounds, reflecting thoughtfully on the meaning of the day.



Westleigh Methodist Primary School's, very own Mr Pilkington, Chair of Governors and an ex-navy serviceman, led Year 3 and 6 children



in a march past the Remembrance Service. It was fantastic to see so many families and friends sharing in this really important day.



At Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School, Year 6 pupils led a worship for the whole school focusing on remembering people all around the world throughout the commonwealth. Pupils shared stories from inspiring individuals before joining the wider community at the war memorial to lay their wreaths.

Summerseat Methodist Primary School pupils gathered together for a whole school service in memory of those who gave their lives and those who serve today. Beautiful handmade poppies were laid at the cenotaph, with even the youngest pupils getting involved.



Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School pupils marked Remembrance through learning about conflict, peace and remembrance. Year 5 led the way, exploring poetry and song, including 'In Flanders Fields', before leading a moving whole-school Remembrance Service. Their reflections were later shared with the church community.

Over at **Leyland Methodist Schools**, Year 6 and the Ethos Group created a beautiful Remembrance Day display outside the school for pupils, staff and the wider community to reflect. The display honours all those who have served and continue to serve our country.





Last year's Winter newsletter introduced Infinite Eight, a strategy to enrich children's learning through experiences beyond the classroom.

Over the past year, this programme has flourished, offering pupils hands-on opportunities to develop skills, curiosity, and empathy. Every child will soon receive an Infinite Eight booklet to record memories throughout their time at Epworth.



Here are just some of the highlights from across the Trust, showing how our schools have embraced the Infinite Eight in creative and inspiring ways.



Marvel at the masters

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

Westleigh Methodist Primary School's Year 3&4 pupils were transported back in time with visits from History Alive! They were lucky enough to enjoy interactive lessons teaching them all about Medieval ages and the Romans.



Pupils in Years 1 & 2 at **Summerseat Methodist Primary School** have been studying the works of L.S Lowry, experimenting with charcoal and recreated his famous matchstick cats and dogs



Walk a while in someone's shoes

At **Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School**, three pupils were awarded the Gold Global Citizen Award from Edukid. The special medal, made in Uganda from recycled materials, sparked discussions about global responsibility and sustainability.



Also, Darcey in Year 4 at **Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School**, was inspired after learning about life for children in Uganda through Edukids. During the October half-term, she climbed Pen-y-Ghent with her family, raising an amazing £375 to make a difference.



Be a heritage host



Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School was thrilled to be invited to participate in a new community Christmas initiative organised by Wheatley Lane Methodist church - 'Light Up The Village'. Each day during December a Christmas window is lit. By Christmas Day there will be 25 displays for the village of Fence to enjoy.



Be a culture collector

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



At **Leyland Methodist Schools**, Year 6 visited Preston Docks, focusing on Culture Collector while enjoying many other Infinite Eight experiences. Pupils explored the docks' history, human impact on the environment, and sustainable development, practising skills such as mapping and data collection.



Be at one with nature

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



EYFS pupils at **Nutgrove Methodist Primary School** took part in a Welly Walk as part of their Infinite Eight opportunities. They explored the school grounds, Forest School and Trim Trail, discovering signs of Autumn and creating artwork from natural resources they collected.



Be part of a top team

Teamwork and collaboration have taken centre stage across our Trust.

Year 3 and 4 pupils at **Wheatley Lane Methodist Primary School** have been working together to create some fantastic LEGO structures. Year 4 built an electric city. Using various electrical components such as switches, bulbs, and motors, they made multiple circuits to bring their LEGO® building to life.



Be a helping hand

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

For Hello Yellow Day, pupils and staff at **Westleigh Methodist Primary School**, turned yellow to raise funds for the amazing charity Hello Yellow, who raise funds for young people's mental health.



Be inspired to aspire

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



Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School welcomed the Premier League Trophy into school, helping pupils see that they are truly 'Without Limits', as reflected in the school's vision. Children loved learning about the trophy and hearing how hard work and resilience can lead to success – even if only those who had earned it were allowed to touch it!

Children from **Wesley Methodist Primary School** had the incredible experience of walking out as Bee Netball mascots with England and New Zealand players! Children had the chance to ask the pro netballers questions and go backstage at an International Netball game. A truly inspiring experience!



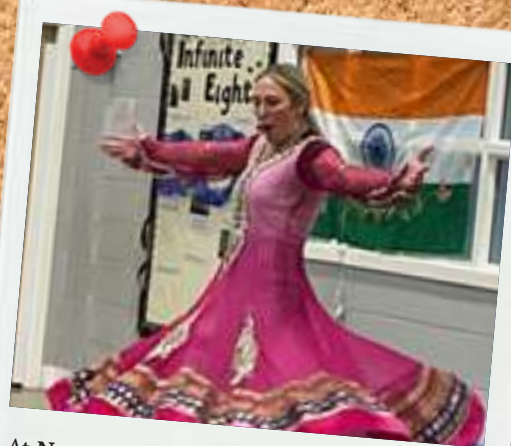
The Noticeboard



Harris from **Bakewell** won a bronze medal at his regional Taekwondo championships in Nottingham, earning it with his blue belt with a red stripe. He overcame his fear of competing and smashed it!



Rosehill's newly elected School Councillors have officially taken up their roles, received their badges and begun their work as student leaders. Pupils shared thoughtful ideas for improving break and lunch times.



At **Nutgrove**, their youngest pupils enjoyed a special Diwali dance workshop celebrating the Festival of Lights. Pupils learned about the traditions of lighting lamps, creating rangoli art, exchanging sweets, wearing new clothes, and fireworks, before performing a dance together.

Bedford Hall, last year, was accredited with an Equal Access in Sport Award. This was mainly due to the school's values-driven approach to delivering curriculum and extra-curricular sport, ensuring inclusion for all pupils. Leigh MP, Jo Platt, visited the school to take part in a Q&A session, exploring how values impact her role in driving change. Head pupils gave Jo a tour of the school, and she was presented with special gifts from every class.



Leyland are celebrating Andy Baybutt, who recently represented Team GB at an international roller hockey tournament in Germany. His dedication and sportsmanship make the whole school proud.



Bedford Hall held a well-attended Christingle Service, highlighting the school's strong and valued relationship with the local church and wider community.

The Noticeboard

Rosehill pupils rocked out this term during their Times Tables Rockstars event, with quizzes, battles and a maths jam! Fantastic fun was had by all.

Our Westleigh families joined the school for a Healthy Schools Coffee Morning to help families learn about a range of local services that support children and the community.



Pupils at Wheatley Lane have been enjoying Forest School, spending more time outdoors building dens, creating natural art and climbing trees.



KS2 pupils at Westleigh had a brilliant visit from a Road Safety Expert! They learned all about how to stay safe around roads and how to make sensible decision through a fun and exciting session with the visitor.

Wesley's Miss Hunter, Oakley and Mrs Webster took a four lucky Year 6 pupils up Holcombe Hill with The Sunnywood Project this term – they even got to go right to the top of Peel Tower! A tiring but lovely walk!

