

Dear All

I can hardly believe that we are at this time of year again. It feels like it has crept up on us all!

We have had a very busy and productive year since last Christmas, the updates for which I am sure you will have read in my Summer CEO Newsletter.

There is much to celebrate and, not least of which, is the constant striving for excellence in our schools and by individual pupils – your children! I would personally like to thank each and every one of you for your continued support of the schools within SECAT and for your commitment to serving our community to the best of our ability.

All of our schools remain 'good' or 'outstanding' schools in the eyes of Ofsted. Two had inspections in the Summer, inspectors commenting particularly on how well pupils are cared for and are listened to, not to mention how well they achieve. Hinguar Primary School is top of the Southend Primary School again! We are awaiting an inspection at Richmond Avenue Primary and our other three schools are in the cycle although not yet within the window for immediate inspection.

Schools continue to gain awards for Healthy Schools, Silver Artsmark, and Advanced Health and Well-Being status, (to mention but a few) and our leaders and staff do not take their foot off the throttle. What is more, the emphasis this year on developing a Curriculum 'Entitlement' for all of our pupils no matter which SECAT school they are in, has really taken hold. Headteachers have worked together on mapping out experiences that they collectively believe are important for all pupils to have been exposed to during their time with SECAT and have planned carefully the way that these can be delivered. For example, both of the Bournes Green schools have embarked on a new curriculum scheme called Cornerstones which is reportedly being well received by staff and pupils alike; in another school kitchen facilities for pupils to use to develop their cooking skills have been upgraded and in another case, put in place; one of our governors from Hinguar, Jenny Mollica who is the Director of the Creative Arts at the Barbican, is working with all of our schools to really take a close look at how the arts are being delivered and the expertise we have collectively across the MAT. What a bonus for us!

Developing further links across primary and secondary schools never loses its impetus. We fully intend that, in the new year, all staff who lead subject areas in each of our schools, will have the opportunity for regular, focused professional development as a group. Sharing subject-specific expertise and experience is something that staff constantly say would be of benefit to them and ultimately to the pupils.

What an array of festivities again this year. I have no doubt you will have been to many Christmas concerts, Fayres and productions. From the 'Nursery singalong' at Richmond Avenue Primary, to the production of 'We will Rock You' at Shoeburyness High School. The staff in all of our schools go to tremendous lengths to ensure that all of the pupils are involved as much as they want to be in the festivities and that you have the opportunity to see them 'in action'. I am sure you will have really enjoyed seeing and taking part in, these events as much as I do.

It only remains for me to wish those of you who celebrate, a very Merry Christmas and to all of you, a restful and peaceful New Year.



RUTH BROCK

SECAT CEO

Thorpedene Primary School



Thorpedene Primary School is working hard towards gaining the 'Emotional Health and Wellbeing Enhanced Healthy Schools' award. We have invested in training with 'My Mental Health Rocks!' and Mrs. Powell, in her role as Wellbeing Lead, is now ready to deliver her training to all staff and the children in years 4-6.

So far this year, staff have attended a range of training sessions which have then been relayed to the rest of their colleagues. We will finish this term with our two annual wellbeing sessions for staff, taking place after school, offering staff the chance to enhance their own wellbeing through a choice of different fun activities run by our own team.

Thorpedene Primary School use the Jigsaw



programme to support the PSHCE curriculum and our PSHCE Lead has delivered staff training on updates to the programme for this year. With its strong emphasis on Emotional Literacy,

building resilience and nurturing mental and physical health, we believe that Jigsaw provides our children with a range of positive experiences to help them understand the world around them. It also encourages children to develop positive relationships with themselves and others.

Our wider curriculum at Thorpedene ensures that children have further opportunities to develop their own well-being and mental health through a range of approaches including mindfulness sessions, yoga, circle times and Philosophy for Children activities. Throughout the year, as part of the project, we will be offering activities and welcoming visitors for all year groups to enjoy.

The children are also currently benefitting from the ideas featured on the Wellbeing Advent Calendar.

We have many other exciting ventures in the pipeline for 2020 and are proud to be well on the way to improving the wellbeing of both staff and children alike.



Hinguar Primary School & Nursery

Supporting the Development of the Creative Learner

This term, staff have undertaken a range of creative training opportunities as part of staff meetings and within INSET days to extend their knowledge on using different media within the classroom.

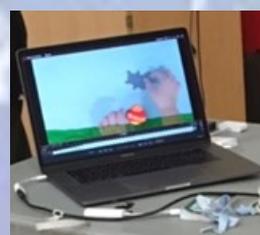
As part of this, staff have attended a Modroc training session at Richmond Avenue Primary School. A follow up session was hosted by Hinguar, with all SECAT Schools invited, which demonstrated the use of visual arts and animation with expertise from a visiting visual artist.



The focus on creative arts has given staff the opportunity to pursue creative teaching and learning opportunities and develop ways to think outside the box to enable this to take place. Our whole school 'Moon Landing' curriculum week and Armistice Day ensured we worked collaboratively in creative ways.

Supporting the development of the Whole Child

Ten members of staff including teachers and Learning Support Assistants, have undertaken free training for a 6



week course; Understanding Young People's Mental Health. This is a Level 2 CACHE accredited and OFSTED recognised qualification. This will enable a range of staff

across the school to recognise the mental health problems commonly associated with children and young people, understand the impact of mental ill-health on children and young people and the support available to maintain mental wellbeing in children and young people.

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'Strong Partnerships,

Strong Community, Strong Schools'

Hinguar Primary School continued....

Developing Excellence in Subject Leadership
Subject – specific training has been identified for all staff members as part of a year-long programme to enable all staff to stay abreast of any changes in education and to identify new ways to inspire children and staff and immerse each subject within a broad and balanced curriculum. So far this year, this has included PSHE, EYFS Music, Ekland S&L, Safeguarding and visual arts. Staff provide feedback at the following staff meeting and embed new ideas in planning.



Developing Excellence in Education

To support staff in developing themselves as future leaders and to enhance knowledge that can support our learners in school, a member of staff is undertaking KS2 Moderation training. The knowledge gained will be disseminated to staff to enhance the knowledge of all staff in moderation. In the New Year a member of staff will begin an Ethnic Leadership course with funding secured from the Equality & Diversity (E&D) fund. The aim is to increase the representation of ethnic minorities in leadership roles in schools. This is to ensure pupils from ethnic minorities have the necessary role models to inspire them to become leaders themselves.

SECAT is comprised of 6 local schools:

- ◆ Bournes Green Infant School 
- ◆ Bournes Green Junior School 
- ◆ Hinguar Primary School & Nursery 
- ◆ Richmond Avenue Primary School & Nursery 
- ◆ Shoeburyness High School 
- ◆ Thorpedene Primary School 



SECAT
Bournes Green Infant School

Over the last year we have developed our outdoor learning curriculum and outdoor learning area. To us it is very important to ensure that we provide our children with valuable learning opportunities which go beyond the national curriculum. In order to make this successful, two members of staff have undertaken The Outdoor Learning Level 2 Accreditation, which involved days offsite; learning in the classroom and in the woods. To gain the award the members of staff completed coursework and undertook a sustainable project within our school grounds.



Prior to embarking on this project, we had minimal opportunities for outdoor learning; now we have regular outdoor learning sessions, led by qualified members of staff. The children thoroughly enjoy these lessons, which have supported us in the development of our learning powers. To date we have created a fenced-in woodland area, built an outdoor learning cabin, planted herbs and bulbs and bought resources to support the development of outdoor learning skills such as fire and den building. Our active Parents' Association has been very supportive and have kindly agreed to fund our future projects, such as; the development of a pond, seating for the area, rain harvesting and composting.

The impact on the children has been wonderful to watch. If you look out onto our grounds you can often see smiling muddy children who are learning about the environment, closer to nature and developing memories which we hope they will hold onto through their future years.



**Curriculum Development**

Like all SECAT schools, we feel passionately about making sure our curriculum is engaging and interesting for our pupils. Motivating pupils to learn helps maximise enjoyment and progress/development. To help achieve this, we carried out extensive research during the first half of 2019 and decided to invest in Cornerstones.

What is the Cornerstones Curriculum?

The Cornerstones Curriculum is a coherent, skills and knowledge-based primary curriculum with a creative edge. It's rooted in a proven pedagogy based on how children learn best. Teachers are provided with the 6 exciting topics from which to plan, with suggested activities and *end products*. The platform is all based online. The programme follows the following sequence:

ENGAGE – this is where children are totally immersed in the topic, this could include a trip, visitor or just something 'out of the ordinary' to really capture their focus and imagination. This stage is all prep for the next DEVELOP stage.

DEVELOP – this is where children learn new skills and knowledge related to their topic. This stage is all prep for the final INNOVATE & EXPRESS stage.

INNOVATE & EXPRESS - this is where children showcase their efforts into a final presentation/outcome/ event, ideally for a real audience. This gives the project purpose and allows the children to apply their skills and knowledge in a meaningful way. Express is the final stage where pupils have the chance to reflect, evaluate and celebrate their learning.

Examples of Cornerstones so far this academic year:

Year 6 started the year with their topic 'ID', which allowed children to explore human identity, genetic characteristics, family traits and their own values and beliefs. With strong science links, they had forensic scenes to investigate and draw inferences from, and ended the project by applying their skills to a 'real crime' - A teaching assistant's handbag has been taken from the school staff room. When police arrived on the scene the room was in a mess, coffee cups were everywhere and coats and bags are strewn about the floor! Year 6 are now jumping into their next topic 'Gallery Rebels', where they have just visited the Tate Modern in London.

Year 5 started the year with their topic 'Alchemy Island', where children were given the opportunity to explore the mysterious sounds and hidden treasures of Alchemy Island in this music-based project. Children were able to compose, edit and create music and develop an understanding of musical scores. They are now moving on to their new topic 'Stargazers' with a trip to the Planetarium already under their belts.

Year 4 started the year with 'The Blue Abyss', which enabled children to develop their knowledge of ocean layers, sea exploration, food chains, habitats and pollution. With links to Science, Design and technology; Geography and History, the children's learning culminated in an exciting community event; 'The Year 4 Glow Gallery' which was a huge success (as seen in some of our photos). They have now moved onto their new topic 'Playlist' where they are going to be composing and performing their own Christmas song.

Year 3 started the year with 'Scrumdiddlyumptious!' where they got to tuck in and enjoy a yummy journey of discovery. With strong Design Technology and Science links, they then worked up an appetite with delicious stories about food and even became fruity sculptors. Their project culminated in 'Smoothie Day' where they all got to design and make their own smoothie and test them out on a real audience (Year 5). They are now getting stuck into their next project 'Mighty Metals' in which children will learn about the incredible properties of metals. This project develops children's knowledge of metal names, where they are found, their main properties and how metals can be used in everyday life.

YEAR 4 HOST INCREDIBLE GLOW GALLERY!



YEAR 3 HOST SUPER SMOOTHIE DAY!



As part of Shoeburyness High School's desire to continually raise achievement and inspire a love of learning amongst its students we are taking part in a series of learning performance workshops across all year groups this year. These workshops have been ongoing since October and have covered topics such as; Time Management, Organisation Skills, Confidence and Self-Esteem, Stress Management and Goal Setting for the future. Each year group will receive two workshops at various points during the year aimed at developing skills linked to exam revision and mental approaches to preparation and readiness for high performance. After each session, the students will fill out an evaluation form giving their views on the qualities of the workshops. These will be sent back to the company and an end of year Impact Report will be published which can be used to analyse pupil views about their learning. There has also been a training session for staff which focused on Memory and Retrieval Techniques for the classroom. Additionally, there will be a Parent Forum in March or April where parents will be given advice on how to support their child's learning at home and how best to help support years 10-13 in their examinations this summer.

Student Testimonials

'I've learned a number of new revision techniques that will help me revise in some of my more difficult subjects' Year 8 Student

'I'm always extremely nervous before exams, but Amy has shown us some really good techniques on how to stay calm and focused before important exams' Year 11 Student

'Sally reminded us of the importance of staying positive in exam situations' Year 10 Student



Teacher Testimonials

'I felt there was a really positive atmosphere in the room and the students were engaged and eager to ask questions'

'The speakers were extremely knowledgeable and were able to adapt their sessions to suit the needs of the students'

Richmond Avenue Primary School & Nursery

Learning and Development

At Richmond Avenue we are always looking to further enhance our curriculum offer to our pupils and develop the expertise of our staff. This year, for example, every year group is again benefitting from working towards the Crest Award in Science. In Years One and Two, pupils complete eight experiments and another eight in Years Three, Four and Five. Our teachers are being supported by a planned programme of professional development arranged between our Science Lead and the Science Department at Shoeburyness High School.

We are continuing to develop and improve our curriculum offer to pupils this year. Our book-based curriculum, where each year group's work is planned around a high quality text each term, is enriched with a wide range of visits and visitors. For example, Year Four have recently spent a day immersed in Ancient Greek culture and Year Three are soon to spend a day weaving, dyeing and making long boats in a Viking experience day.

Our subject Leads have recently completed a skills audit to allow school leaders to support their professional development in this role, so that we can enable cross curricular links and progression of skills and knowledge to be at the heart of what we teach.



Southend East Community Academy Trust (SECAT)

SECAT are looking for school Governors

Why I became a school Governor and why it might be for you

I was asked completely out of the blue "have you ever thought about being a school Governor?". The answer was 'no'. So why did I become a Governor?

Broadly Governors set the aims and objectives for the school and set the policies and targets for achieving those aims and objectives. They monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making and act as a source of challenge and support to the headteacher and senior leadership team.

Being a governor has been, and still is, an enormously challenging and rewarding opportunity. I have a sense of satisfaction through knowing children will benefit from my efforts, also to be supported to develop new skills and to strengthen existing ones. Through helping solve problems ranging from finance to site management; human resources to marketing; pupil welfare to curriculum development. Every governor is guaranteed to broaden their skills and knowledge in some way and training is offered by local education authorities and online training. All decisions are made with the consensus of the whole governing body and I have a real sense of adding value and assisting making sure children have the best possible start in life.

So if this is something you have never thought of doing, I ask you to give it some consideration, your skills may be just what we need. I have been a Governor at Shoeburyness High School for 5 years and am now also a Governor on the Advisory Panel here at Thorpedene.

We would welcome all who this this might be for them to contact admin@secat.co.uk for an application pack or further details.

A governor must be aged 18 or over at the time of his/her election.

Closing date 17th January 2020

SECAT is committed to safeguarding the welfare of young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post will be subject to an enhanced disclosure check from the Disclosure and Barring Service and a Right to Work in the UK check.