Empower
Multi-Academy Trust
Inspire • Empower • Achieve

TOGETHER WE THRIVE

TRUST NEWSLETTER
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TOGETHER WE THRIVE

Carla Whelan
CEO

Respect and why it matter to me...

If life were a recipe, respect would be the secret ingredient that makes everything rise. For me, it's not just a word on a banner, it's the heartbeat of our Trust. Respect means listening before leading, understanding before acting, and recognising that every pupil, staff member, and community voice matters. It's what turns a group of schools into a family of learners. Whether we're shaping curriculum, reviewing attendance, or making tough decisions about resources, respect is the compass that keeps us true.

Contextual Wisdom & Community Service

We are ensuring that each school's unique context is understood and respected. By tailoring strategies, like attendance reviews, SEND planning, and curriculum development, to the specific needs of each community, we're making sure that decisions are not one size fits all but rooted in local understanding.

Belonging, Safety & Connection

We respect the importance of belonging beautifully, creating environments where pupils feel safe, connected, and valued. This isn't just a policy to us it's a lived practice across our schools, from trauma-informed training to pupil voice initiatives. This is why we have committed to being the FIRST trust to do a TRUST WIDE programme – **Hearts & Minds** in conjunction with the local authority.

Relational Focus

We're placing relationships at the heart of everything, from how staff collaborate to how pupils are supported. Relational trust is a cornerstone of our work

Curriculum for Excellence & Equity

Through our work on inclusive assessment, we are helping schools build learning experiences that are both academically rigorous and socially just. We have a focus on diversity, inclusion, and equity to ensure that every child can thrive.

Empower
Multi-Academy Trust

Connect with us to explore how our offer can support your vision and goals.

- Collaborative Sharing
- Coaching
- Training/CPD
- ITT
- Conferences/stalls

empowermat.co.uk
@Carla Whelan
@EmpowerMAT

TOGETHER WE THRIVE

Michelle Harrington
Director of People & Culture and EA to CEO

Respect: The Heartbeat of Operational Excellence
Operational excellence is often linked to efficiency, precision, and performance, but it isn't just about systems and processes. At its heart lies something deeply human: respect. When respect becomes a guiding principle, it transforms processes, culture, and outcomes.

Why Respect Matters
Respect is more than courtesy—it's about creating an environment where every voice counts, every contribution is valued, and fairness underpins every decision. This foundation drives:

- **Psychological Safety**: Teams innovate and share ideas without fear.
- **Collaboration:** Diverse perspectives strengthen problem-solving.
- **Trust:** Transparent processes build confidence across the organisation.
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Respect in Action across our Trust

- **Leadership Behaviours**: Inclusive decision-making and active listening.
- **Policies and Processes:** Fair recruitment, equitable pay structures, and workload management.
- **Recognition and Feedback:** Celebrating contributions and acting on staff voice.

Some of the things we are working on to support Respect in Operational Excellence: Leadership Qualities Framework across all levels, People Strategy development, standardised, inclusive and aligned job descriptions and pay scales, Operational Excellence & Professional standards, Learning & Opportunities Hub, suggestion box and impact reporting.

The Impact
When respect threads through governance, leadership, and daily operations, excellence becomes sustainable. It's not just about doing things right—it's about doing right by people.

Lucy Copson
Communications and Enterprise Lead

Respect is more than a value, it's a vital part of how we work together across Empower Trust. It's about listening, valuing every voice, and ensuring fairness in all we do.
When respect is present, it builds trust, encourages collaboration, and creates space for innovation and growth. Whether through inclusive leadership, fair and transparent processes, or meaningful staff engagement, respect helps shape a culture where people feel safe, heard, and empowered.
Because when people feel respected, they thrive, and so do the communities we serve.

Wilfred Owen Primary School

Aspiration • Opportunity • Knowledge

Sarah O'Hara
Head of School

At Wilfred Owen Primary, Respect is a cornerstone of our Behaviour and Attitudes work. It's woven into our daily practice—not just in how we treat one another, but in how we connect with and care for the world around us.

During our recent Harvest Celebration, we encouraged children to show respect by recognising the needs of our wider community and responding with compassion. Our families generously donated food to support The Ark, our local day centre for the homeless and vulnerable.

It was important for our children to understand that everyone deserves dignity and respect, regardless of their circumstances. Through this act of giving, they learned that respect extends beyond the classroom—it's about empathy, kindness, and social responsibility.

We take pride in coming together as a school to make a meaningful impact beyond our gates. These moments help shape thoughtful, caring citizens of the future.

St Mary's
CE Primary & Nursery School
Where Every Day Matters & Everyone Counts

Sarah North
Headteacher

At St Mary's, the value of respect truly shines through in the work our Resilience Reps do every day—whether it's during lunchtime or in the classroom. These children step forward to support their peers, noticing when someone needs a helping hand, encouraging friendships, and making sure everyone feels included and valued. By leading respectful initiatives and modelling kindness, they help create a school where every voice matters and everyone's wellbeing is prioritised. #Respect #StMarysResilience #CommunitySpirit

Introducing a "craze of the week" also supports this ethos by giving pupils a shared focus and opportunity to connect through fun, inclusive activities. For example, selecting hopscotch as the craze of the week encourages children to learn the game together, take turns, and support one another, fostering teamwork and mutual respect. These weekly initiatives create a sense of belonging and excitement, helping to strengthen relationships and promote a positive, respectful atmosphere across the school.

Kelly Lee
Headteacher
St George's Junior School
Excellence & Enjoyment Are Achievable

Respect: A Core thread in Our School and Trust Community

At St George's, respect is not just a value, it is a foundation that underpins everything we do. As part of our wider Trust, we are united in the belief that respect is essential for building a thriving, inclusive, and aspirational learning environment.

Our school vision: **Connect, Believe, Succeed**, is deeply rooted in respect. It is the thread that runs through our relationships, our learning, and our daily practices.

Connect with respect

We connect with one another through kindness, empathy, and understanding. Whether it's a warm greeting at the school gate, collaborative group work in the classroom, or listening to each other's ideas, we foster respectful connections that make everyone feel valued and heard.

Example: Pupils are encouraged to work in mixed groups, learning to appreciate different perspectives and communicate respectfully, even when they disagree.

Believe in respect

We believe that respect begins with self-respect—knowing our worth, taking pride in our actions, and striving to be our best selves. We also believe in respecting others: their cultures, beliefs, identities, and experiences.

Example: Assemblies and PSHE lessons regularly explore themes of diversity, inclusion, and mutual respect, helping pupils understand the importance of treating everyone with dignity.

Succeed with respect

Success is not only measured by academic achievement but by the way we treat others and contribute to our community. Respectful behaviour creates a safe and supportive environment where everyone can flourish.

Example: Pupils take part in community projects, such as litter-picking or fundraising for local causes, showing respect for the world around them and learning the value of civic responsibility.

Respect in practice

Respect permeates our school life:

- In the way staff model respectful communication and behaviour.
- In our behaviour policies, which promote restorative approaches and mutual understanding.
- In our classrooms, where every voice matters.
- In our shared spaces, which we care for together.

We teach our pupils that respect is a choice—one that builds trust, strengthens relationships, and opens doors to success. It is central to who we are as a school and as a Trust.

Together, we connect with respect, believe in respect, and succeed with respect.

Market Drayton
Infant & Nursery School

Kerry Simmons
Headteacher

Demonstrating Respect and the Feeling of Belonging in our School Community

We honour the importance of transitions and fresh starts. Whether pupils are joining our school for the first time or moving into newly mixed year groups, we foster respectful relationships that build trust and community spirit from day one.

Respecting Readiness and Behaviour

Our core values—Ready, Respectful, Safe—guide daily interactions. Weekly dojo focuses reinforce respectful behaviours which help with our sense of belonging, such as:

- Smart lining up
- Smart, sensible sitting
- Silent signals to support readiness for learning
- These routines promote mutual respect and self-awareness, helping pupils engage positively in their education.

Respecting and Belonging in our Community Through Connections

We show respect for our wider community by actively engaging with it:

- Visits from the High Sheriff and Town Crier brought pride and recognition to our school. Their feedback highlighted the respectful and warm interactions between staff and pupils.
- Participation in the Youth Project (wearing blue) and Mental Health and Wellbeing Day (wearing yellow) demonstrated our commitment to unity, emotional awareness, and respectful support for one another.
- Our pupils showed respectful sportsmanship and teamwork during the recent Cross-Country competition, earning second place and celebrating each other's efforts.

Market Drayton Junior School

Emma Tibbetts
Headteacher

Respect at Market Drayton Junior School

Respect is a foundational value that shapes everything we do. It goes hand in hand with our commitment to ensuring every child feels safe, healthy, and able to build strong connections with others. At Market Drayton Junior School, the sense of belonging is strong and robust for all, and recent work across the school community has deepened this further.

Recently, we welcomed representatives from TAARC (Telford Afro-Caribbean and African Resource Centre) and the Telford & Wrekin Multicultural Development Team, who led powerful workshops exploring inclusivity, hate crime awareness, and the power of words. Pupils were encouraged to reflect on how their words and actions affect others and how they can be active allies in creating a kinder, more respectful world.

Alongside this, our school continues to strengthen its No Outsiders curriculum, which promotes seven of the nine protected characteristics and teaches pupils that everyone is welcome, just as they are.

The impact has been profound. Pupils are demonstrating a deeper understanding of respect and difference, and many have spoken passionately about what they've learned:

"I didn't realise how words could hurt people like that. I will try to think more carefully before I speak." – Year 5 pupil
"It made me feel proud of who I am and my heritage." – Year 6 pupil
"It helped me understand other people better." – Year 6 pupil
"We talked about how everyone deserves kindness. I want to be someone who makes people feel safe." – Year 6 pupil

These sessions have sparked meaningful conversations across the school. More than ever, our pupils are showing empathy, standing up for one another, and celebrating what makes each of us unique.

At Market Drayton Junior School, pupils are safe, healthy, and build strong connections with others. The sense of belonging is strong and robust for all.

Shropshire
Primary Partnership
Aspiration • Collaboration • Knowledge

Sam Scott
Director of Education and
Programme Lead

Welcome to the Shropshire Primary Partnership PGCE Cohort 2025–26! We're delighted to welcome our new Associate Teachers to the Shropshire Primary Partnership Lead School. Their journey into teaching has officially begun—and what a brilliant start it's been!

Our first day was filled with connection, collaboration, and inspiration. From exploring key course documents and the PGCE overview to engaging in ice breakers and sharing lunch together, the day set a positive tone for the year ahead. We reflected on the influences that shaped us as educators and the powerful role teachers play as role models.

Since then, our Associate Teachers have dived into a range of high-quality facilitation sessions, covering English, maths, SEND, EYFS, science, and more. They're already showing great promise and enthusiasm.

A recent science session, led by Beck Preece (Headteacher at Woodfield Infant School), brought learning to life with hands-on experiments and practical strategies. Beck's passion and expertise empowered our teachers to think creatively and confidently about delivering engaging science education in the classroom.

Here's to a year of growth, learning, and making a real difference. We're so proud of how well our cohort is doing already, let's keep the momentum going!

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#authenticallyours #buildingbrilliance #togetherwehavegotthis