

TOGETHER WE THRIVE

TRUST NEWSLETTER - AMBITION
AUTUMN 2 2025





Woodfield
Infant School



Wilfred Owen
Primary School



Greenacres
Primary School



AMBITION



Shropshire
Primary Partnership



St Mary's
CE Primary & Nursery School



Market Drayton
Infant & Nursery School



St Peter's
CE Primary & Nursery School



Market Drayton
Junior School



St George's
Junior School



Carla Whelan
CEO

Ambition to me...

At Empower, ambition and initiative are not just expectations—they are the foundation of everything we do. We are an **ambitious trust**, committed to breaking down barriers and ensuring that every child and every person thrive. Our promise is clear: there will be **no gaps between those who are advantaged** and those who are disadvantaged. We have a high expectation – high hold philosophy. Supporting our schools to be the best version of themselves daily.

I am proud that we have teams of staff who know that their accountability is to ensure our young people are ready for very stage of their learning and is high priority. We work in collaboration across our schools to ensure this, to ensure we learn and grow in what we do daily also.

We know that education is one of the most powerful levers for social change, and we take that responsibility seriously. Every action we take is designed to enhance the experience of our pupils and strengthen the expertise of our people. From early years to the next phase of learning, **good progress means every child meets their potential**. We have no excuses on this – we know we must deliver.

Our leaders are equipped to make informed decisions, using data and trends to drive improvement and unlock academic potential. Where intervention is needed, it is delivered because every child deserves the chance to succeed.

We work in partnership: with families, with agencies, and across our schools. Professional collaboration is at the heart of our improvement cycles, ensuring that **expertise and knowledge flow across the trust**.

Our schools are places where we expect **adaptive learning to be strong**, disadvantage gaps narrowing, and pupils that are happy because their learning thrives. Every school commits to ambition and excellence, ensuring that the right expertise is in the right place at the right time.

This is what it means to be part of Empower: **a trust that wants the best for its people and its pupils**.



TOGETHER WE THRIVE



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](#)



Sam Scott
Director of Education

Ambition is at the heart of everything I do. It is a privilege to work across eight schools, supporting them as they move forward and thrive. My ambition is not just for myself, but for the little people we have in front of us every day. I want every child to be the best they can be as an individual and to achieve all that is possible for them.

For some pupils, ambition means opening doors to opportunities they may not yet know exist. It is our responsibility to broaden their horizons, to give them experiences that inspire and show them what life has to offer. From the moment children start in early years, we commit to giving them the best possible start. We ensure they are ready for the next stage of their education when they leave primary school, equipped with confidence and skills to succeed.

The world is full of possibilities and our role is to make sure every child sees those possibilities and believes they can reach them. Through collaboration, high expectations and a relentless focus on equity, we strive to remove barriers and create opportunities so that ambition is not limited by circumstance. Every action we take is driven by the belief that every child deserves the chance to shine.



Michelle Harrington
Director of People & Culture and
EA to CEO

Evidencing Ambition - Professionally and Personally

At Empower Multi Academy Trust, ambition is one of our defining values — we aim high and support every adult and child to achieve their aspirations.

For me, evidencing ambition means being intentional about growth and aligning it with our Trust priorities.

This year, I've begun the **Senior People Professional CIPD Level 7 apprenticeship**, a programme that strengthens my HR, leadership and strategic capability. My enrolment, onboarding milestones and scheduled progress reviews demonstrate a clear commitment to developing expertise that directly benefits our People & Culture work.

Ambition also shows up in how we apply learning. Through this apprenticeship, I am already enhancing areas such as wellbeing, workforce planning and succession development — all central themes in our professional development and succession planning policy.

Finally, ambition is collective. Empower Trust has been recognised for supporting apprentices and investing in staff development, reinforcing a culture where learning is celebrated and accessible.

Whether personal or professional, ambition is something we can evidence through purposeful development, reflective practice and the real impact it creates across our Trust community.



Molly Palin
People Services
Administrator

I am demonstrating ambition in my new role as People Services Administrator by proactively seeking opportunities to learn and take on responsibilities beyond my core tasks. For instance, recently I assisted with the development of the Learning & Development opportunities Hub. Rather than simply performing routine duties, I am focused on understanding the bigger picture of how our processes work and identifying ways to improve efficiency. For instance, I have created recruitment templates for each school, to create consistency and clarity, strengthening the recruitment strategy. This ambition stems from my desire to grow professionally and contribute meaningfully to the team's success. To work on this, I am actively developing my organisational and problem-solving skills, asking for feedback, and exploring training resources that will help me build confidence and expertise. By doing so, I aim to position myself as a reliable and forward-thinking member of the team who is ready for greater challenges.



Lucy Copson
Communications
and Enterprise Lead

Ambition is at the heart of everything we do at Empower MAT, and it's a value that has shaped my own journey within the Trust. I began as a Trust Administrator, supporting day-to-day operations, but over time I discovered a passion for communications and creativity. This led me to take on new responsibilities, from designing newsletters to managing social media content for our courses and ITT offer. In September, my role evolved into Communications and Enterprise Lead—a position that allows me to champion innovation and engagement across the Trust. Alongside this, I am completing a multi-channel marketing apprenticeship, which has given me fresh skills and insights to help us reach wider audiences and showcase the incredible work happening in our schools. For me, ambition means embracing growth, seeking opportunities, and striving to make a positive impact—and that's exactly what we aim to inspire in every member of our community.



Woodfield
Infant School
Kind • Responsible • Hardworking

Beck Preece
Headteacher

Ambition...a strong desire to do or achieve something.

What Ambition Means to Me as Headteacher of Woodfield Infant & Nursery School

Ambition, for me, is about striving for the very best for every child, every day. It is not simply about academic success, but about nurturing happy, confident, and curious learners who feel valued and inspired. As headteacher, my ambition is to create an environment where children love learning, feel safe to take risks, and develop the skills and character they need for life.

Ambition means setting high expectations—not just for our pupils, but for ourselves as educators. It is about continually improving, reflecting, and working together to ensure that every child reaches their full potential. It is about believing that every child can succeed and doing everything possible to make that happen.

The Woodfield Way: Happily Learning Together

Our ambition is rooted in The Woodfield Way, which guides everything we do:

- Be Kind – We treat everyone with respect and compassion, creating a caring community where kindness is at the heart of our actions.
- Be Hardworking – We persevere, give our best effort, and embrace challenges as opportunities to grow.
- Be Responsible – We take ownership of our learning, our choices, and our environment, helping each other to thrive.

These values shape our ambition: to ensure that every child leaves Woodfield not only with strong foundations in learning but also with the character and confidence to flourish in the wider world.



St Peter's
CE Primary & Nursery School

Sarah Kynaston
Headteacher



AMBITION

through the eyes of our children

WHAT AMBITION MEANS TO OUR PUPILS



Dreaming big

Many children describe ambition as wanting to be something exciting when they grow up, like astronauts, doctors, or artists.



Trying hard

Pupils often connect ambition with effort, saying it means working hard in class and never giving up.



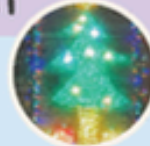
Learning new things

Ambition is also expressed as curiosity—wanting to discover, explore, and understand the world around them.



Helping others

Some children see ambition as making a difference, whether by helping friends, family, or the wider community.



DESIGN IN LIGHTS

Alice Knight had her Christmas design made into Wern's new town light this term! What an achievement 😊

Ambition is often seen as a trait that develops later in life, but in our school trust, we believe it begins in the earliest years of education. Primary school children have unique perspectives on ambition—dreams that are pure, imaginative, and full of possibility.

HOW WE NURTURE AMBITION



Encouraging creativity

Through art, music, and storytelling, children learn to express their dreams.



Connecting learning to life

We show children how classroom lessons link to real-world possibilities.



VOICES OF OUR CHILDREN

- "Ambition means I can be anything I want if I keep trying." – Year 3 pupil
- "I want to be a scientist because I love finding out how things work." – Year 5 pupil
- "Ambition is about helping people and making the world better." – Year 4 pupil



Sarah North
Headteacher

St Mary's

CE Primary & Nursery School

Where Every Day Matters & Everyone Counts

St. Mary's: A Journey of Ambition and Determination towards becoming a School of Sanctuary

Over the past two years, St. Mary's has demonstrated unwavering ambition and determination in its mission to become a School of Sanctuary—a place where everyone feels safe, valued, and welcomed. This journey has been more than a checklist; it has been a commitment to fostering an environment of



School of
SANCTUARY AWARD
Welcoming People Seeking Sanctuary

compassion and inclusion. Staff, children and our wider community have worked tirelessly to gather evidence that reflects our ethos of care and respect.

St. Mary's is proud to lead by example, proving that ambition and determination can transform a vision into reality

Share Our Ambition: Take a Tech Timeout

At St Mary's CE Primary School, we believe in creating a balanced environment where technology supports learning without overwhelming our lives. Our ambition is to encourage our children, staff, and families to take regular Tech Timeouts—moments to unplug, connect with each other, and enjoy the world beyond screens.

We used our Tech Timeout session to get creative! Pupils made lots of wonderful crafty creations for our Christmas Fayre—from festive decorations to handmade gifts. It was amazing to see the imagination and teamwork shine through when screens were set aside.





Sarah North
Headteacher

St Mary's

CE Primary & Nursery School

Where Every Day Matters & Everyone Counts

Ambition in Action: Building a Resilient School Community

We were thrilled to welcome YouthShoots to our school for an inspiring training session with our brand-new Resilience Reps! These young leaders are full of ambition and determination, stepping up to make our school an even better place for everyone.

Their mission? To champion positivity, confidence, and emotional strength across our community—creating an environment where every pupil feels supported and empowered to thrive.





Kelly Lee
Headteacher



At St. George's, ambition is one of our core values and is deeply connected to our vision of Connect. Believe. Succeed. We encourage pupils to set high aspirations and believe in their ability to achieve them. Ambition is celebrated through awards, enrichment activities, and leadership roles, showing pupils that effort and perseverance lead to success. This culture of ambition ensures that every child feels supported to aim high and achieve their goals as part of our shared vision.

We encourage pupils to set high aspirations for themselves and believe that they can achieve their goals through effort and perseverance. Through strong relationships and collaboration, we help children connect with opportunities that inspire them to dream big. We nurture confidence so every pupil believes in themselves and their potential. By fostering ambition, we empower pupils to succeed - not only academically but personally - preparing them for future challenges and opportunities.

Ambition is a thread through a rich curriculum, inspiring assemblies, and opportunities such as leadership roles, competitions, and enrichment activities. We celebrate achievements - both big and small - through awards, displays, and recognition in newsletters, showing pupils that their hard work matters. Our staff model ambition by sharing their own learning journeys and encouraging pupils to dream big for their future. By creating a culture where ambition is valued and celebrated, we empower every child to strive for excellence and reach their full potential.



AMBITION



Market Drayton
Junior School

Building Ambition at Market Drayton Junior School

At Market Drayton Junior School, ambition is at the heart of everything we do. Our recent developments aim to inspire children to take ownership of their learning, develop confidence, and dream big.

• Sensory and SEND Hub

Funded by PTA donations, this safe space supports emotional wellbeing through ELSA and Playful Connections, helping pupils build resilience and confidence—key drivers of ambition.

• Outdoor Learning Spaces

In partnership with Men's Shed and Furlands, we are creating Forest School and garden areas to spark curiosity and independence, encouraging pupils to explore and aim high.

• Positive Behaviour and Emotional Availability

Initiatives like Best Seat in the House celebrate children who consistently go above and beyond in their behaviour for learning. These pupils are rewarded with Hot Chocolate Friday, reinforcing that effort and excellence lead to recognition.

• Extended Writing Books

Children write in these books fortnightly, giving them ownership of their personal writing and improving their stamina over time. This focus on perseverance and creativity fosters pride and ambition in literacy.

• Writer of the Week

Celebrating exceptional writing in whole-school assemblies showcases talent and motivates pupils to strive for excellence.

• Parliament Week

By exploring the electoral system and government functions, pupils gain insight into leadership and civic responsibility, broadening their aspirations.

• Little People, Big Dreams

Inspired by the book series, every child shares what they want to be when they grow up. This initiative encourages pupils to think boldly about their future and see that big dreams start small.

• Primary Science Quality Mark (PSQM)

Achieved in late October, this national recognition validates our commitment to inspiring science education:

"The school community is developing effective practice in providing an inspiring science education."

Together, these initiatives create a culture where ambition isn't just encouraged—it's embedded in every experience.



Sam Scott

Director of Education and
Programme Lead

Shropshire

Primary Partnership

Aspiration • Collaboration • Knowledge

Ambition is at the heart of everything we do at Empower Trust, and this half term our Initial Teacher Training (ITT) students have truly embodied this value. By choosing to train as teachers, they have already demonstrated a remarkable level of ambition—committing themselves to a challenging and rewarding career that shapes the future. Over the past few weeks, their drive and determination have been evident through a series of enriching experiences:

- **Second ITAPs Week with Chester University**

Our trainees successfully completed their second Intensive Training and Practice (ITAPs) week, gaining valuable insights and practical skills to enhance their teaching journey.

- **Key Stage Experience**

Each student took part in either a KS2 or KS3 placement, broadening their understanding of different phases and adapting their teaching approaches to meet diverse learner needs.

- **Empower Trust Annual Conference**

They attended our annual event, connecting with experienced educators and engaging in thought-provoking discussions about best practice and innovation in education.

- **Facilitation Sessions**

To deepen their subject knowledge and pedagogy, trainees participated in sessions covering Science, Phonics, RE, PSHE, DT, History, Geography, Art & Design, and MFL. These opportunities allowed them to refine their skills and prepare for the demands of the classroom.



Jen Hulmes

Associate Teacher

Student Voice:
"As a career changer stepping into the world of education later in life, I wasn't entirely sure what to expect. This course has exceeded every hope I had. It's professional, inspiring, and genuinely challenging in all the right ways. I have grown in confidence, developed real practical skills, and rediscovered a sense of purpose. I'm truly grateful for the guidance and high standards that have shaped my journey into teaching so far and the new relationships that I have made along the way."

Through these experiences and reflections, our ITT students have shown that ambition is more than a word, it's a mindset. Their commitment to professional growth and excellence is inspiring, and we are proud to support them on their journey to becoming outstanding teachers.

TOGETHER WE THRIVE



Empower

Multi-Academy Trust

Inspire • Empower • Achieve



#buildingbrilliance

#AllIn

#togetherwehavegotthis