

EMPOWERING EDUCATION

**TEAM EMPOWER! HOW ARE WE SUPPORTING
EACH OTHER?**

TRUST NEWSLETTER
SUMMER 2 2025



Wilfred Owen
Primary School



Market Drayton
Junior School



Greenacres
Primary School



St Mary's
CE Primary & Nursery School



Woodfield
Infant School



St George's
Junior School



Shropshire
Primary Partnership



Market Drayton
Infant & Nursery School

Collaboration • Inspiration • Support • Progress



St Peter's
CE Primary & Nursery School



Carla Whelan

CEO

The Power of Belonging in Education and Life

Belonging is more than just being present—it's about being seen, heard, and valued. In our schools, it's the quiet assurance a child feels when they know their ideas matter, their identity is respected, and their presence makes a difference. It's the warmth of a classroom where every pupil, regardless of background or need, feels safe to take risks, ask questions, and grow.

As educators, we have the profound responsibility—and privilege—of creating spaces where belonging thrives. This isn't just about inclusion policies or pastoral care (though those matter deeply). It's about the everyday moments: a teacher greeting each child by name, a SEND pupil being given the tools to shine, a governor listening intently to pupil voice.

Belonging is also the foundation of resilience. When children feel they belong, they are more likely to persevere, collaborate, and succeed. They learn not just for themselves, but for their community. And in turn, they contribute to a culture where others feel they belong too.

In life beyond school, belonging remains essential. It shapes our relationships, our workplaces, our sense of purpose. For our Trust, it's the thread that connects our staff, leaders, families, and pupils. It's what makes us more than a collection of schools—it makes us a community.

Let's continue to nurture belonging in every corner of our Trust. Because when people feel they belong, they flourish. And when they flourish, so does everything around them.



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

- [EduShare](#)
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HOW ARE WE SUPPORTING EACH OTHER?



Sam Scott

Director of Education

At work, I've always thrived in teams—whether that's supporting staff development, contributing to ITT or collaborating across schools in the Trust. We're all part of the cogs that keep things moving and there's something powerful about knowing we belong to something bigger. Being part of a team means showing up for each other, sharing the load and celebrating the wins—big or small. That sense of belonging has always been important to me.

I come from a sports background and have loved team sports since I was 10. Netball was my game and I played until last year when my knees finally said no (walking netball, anyone?). I also recently got married and our family—sometimes dysfunctional—is its own kind of team. Whether at home or at work, being part of a team means being part of a family.



Rachel Butterfield

Trust SENCo

As a new member of the EmpowerMAT team at the start of this school year, I immediately noticed how all schools are supportive of each other.

An example of this was on the PD day in September when Greenacres had run out of backing paper for a display. They didn't think twice about giving St Peter's a call and arranging to borrow some backing paper later that day. St Peter's didn't think twice about helping Greenacres out!

Straight away I knew that I had joined a Trust that supported each other, and I wasn't wrong! This is just one example of how supportive of each other the EmpowerMAT Team is; I could describe thousands of occasions where I have experienced this supportive culture in various aspects of my role since September.



Lucy Copson

Trust Administrator

Belonging means feeling valued, supported, and connected within a team. At Empower Trust, our team thrives on respect and collaboration. We share ideas freely, offer help when someone is struggling, and celebrate each other's successes. This sense of togetherness not only strengthens our work but also creates a positive, inclusive environment where everyone feels they truly belong.

HOW ARE WE CONTRIBUTING BACK TO OUR WORLD?



Jess Shore

Trust Business

Administration Apprentice

Being part of a team part of a team is not just getting the work done, but supporting each other in meaningful ways. I try to check in with people, offer help when I can, and celebrate the little wins that often go unnoticed. Being kind and supportive goes a long way for me, it's the little things that builds a connection, and I truly believe that when we treat each other with care, everything else falls into place.

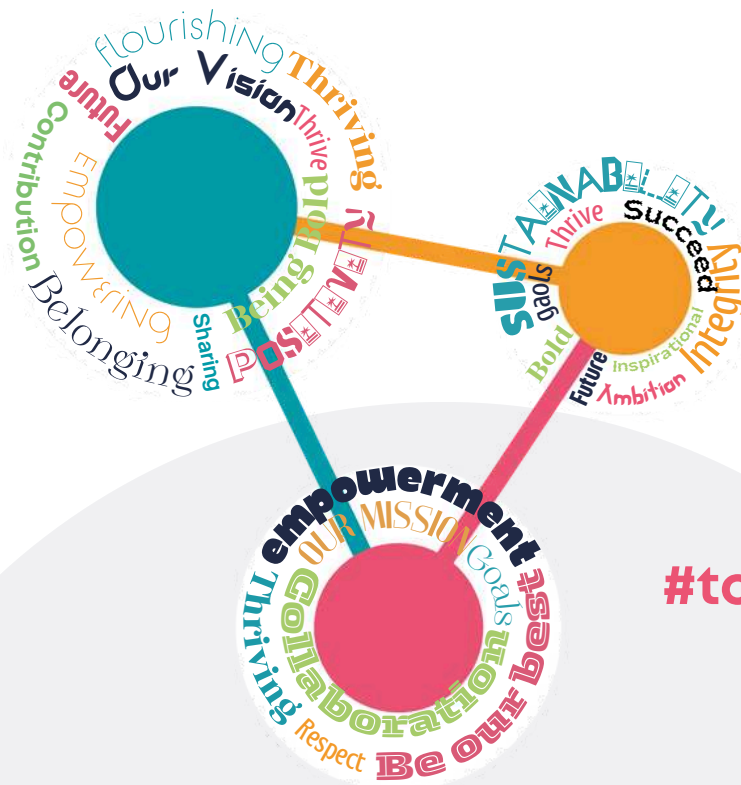


Leon Johnston

Trust Facilities &
Estates Apprentice

In our team, we're more than just colleagues—we're a family. We support each other by supporting, actively listening, and lifting one another through challenges and successes alike.

Being a team means celebrating wins together, learning from setbacks, and always having each other's backs. It's about trust, respect, and the shared belief that we're stronger together. That's how we grow not just as professionals, but as people.



#authenticallyours
#togetherwehavegotthis
#buildingbrilliance



St Mary's

CE Primary & Nursery School

Where Every Day Matters & Everyone Counts

At St. Mary's, we believe that every child should feel they truly belong. To us it means that every child feels welcome, included, and part of the school family. This starts with the morning welcome they receive by staff by greeting children by name, how we celebrate different cultures, and make sure everyone's voice is heard.

Our children love to show kindness to each other which promotes a respectful environment for the children to feel safe and ready to learn.

Within our values and the curriculum, we look at friendships, respect and community and choose books to explore identity and empathy. Children build social skills which enable them to continue their next stage of their learning journey.

Belonging isn't just a feeling—it's built into everyday school life.

A Day of Welcome in KS1

KS1 took part in a webinar to celebrate 'A Day of Welcome'. It is an annual day to help children understand the importance of a welcoming culture.

We listened to an online story about Bobble who had to move to a new place because his home was no longer safe. We had class discussions about how we can create a kind culture and welcome new people.



A Day of Welcome in KS2

In KS2 to celebrate the Day of Welcome, as part of Refugee Week, children in Year 5 and Year 6 made masks. This was centred behind the idea that there are many hidden superpowers including being able to speak another language. We celebrated other languages people in our class knew, or their relatives knew, then



made superhero masks to celebrate. The children had a thoughtful and enjoyable afternoon.



St Mary's

CE Primary & Nursery School

Where Every Day Matters & Everyone Counts

🦋 Sports Day Success! 🦋

What an incredible Sports Day we had! The sun was shining, spirits were high, and our four house teams—Peake, Rashford, Thunberg, and Webster—showed amazing teamwork, determination, and sportsmanship throughout the day. Being part of a sports house creates a real sense of belonging for our students. It was heartwarming to see children cheering each other on, celebrating every effort, and working together as one.

A huge well done to all our children for their enthusiasm and effort. And a special congratulations to Rashford House, who took home the trophy this year! 🏆 Let's carry this team spirit with us every day!



❤️ Belonging at St. Mary's ❤️

At St. Mary's, we asked the children a few simple questions about belonging, to say what it means through their eyes. Their responses remind us that belonging is about feeling seen, accepted, and valued just as you are. We're would like to share some of their reflections with you.

What does belonging mean?

Belonging means everyone feels comfortable with each other and feeling like they fit.

Belonging means feeling like you fit in and you don't need to be anyone else but yourself.

How do we belong to St Mary's?

We have our uniform which makes us feel like everyone is a part of the same community.

We belong to St Mary's because everyone looks after us and keeps each other safe.

Mrs North always says everyone belongs in this community.

How do we help you feel like you belong?

“Adults at school treat you how they would want to be treated. They are not just here to help us learn, they are here to help us when we are worried about something.”

“Teachers make us feel like we belong because they treat us equally and make us feel comfortable each day.”



**Woodfield
Infant School**
Kind • Responsible • Hardworking



**St George's
Junior School**
Excellence & Enjoyment Are Achievable



Belonging at Woodfield Infant School and St George's Junior School

Belonging

To us belonging is about connecting with each other and feeling part of a community.

Our two schools belong together in the community we serve. Together we feel happy and comfortable in our schools, our community group and our wider trust community. Our sense of belonging is based upon welcoming relationships and acceptance. We know and value 'belonging' as one human beings' basic needs.



Believe in each other

Everyone together, every voice valued

Learning all the time, laughter in work and at play

Open to all and accepting of each other

Names are learned and stories told,

Gratitude for belonging, a school community of hope

Integrity embedded in all that we do

Neverending support to thrive and grow

Giving the best of ourselves, working together, we all belong





We Are Family

Family feel - whole school open door sessions and parent workshops allow us to share what we do with our families.



Teamwork in Action

Classroom collaborations

Our children come together to put on incredible performances for our community. Here are some of our children ready for the KS1 nativity.



Buddy Systems

We have various buddy systems set up, whether that be our Reading for Pleasure buddies (mixed year groups), peer buddies for learning time and turn talk (same class) or breaktime buddies (team created). Here are our breaktime buddies who help EYFS & KS1.



Voices of the Team

"Collaboration is a key element here at St Peter's, and this is echoed by Empower Trust too." Mrs Grove



"We welcome everyone at St Peter's - I was really proud that we supported Refugee Week." - Agasya Y4

"St Peter's has a warm, friendly feel and you very quickly feel like you belong." Oscar, Y5



Creative Corner

Collaborative projects

We had a lovely, collaborative Worship with St Peter's, Edgmond. We came together to celebrate St Peter's Day. We shared ideas, prayers, and a song across the two schools



Sports Week - Our whole school sports week involved teamwork in abundance, as well as respect and tolerance.



Team Triumphs

A mix of our KS2 girls played a match tonight versus Newtown. The girls showed ambition and resilience.



Quarry Cross Country Event - our y3/4 boys came 1st. An amazing day for all involved.



Team Triumphs

Our Young Voices choir worked incredibly hard to rehearse and learn all of the songs ready for their huge performance in Birmingham. This was all made possible by dedicated parent volunteers.





At Market Drayton Infant School, belonging is a concept that forms part of the foundations of our culture. It shapes how we work, learn, and grow together. Through shared achievements, collaborative learning, and a commitment to each other's development, we create an environment where every member of staff feels valued and connected.

One of the most powerful examples of this is the collective completion of the NPQLT by teaching staff. This wasn't just a professional milestone, it was a shared journey that reinforced the idea that everyone's growth matters. It fostered a sense of pride and unity, showing that we are stronger when we move forward together.

Our collaboration days and participation in events like Edushare have further deepened this sense of belonging. They are safe spaces where staff feel seen, heard, and supported. They offer time to reflect, share, and connect with colleagues in meaningful ways, reinforcing the idea that we are part of a supportive professional family.

The impact of a culture of belonging ensures that staff feel more confident to innovate and lead, knowing they are supported. They approach their work with empathy and purpose, and this in turn creates classrooms where children feel the same sense of safety, value, and connection.

This culture of belonging extends to our children, too. Through wellbeing days, celebration assemblies, and the involvement of our safeguarding board, we ensure that every child feels safe, valued, and part of our school community. These experiences help children build positive relationships, develop confidence, and take pride in their place within our school. Their voices are heard, their achievements celebrated, and their wellbeing prioritised, laying the foundation for a lifelong sense of belonging

At Market Drayton Infant School, belonging is a core part of our culture, shaping how we work, learn, and grow together. Staff feel valued and connected through shared achievements and collaborative learning.

A key example is the collective completion of the NPQLT by teaching staff—a shared journey that highlighted our commitment to each other's growth and strengthened our unity.

Events like collaboration days and Edushare deepen this sense of belonging, offering safe spaces for reflection, connection, and support. This culture empowers staff to lead with confidence and empathy, creating classrooms where children feel equally safe and valued.

Belonging extends to our pupils through wellbeing days, celebration assemblies, and safeguarding initiatives. These experiences help children build confidence, form positive relationships, and feel proud of their place in our school community.





Belonging is a core value in our academy's mission and daily practices reflect this. Stakeholders are all encouraged to look at what this means for each individual school and how that feeds into a sense of partnership and common goals across the Trust as a whole.

Student voice is a huge part of our culture, our pupils feel listened to and can articulate opinions and personal views with a high level of understanding, empathy and social awareness. Staff build authentic relationships with students and families to support individual need and adjust to changing circumstances that can impact on a child's ability to be a successful learner.

Staff development is encouraged, and training is offered in trauma-informed practices, inclusive pedagogy, and unconscious bias as well as through whole Trust learning experiences such as the NPQLT. Peer networks are facilitated through support systems across schools, subject leaders have opportunities to share good practice and develop their subject areas within their own settings based on a common understanding of best practice.

Market Drayton Junior School has achieved the Royal Life Saving Society UK - Gold level of accreditation.

I have attached the Gold award certificate and the PowerPoint presentation which Sam Taylor (PE Co-ordinator) submitted - so you are very welcome to take any photos from there.

RLSS UK assessed our evidence and provided the following e-mail.

Thank you for submitting your evidence in support of your efforts with RLSS UK's Water Smart Schools programme.

Having assessed the excellent quality of your evidence, I am very pleased to confirm that Market Drayton Junior School has achieved Water Smart Schools gold level of accreditation.

It is very clear that your school, its staff and students have worked very hard and engaged fully with the programme so please pass on my congratulations to everyone involved.

Also, Market Drayton Junior School has been awarded the school games platinum award again for this year. We should be expecting the certificate soon.



**Book
now!**

Email:

admin@empowermat.co.uk



3RD NOVEMBER 2025

8:30am - 3:30pm

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR

EmpowerMAT: PROVIDING FOR ALL CONFERENCE

JOIN US FOR A MOTIVATIONAL DAY, THAT WILL INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE



**PRIMARY
READING
SIMPLIFIED**
**THE Art &
SCIENCE of
TEACHING
PRIMARY
READING**
CHRISTOPHER SUCH

AUTHOR
CHRIS SUCH



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