

Teaching in Tanzania

School, Safari and making coffee straight from the tree! - Pages: 6 & 7



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FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES



Welcome

I hope you've had a good start to this new academic year and that all our new children and staff are settling in well.

This is an exciting time to be part of the Wensum Trust. We had three Good Ofsted reports last year for Acle Academy, Alderman Peel High School and Wells-next-the-Sea Primary & Nursery School - and we have continued to invest in all of our schools significantly.

Hellesdon Sixth Form has been refurbished, whilst a new building with three classrooms will improve learning and offer a dedicated space for those with specialist educational needs in Hellesdon High School.

Alderman Peel High School also has two new classrooms to accommodate its growing number of students, whilst many of our other schools have received important maintenance and decorative work, such as new toilets, lighting upgrades to fit our sustainability programme and flooring upgrades.

In total £1.2 million has been invested from funds ring-fenced purely for building work.

As we look forward, we remain committed to ensuring we educate the whole child. Our focus on mental health and well-being enables children to be in a good place to learn, whilst our focus on careers and life skills through our unique partnerships gives children a pathway and aspirations to help them engage with their learning to reach their full potential.

I am looking forward to seeing all of our schools build on their achievements this year, and help celebrate the successes of our children.

Daniel Thrower
CEO, Wensum Trust

‘Your Wensum Trust Journey’ Premieres

A short film which highlights the unique learning journey the Wensum Trust has to offer has been released.

The film, which was produced by Trett Films, focuses on former Wensum Trust student, Olivia Bourne, as she prepares to go on stage at Norwich Theatre Royal. Now an actress, Olivia looks back on her Wensum Trust journey and all the skills she learned to help her succeed and reach her career aspirations.

Daniel Thrower, CEO of the Wensum Trust, said: “We are really proud of this film which demonstrates that the Wensum Trust is providing strong foundations for young people to reach their full potential.”

“Through our unique partnerships with organisations such as Norwich Theatre, we inspire individuals and broaden their opportunities, whilst ensuring that day-to-day children are in our schools participating, enjoying learning and being given a sense of belonging.”

Look out for the film on our school’s social media pages.

To find out more about our schools, or to arrange a visit, please go to www.wensumtrust.org.uk



Schools reap benefit of English Hub programme

One of the first groups of schools to take part in the Wensum English Hub programme has graduated.

Representatives of 17 primary and infant schools across Norfolk attended a special event at Bookbugs and Dragon Tales in Norwich in July to receive their certificates.

The Wensum English Hub, based at Heather Avenue Infant School, is one of 34 English Hubs nationwide. Funded by the Department For Education, it supports other schools across Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex to achieve excellence in teaching reading and early language development.

Once enrolled in the programme, the schools receive intensive dedicated support from a Literacy Specialist to help develop a single Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme, access to training and up to £6,000 of funding for training and resources.

Since signing up to the programme, the 17 graduating schools have all seen significant improvements in their literacy data with some schools improving by up to 40 per cent.

Laura Anderson, the Wensum English Hub lead, said: "It's been a pleasure to work with these schools and to help their reading teachers develop in confidence and knowledge. These schools have worked with us since joining in September 2019 and have kept going despite the challenges we've faced with the pandemic.

"These schools have made exceptional progress and are in a strong position going forward in their teaching of phonics and early language.

"One of the schools graduating from the programme is Edward Worlledge Ormiston Academy in Great Yarmouth. Its reading lead, Danielle Grant, said: "The Wensum English Hub programme has been fantastic. I was new to the reading lead role when I joined the programme and it's given me the confidence to reach our expected standards in our school.

"The funding has been invaluable and it's allowed us to buy the resources we need to be able to provide our children with a good start to their education.

"Working with the English Hub has definitely been a way forward for us. We now have a structured phonics programme across our school, consistency across our teaching, and we are seeing positive improvements in the children's reading and writing."



Investing in the future of Hellesdon High and Sixth Form

Finishing touches are being made to the refurbished Sixth Form Centre at Hellesdon High School ahead of its official opening later this year.

The Wensum Trust has invested £278,000 in the refurbishment of the existing Sixth Form building which now offers a bigger study centre for students, along with a modern common room and kitchen area.

As well as the new look Sixth Form, the school's new K Block is now open to students across the school. The building - a £300,000 investment from the Trust which was craned onto the site during the summer - houses three new classrooms and a support hub for students to access help from learning support to emotional and mental health advice.

Look out for a special feature on these developments in our next edition of Wensum News.





WAW Enters Second Year

The second year of the Wise About Words project got underway at Norwich Theatre Royal's Studio Two at the start of the new school year.

A further eight teachers from across the Wensum Trust's primary phase schools have taken part in specialist training to join the project in partnership with Norwich Theatre.

Funded by the Paul Hamlin Foundation, Wise About Words is aimed at embedding story sharing in schools and uses the arts as a tool to bring stories to life, so that children can grow their love of stories, learn life skills and develop good emotional literacy.

The new cohort of teachers were joined during their training by the eight teacher's who took part in the first year of the project.

Jo Reil, from Norwich Theatre and Wise About Words lead, said: "Having the first cohort there to support the workshop was essential and they were brilliant sharing all they had learnt last year.

"The workshop is invaluable as it is a hard project to explain but as soon as people see it in action, the penny drops, and people understand its potential impact. All the teachers who took part in the workshop are really committed and can see the value in the programme.

"Since introducing Wise About Words, teachers in the Wensum Trust primary schools have seen a difference in their classes: communication between the children has improved and their confidence has grown, along with their ability to work together.

Jo added: "Many of the teachers have said it was often the children they least expected to thrive with the drama that did so. We have gone from children who would shut down both physically and verbally if they were worried or felt uncertain, to children who would stand up in class to give a speech or put their hand up to ask a question.

"By exploring emotions through stories and drama, children have been much more able to understand their own feelings, as well as considering other people's perspectives, which complements the Wensum Trust's relational approach."

The Wise About Words project now has a total of four professional creative artists going into eight of the Wensum Trust schools, with 16 teachers and more than 500 children now involved in the project.

Robot Wars!

Two students from Alderman Peel High School are off to Estonia in November to compete in the Robotex World Championships.

Lily and Alexi won the Lego Line Following Robotics competition in July with their robot 'Jo Not So Slow'. Their goal was to navigate their robot through a complex course in the shortest time possible and they beat the competition with a time of 34 seconds.

The All Computer Science Club, run for Years 7 and 8, spent the last term testing and refining their robots, for the event.

Matt Hardman, Deputy Principal, said: "We are extremely proud of Lily and Alexi, along with the rest of the All Computer Sciences Club, for their achievement. We are really looking forward to taking Jo Not So Slow to Estonia and represent our school."

The event was sponsored by Equinor, the company which developed a large wind farm off the North Norfolk Coast, and included a presentation by them about off-shore wind farms and careers in engineering.



Teacher Training in Tanzania

A teacher from Kinsale Junior School spent the summer mentoring and coaching teachers in Tanzania.

The Wensum Trust sponsored Isobelle Rose to embark on her own learning journey through the charity Inspiring Teachers. She accompanied fellow Kinsale teacher, Rosie Howell, who was invited back by the charity to be a team leader following previous trips.

They both joined 25 other teachers from the USA, Spain and the UK to mentor and coach teachers from the Silverleaf Academy Trust.

Isobelle began her trip at the Silver Leaf Academy observing the teaching and learning in classes from Kindergarten age to Grade 6. She then visited Tupendane Orphanage Centre and Amani Primary School to observe lessons and speak to the head teachers.

Isobelle said: "I was able to use my observations to guide the mentoring session and what coaching was needed. I spent two weeks mentoring 22 teachers in total, explaining different techniques and showing how they work in practice. All the teachers were extremely appreciative of the workshops and since I have returned home I have received messages from them telling me how they are implementing what they have learnt."

Whilst Isobelle spent the majority of her time working hard to coach the teachers, she was able to use her weekends to explore Tanzania outside of the classroom.

"On my first trip, I visited a charity called The Small Things (TST) that provides support to vulnerable families and children in the Meru district of Tanzania. TST aims to create alternatives to traditional orphanages for vulnerable children, by supporting struggling families, empowering caregivers and communities."

"When we arrived, we were welcomed by women from the Meru tribe who were performing traditional welcome songs and dances for us. We were able to see where the families and children stay and we saw their extensive smallholding. They grow much of their own food and we were also able to see the process of coffee making. We picked some coffee cherries from the trees, pulped them, and then milled the beans before roasting and grinding them down. We finally added water and got to drink the coffee. It tasted amazing, especially as so much effort had gone into making the coffee"



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Isobelle also took a slippery hike to Napuru waterfalls and spent some time on the beaches of Zanzibar, but her real highlight was going on safari in the Tarangire and Lake Manyara National Parks.

She said: “We had only been inside Tarangire National Park for about 20 minutes before we were surrounded by hundreds of zebras, impala and wildebeest and were able to see a few giraffes and elephants in the distance.

“All of a sudden, the animals began to stampede directly in front of us because there were lions around. I then spotted a lion that was hiding behind a mound near the small watering hole and then another lion appeared. A few minutes later our driver got a message over the radio that a lion elsewhere had caught a wildebeest so we drove over to see. There were actually 15 lions in the pride including two cubs and two males that were feasting on the wildebeest.

“I also saw an abundance of other animals including waterbucks, gazelles, vervet monkeys, banded mongooses, baboons, buffalo, hippos, warthogs and a python.

“Back in the classroom, Isobelle said whilst some of the teaching was similar to what we would expect in the UK, there were many differences: “It was evident that there is a clear lack of resources with very few reading and text books - and most schools have little to no technology.

“Teachers mostly use a blackboard and they use singing and dancing at every opportunity to aid learning as this is a huge part of their culture.

“I also met one teacher that had only received one day of teacher training before she was placed within a classroom as a full-time teacher, whilst other teachers had been to university for three years to gain a teaching diploma. Class sizes also varied considerably with some classes of 12 but other teachers could have classes of up to 70 children.”

Now back in the UK, Isobelle, along with Rosie, will be using their experience in Tanzania in lessons over the coming months - and she will also be delivering assemblies to other schools across the Wensum Trust to talk about her experience and share some learning.

But Isobelle said it's also had a personal impact: “This trip has reignited my love and passion for teaching again. Sometimes it is easy to get so busy with the day to day stresses of teaching that you don't have time to remember why you decided to go into teaching as a career in the first place. The joy and excitement that I saw on children's and teacher's faces while on my trip has reminded me of this.”



In Partnership with Ian Thornton OBE

The Wensum Trust has established unique partnerships with a number of organisations to offer experiences that allow children to explore their talents from an early age. Every term Wensum News will speak to a representative of one of our partner organisations to find out about their role and their work with the Wensum Trust. In our first feature we are speaking to Ian Thornton OBE, CEO of the Norwich City Community Sports Foundation.

What was your educational and career route to where you are today?

I actually started on work experience with the Foundation. I struggled at school and further education. Most of my learning has come from “doing something I love” and “on the job”. At the age of 25, I completed my UEFA ‘A’ Coaching Licence, which is the equivalent of a degree. In my early years most of my time was coaching specific but I have grown with the Foundation over 29 years, completing a number of roles and projects.

How important is the CSF’s partnership with the Wensum Trust and why?

The partnership with the Wensum Trust provides a significant opportunity to support many young people in shaping their future. We like working with the Wensum Trust because we share similar standards, values and desired outcome, as well as sharing our skill sets, resources and facilities. This is proving to have a massive effect and impact on the young people we work with.

What would be your advice to young people looking for a career in the sporting industry?

Ultimately, you should try your hardest and find opportunities that align with any industry you’re interested in. For me, my role at the Football Club and Foundation has never been a job, career or even work; it’s just been a passion. My biggest piece of advice would be to back up your academic knowledge with real practical life experiences. Volunteering is so undervalued in my opinion. If you really want to achieve something you have to put yourself out.

Like the Wensum Trust, the CSF is focused on mental health and wellbeing - what is CSF doing to improve the lives of young people in Norfolk?

Boosting mental health and well-being is really important to us. We use the physical and social benefits of sports to improve people’s mental health and physical well-being. In regard to young people, a number of our courses and partnership work provide guidance and expertise. We will be running a new pilot programme for young people soon – so watch this space!

What has been your proudest moment so far with CSF?

I’m really lucky. I’ve had many iconic moments with the Foundation. Contributing to the build projects at Carrow Park and The Nest have been major challenges but so rewarding to see the number of people who benefit from them. Standing near the start line of the first Run Norwich was emotional. The engagement from people all over the world to take part in this event overwhelms us all every year. Recently, I was awarded an OBE for services to the community. I am fully aware this award recognises all the work and help of so many people within the Foundation.

What or who inspires you?

Our staff, fundraisers, and volunteers always inspire me. They give up so much time and effort, sometimes literally putting their body on the line, to raise money to help us help others.



Student Goals on target thanks to partnership

Students are already seeing the benefits of a new educational programme being delivered by the Wensum Trust, in partnership with Norwich City Community Sports Foundation (CSF).

The Physical Education Teaching (PET) programme based at Hellesdon Sixth Form provides students with a structured and supported pathway into careers such as PE teaching and the wider sports sector.

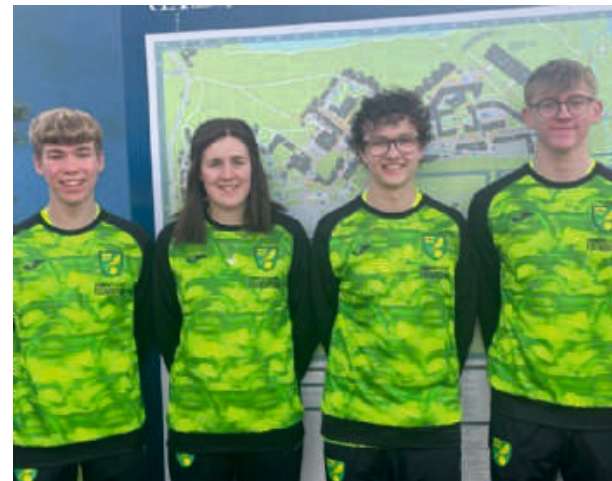
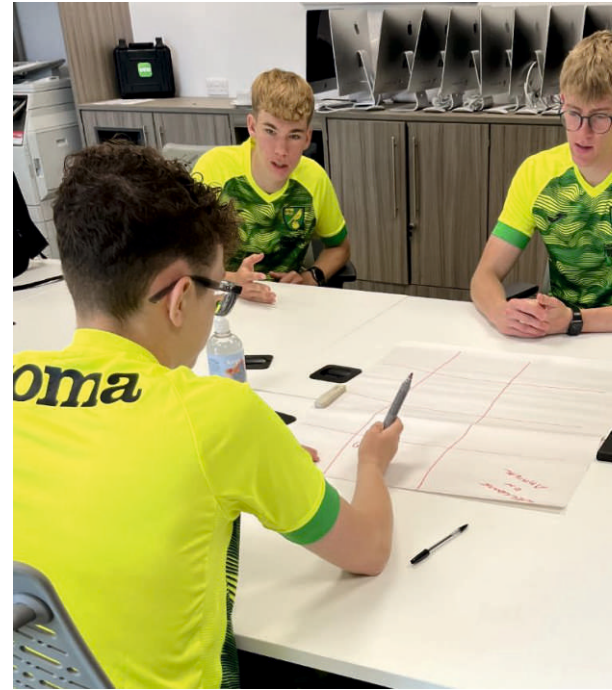
The two-year course allows 16 to 18-year-olds to choose their own education package, selecting from a range of A-Level and vocational subjects. These are then complemented by the chance to obtain the Level 2 Certificate in 'Supporting Physical Activity and School Sport', alongside additional coaching qualifications with the Foundation. Those that achieve the required entry grades are then guaranteed a place on the University of East Anglia's BSc Physical Education course.

Throughout the programme the students have the unique opportunity to benefit from in-school work placements delivering PE across all four key stages of the Wensum Trust's infant, junior and high school levels, providing "real life" opportunities to put the skills being developed through the programme into practice.

Current student, Lucie, said she has found a love of coaching whilst taking part in the programme: "This course has given us so many opportunities and broadened all our horizons. When I started the course, I didn't realise how much I would enjoy coaching and now I am looking at taking that course at the UEA."

Richard Taylor, Director of Sixth Form, said: "The first year of the PET course has gone amazingly well - we couldn't have asked for a group of more active and committed students. The PET course is providing experiences that allow students to have a clear pathway from GCSE, through A Levels, and on into a Sport related degree with our higher education partner, the UEA."

Stevie Bramble, Head of Curriculum at Norwich City CSF, "The course is unique that it offers teaching experience placements across a variety of settings, vocational qualifications to further enhance CVs and skill sets, whilst the partnership with the UEA is ensuring the next steps are already being supported for our students to achieve"



Exam success for Wensum Trust schools

Students from across the Wensum Trust returned to school in the summer holiday to receive their GCSE and A Level results.

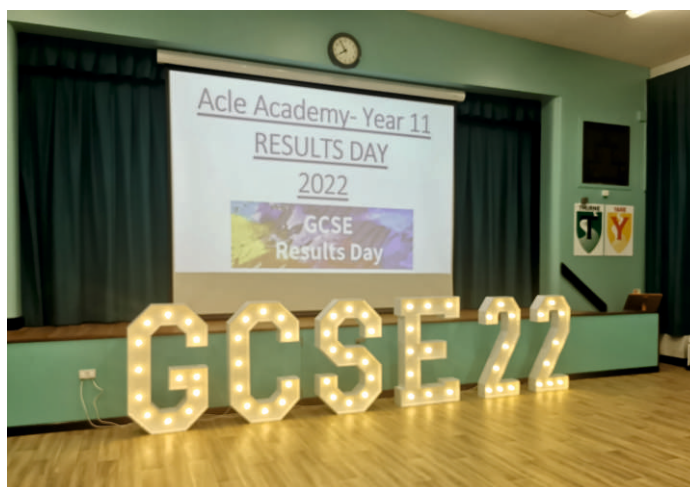
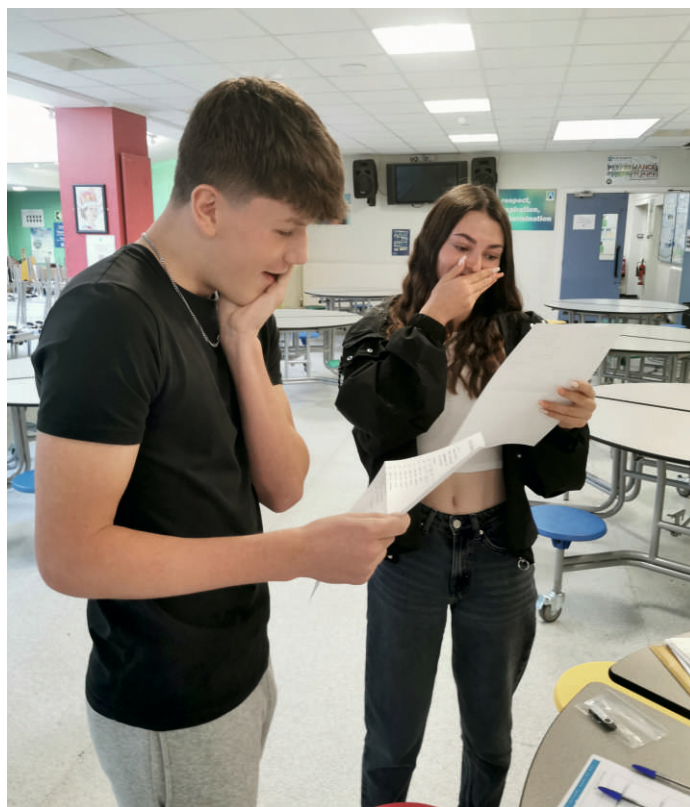
Acle Academy, Alderman Peel High School and Hellesdon High School welcomed Year 11 students back as they collected their results. Whilst the sixth form students at Hellesdon celebrated their A-Level results a week earlier.

Speaking about the GCSE results, Principal of Acle Academy, Helen Watts, said: "I am delighted with the overall and personal results for their 2022 cohort who showed great determination, resilience and excellent effort in the challenges of the last two years.

They started their Key Stage Four course in 2020 and endured the turbulence of Covid throughout. Staff had to adapt the curriculum and adopt creative approaches to teaching and learning. Students had to develop self-discipline and new working strategies. Many students endured staff absence or periods of self-isolation where they had to learn from home. In addition to this, students had to cope with the mental and emotional challenges that arose from covid. As a school, we have worked really hard to prioritise pastoral care and emotional regulation over the past two years to ensure that students were in the best frame of mind to learn and achieve their potential."

Meanwhile, Richard Taylor, Director of Sixth Form, said it was great to see A-Level students collect their results in person this year. He said: "There were lots of happy faces after a challenging two years. As a year group who hadn't sat public exams at GCSE they have done fantastically well. My thanks to their teachers and parents/carers for all the support they have given over the last two years."

Daniel Thrower, CEO of the Wensum Trust said: "I would like to congratulate students at our schools across the Trust who have achieved excellent results through hard work and determination. I would also like to thank all the staff and teachers who have guided our students during their learning journey in order that they can leave school prepared, not only to reach their future aspirations, but also to be well-rounded individuals."



SOCIAL SNAPSHOT

Alderman Peel High School students performing at the Royal Norfolk Show in June.



The children at Heather Avenue had a visit from a dentist and learnt how to keep their teeth healthy



Reception children at Garrick Green have been teaching the rest of their class tricky words.



The chicks hatched at Lodge Lane Infant School



Mr Nice's class at Firsides found a way to cool off in the summer heatwave!



Reception children at Arden Grove became pirates for the day. Arrrrggghh!



Hellesdon High School students had a great time taking part in the Colour Run at the Norfolk School Games



Acle Academy has welcomed the Pets As Therapy charity into the school.



FACILITIES HIRE



Do you run a group or club?

Are you looking for somewhere to meet regularly? Or somewhere to host a one-off event?

Many of our schools have facilities which you can use as your base.

Whether you're running exercise or antenatal classes, slimming world sessions, adult education classes or drama groups, we can help accommodate you.

If you're interested in talking to us about using our facilities, please get in contact with Kris Hart by emailing k.hart@wensumtrust.org.uk or call 01603 254327.

Alternatively visit our website www.wensumtrust.org.uk to look at all the facilities we have on offer across the Trust.

"We are delighted to have access to the great facilities at the Wensum Trust. As a grassroots football club, they have been able to support us in providing good quality facilities at each of the formats we need; 5, 7, 9 & 11 a side, at prices that mean we can make football accessible for the children of our community"

Dan Henry Costessey Youth



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