



I can hardly believe that another academic year has passed. What a year this has been for the Trust. I feel so proud of our learners and staff and I think this edition of The Buzz really does show the vast range of talent in our academies.

I am delighted that learners in all year groups are certainly Dreaming Big and fully embracing the opportunities presented to them. We have enjoyed so many amazing experiences with our young people; to name but a few: the DAT choir performance at University of Wolverhampton, a great team of young people who were trained by the Welsh National Opera, listening to Molly's fantastic 'Speak Out' speech at the Speakers' Trust regional final in Birmingham, and simply hearing about so many learners receiving rewards throughout the year for their superb level of effort.

Please, take a look at the report, as Ofsted have validated many of the Trust's initiatives that are clearly making a real difference to our quality of education. Well done to all learners and staff at Pegasus.



So, our learners and staff are currently enjoying end of year celebrations by participating in an action-packed activities week. I am working closely with Principals and members of the central team to ensure that the Trust continues to improve our academies at pace. We have exciting plans for our team of student leaders, we have a 'commitments' programme ready to launch for all learners (a range of extra-curricular opportunities and challenges) and we are launching our 'mind to be kind' programme as part of our pledge to develop a culture of genuine care, support and kindness in all of our academies.

I am sure you will enjoy this edition of The Buzz. On behalf of everyone at Dudley Academies Trust, I wish all parents, carers and learners a lovely summer holiday.

Jo Higgins Chief Executive



To cap it all, an Ofsted inspection team visited Pegasus Academy recently to undertake a full inspection, six months earlier than we anticipated. In just 18 months, the academy has moved from inadequate to 'requires improvement', a truly great achievement.

It's time to discover more.

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Dreaming BIG

Speakers Trust

The DAT was very proud to host the regional 'Speak Out Challenge' final at St James Academy. 'Speak Out' is a programme designed to give school children the confidence to speak in public, a skill that will be useful throughout their lives. I would like to congratulate Molly from Beacon Hill, who was runner-up on the day. Keith from St James was awarded a very close third place and Ashley from Pegasus spoke bravely about her experiences of Autism. Molly progressed to the West Midlands Grand Final, which took place at the Crescent Theatre in Birmingham.

Over 4,000 young people participated in the West Midlands 'Speak Out Challenge' this year and Molly was in the top twelve. The video of Molly's speech from is available on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8G0bdqSpHY> or type in: speak out challenge molly jarrot). A truly inspiring young lady, who should speak in Parliament!



Welsh National Opera performance

Festival of Education (taster week)

Nearly 700 of our Year 10 learners from across the Trust took part in our Festival of Education, a taster week at our sponsor Dudley College of Technology. They were able to have a go at several A Level subjects as well as 20 other areas such as Engineering, Graphic Design, Health & Social Care, Catering, Construction Skills, Hairdressing and Computing.

Learners were able to get a valuable insight into what to aim for when they leave school; they also did a session on the wide range of career routes available in our region.



Trust Rugby Tournament

The Trust and its sponsor, Dudley College of Technology, have recently been working in partnership to introduce rugby into our schools. In May, learners from across the Trust took part in a Touch Rugby tournament on the College's 3G pitches. The event followed a series of high quality training sessions led by our sponsor's Sports Department staff and learners. It was a great afternoon filled with energy, skill, cheering and fun. We hope to introduce more Trust sports events in the future.

Blood Brothers performances

Learners from The Link Academy took part in three wonderful performances of Blood Brothers, an award-winning musical written by Willy Russell. Parents and carers, learners, board members and central team staff all attended the performances and fed back on how magnificent they were. Well done to all the learners and staff involved in the performances and thank you to The Link Academy learners Aaminah, Kiranpreet and Sneha who sent in their photographs of the performance.

As noted in the Spring edition of Buzz, Dudley Academies Trust alongside other local schools had been working in collaboration with the Welsh National Opera. After a number of rehearsals when they learned operatic techniques, approximately 20 learners from across the Trust performed in 'Freedom', a production devised and performed by the young people themselves. Everyone who attended the event in The Chancellor's Hall at the University of Wolverhampton was impressed by the quality of the production and the singing. The learners were exceptional and proudly represented the Trust.



the buzz

Rewarding effort...

Trust wide merit competition

Following a Trust wide competition, the below learners achieved the most merits, had 100% attendance and did not go into Supporting Expectations between 25/03/19 - 10/04/19.

During assembly on 24th May, Hafash Ali from The Link Academy was rewarded with an Amazon Echo and certificate by the Chief Executive, Jo Higgins, for achieving the most merits across the Trust.

The other learners were given a Showcase cinema voucher and certificate for achieving the most merits in their academy. Well done to all the learners for their excellent effort, there will be more competitions like this to come.

	Merits	Learner name(s)	Year	Academy
1st	162	Hafash Ali	7	The Link Academy
2nd	72	Sydney Sawyers	9	St James Academy
3rd	68	Reel Mohammed	8	Beacon Hill Academy
4th	48	Jack Grabble & Callan Wagg	7	Pegasus Academy

Easter and summer rewards

Other learners who had no lines from January to March didn't miss out, either. The Easter prize draw saw a variety of rewards gifted for excellent effort and achievements. Rewards included Intu Merry Hill vouchers, Showcase cinema vouchers, The Leap Trampoline Park experience for two, Easter eggs and many more. We hope learners have enjoyed the rewards provided so far. There will be a prize draw at the end of the summer term which will include lots more exciting rewards.

Working with the Black Country Chamber of Commerce



Young Chamber Committee

The Young Chamber Committee consists of representatives from secondary schools and colleges across the Black Country who voice the opinions of their whole school body. We are delighted that learners from across the Trust are part of the committee and that the Student Vice-Chair of the committee is a Year 11 learner from Pegasus Academy, Ezha Jahangir.



Leading together

Business in a post Brexit Britain panel

In May, learners from Pegasus Academy attended the Business in a post-Brexit Britain event, organised by the Black Country Chamber of Commerce at the University of Wolverhampton. The exclusive event saw representatives from Britain's biggest business support organisations discussing the implications of Brexit on businesses across the UK. Learners posed some important questions to the panel and were recognised for their intelligent contribution.



Respecting each other and our world

Working with the West Midlands Police

Knife arches

The Trust has been working with West Midlands Police to help keep our schools and children safe. Police Officers visited Beacon Hill Academy and carried out safe searches using a knife arch. The Trust is committed to ensuring our learners respect each other and our world and understand the impact of knife crime. The West Midlands Police will be working with our other academies in the future. Learners have also been working with West Midlands Police Cadets, gaining new skills and experience of how the police operate.

Funding for the Trust

Condition Improvement Fund (CIF)

We are pleased to confirm that the Trust has been successful in securing additional funding as part of the government's Condition Improvement Fund (CIF). Works due to be carried out include the following:

- Electrical improvements at St James Academy.
- Heating, window and roofing improvements at Pegasus Academy.
- Roofing improvements at The Link Academy.

Pegasus Academy has secured £1.6 million to upgrade school buildings. Following on from last years' improvements in A block, this new funding will be used to replace the heating and windows in B Block which houses English and Mathematics. Alongside the renovation of the humanities floor for our Year 8 Literacy for Life pupils, these improvements will really make a much needed difference to the school environment.

Learning that inspires...

Working with Employers – Thomas Dudley Ltd

As part of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce Business Festival, a group of Year 10 learners visited local business Thomas Dudley. Prior to the visit they spoke to learners about how they thought businesses could help them prepare for the world of work. During the visit they put the learners' ideas to business leaders. These ideas included how businesses could provide mentoring, assemblies, help with business skills and work taster sessions.

Meanwhile, Year 11 learners have not only been working hard in lessons but have participated in many out of school events including a Business Speed Networking session at Wolverhampton Racecourse.



Careers strategy

A lot of great work goes on in our academies to help learners explore the possible careers that are on offer to them. However, there is very little government support for these vital activities. The Trust believes that every learner should understand the opportunities that they could aim for; that's why we will be launching a co-ordinated careers strategy across all of our academies next term. We'll update you with the details as soon as the new team is in place.

