

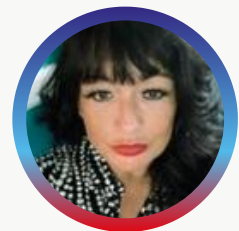


The Island Learning Trust Newsletter

Inside this issue:

CEO MESSAGE

A message from our CEO, Debbie Wheeler



OUR TILT FAMILY OF SCHOOLS

A look into what has been happening
across our schools



PASTORAL NEWS

Latest information from our Pastoral
team





MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

● ● ● **DECEMBER 2023** ● ●



I hope this message finds you well and filled with the same sense of optimism and enthusiasm that permeates our incredible educational community.

Unbelievably, this is the start of our seventh year as a Trust. As I reflect on the seven years and the significant progress made, it is important to say our focus on school improvement remains steadfast, we live and breathe to 'be the best we can be', for our children and our TILT Team too.

The TILT Team demonstrate dedication to providing an enriching learning experience, setting the stage for future success. Continuous, incremental improvement, sustained over time improves the life chances of our learners: this is our mission.

The Trust board and I are currently drafting on a new Strategic Plan that will detailing TILT priorities for the next five years, these will guide our journey toward excellence. These priorities, reflect our commitment to providing the best possible education and to create a lasting & meaningful impact in the communities we serve.

Core Drives 2023-2028

Develop high performing schools: Schools of Choice



To secure outstanding education in our schools so that all of our young people are happy, cared for & are enabled to learn, succeed & grow.

Build Staff Talent: Employer of Choice



Enhanced levels of staff wellbeing & satisfaction. Build staff talent by developing inspiring, research informed staff.

Expand the TILT reach



Education for the greater good



To create a lasting & meaningful impact in the communities we serve, to create social value & civic impact

Instil a love & respect for the natural world and develop sustainability practices



Our plan will be underpinned by the following enablers:

Digital technology
Innovation and Research
Outstanding Leadership and Governance

I am delighted to share our first Newsletter of 2023-24, to allow a glimpse into the wonderful world of TILT.

Here's to a year filled with innovation, progress, and success!

Warm regards
Debbie Wheeler
CEO
The Island Learning Trust



The Island Learning Trust

Be the best you can be



WE ARE PROUD TO BE
SHORTLISTED FOR...

THE NATIONAL
MAT
AWARDS
2024

THURSDAY 7TH MARCH - LONDON

The Island Learning Trust are delighted to announce we have been shortlisted for three awards at the National MAT Awards 2024!

Our Trust has been shortlisted in the 2024 awards for 'Most Improved MAT of the Year' and 'MAT Leadership Team of the Year'. In addition, our very own Maria Loughheed, Learning Mentor and Forest School Leader of Sunny Bank Primary School, has been shortlisted in the 'Rising Star Award'.

Debbie Wheeler, CEO, said "We are absolutely thrilled and honoured to have been shortlisted in one category let alone three! Our Trust has a clear purpose for us and our children 'to be the best you can be' and the strides we have taken amongst great adversity in recent years have showcased our values –

Resilience, Optimism, Ambition and Responsibility.

These values are reflected in everything we do and will continue to be key to our development and growth.

Maria is an exceptional member of the TILT team, she goes above and beyond and epitomises 'be the best we can be'!"

The National MAT Awards are organised by The Multi-Academy Trust Association (MATA) partnered by Eduthing Limited.

The award winners will be announced on 7 March 2024.



Minster in Sheppey News



SHEPPEY UNITED STRIKER VISITS MINSTER

To mark Sheppey United reaching the FA cup against Walshall FC, striker Dan Bradshaw and the club mascot visited pupils. The pupils each received his autograph and were able to ask questions about the club and the upcoming match.

REMEMBRANCE ASSEMBLY



To mark Remembrance Day, the whole school community came together for a special assembly. The Minster Parliament undertook the assembly and focused on remembering the service men and women, who had lost their lives and their families. The school choir performed the 'White Cliffs of Dover', 'Field of Poppies' and 'We'll Meet Again'. The School's Prime Minister eloquently read 'Flanders Fields'. An ex-pupil Emily Collins attended the assembly to play the 'Last Post' while pupils and staff remembered the lives lost. All pupils had created poppies which adorned the school field and created a striking backdrop for the assembly.

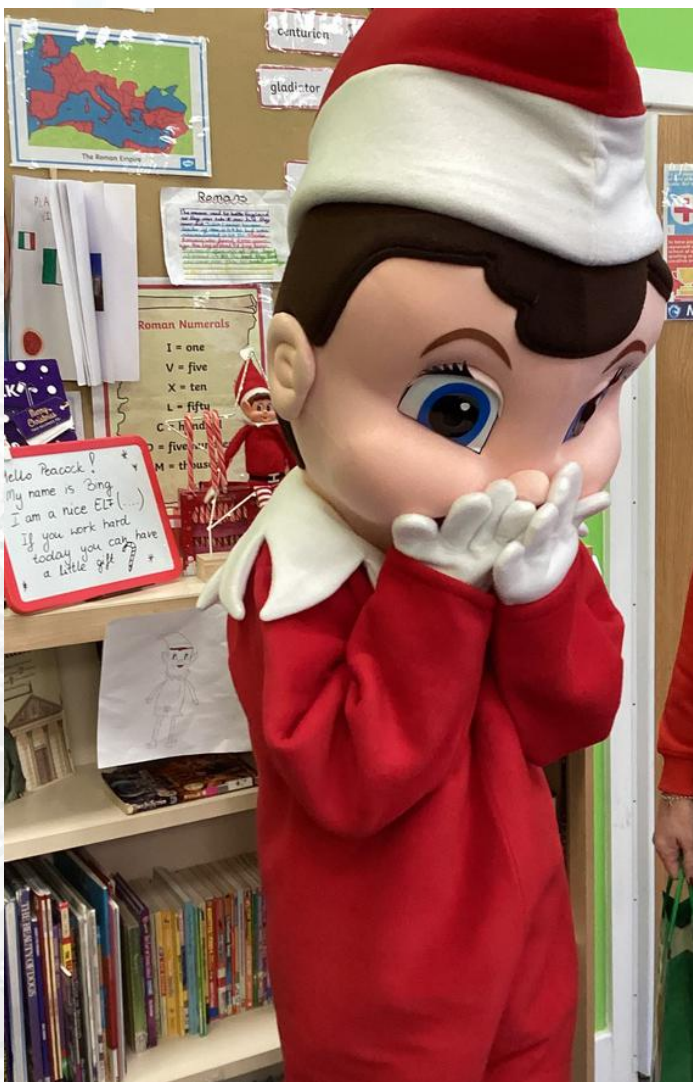
BIKEABILITY

Pupils in Years 5 and 6, have had an opportunity to participate in a Bikeability course arranged by our Sport Coach, Craig Young. Bikeability is a cycle training course teaching practical cycling skills whilst also developing pupils understanding of how to cycle safely on the roads, an important skill for our older pupils. Bikeability also promotes the importance of staying fit and healthy and sustainable modes of travel. The course initially started with pupils undertaking specific manoeuvres on the playground before undertaking training on the roads around Minster.



CHRISTMAS ELF

We were very lucky to have had a visit from the Christmas Elf. All the children were very excited! The Elf kindly delivered each class a gift from the Minster PTA.







Sunny Bank Primary News



MEET BENJI!



BENJI

**MY NAME IS BENJI AND
I AM THE SUNNY BANK
PRIMARY SCHOOL DOG
MENTOR. I AM A 6
MONTH OLD COCKAPOO
AND LIVE WITH MISS
AKRILL AND HER
FAMILY.**

I am new to the school but have passed my Dog Mentor Programme assessment with flying colours! Miss Loughnane has received training to be my handler in school. My role as school dog will be challenging and varied, but I feel that I am more than up to the task. I love being around people and making them happy. Numerous research studies have shown the benefits of dogs in schools and evidence indicates that areas of potential benefits include:

- **Cognitive development** – companionship with a dog stimulates memory, problem-solving, game-playing and can improve reading skills.
- **Emotional development** – a school dog improves self-esteem, acceptance from others and lifts mood, often provoking laughter and fun. Dogs can also teach compassion and respect for other living things as well as relieving anxiety.
- **Physical development** – interaction with a pet reduces blood pressure, provides tactile stimulation, assists with pain management, gives motivation to move, walk and stimulates the senses.
- **Environmental benefits** – a dog in a school contributes towards the creation of home style environment, with all of the above benefits continuing long after the school day is over.
- **Social benefits** – a dog provides a positive mutual topic for discussion, encourages responsibility, wellbeing, developing social skills and focused interaction with others.

But what will my role as dog mentor at Sunny Bank Primary School entail during school hours?

I will have an interesting and ever-changing job. At the moment I am learning how to greet people and where and when I can play. I am spending a lot of time in the SENDCo office and with Miss Loughnane whilst I am introduced to school life slowly. Over time, I will work as a Dog Mentor and will follow planned sessions with individual children or small groups of children as needed. I am also very excited about hearing children read. Sometimes, I may join a class for a lesson or two if it will enrich the experience in some way.

If you have any further questions regarding my role within the school please contact Miss Akrill or Miss Loughnane via the school office.



Benji



CHILDREN IN NEED

Pupils went spotty for the day!



ONLINE SAFETY PODCASTS

Oak class were very lucky to have a visit from a Kent Police representative. The visit included an assembly about anti-bullying and staying safe online. Afterwards, they carried out workshops and worked in groups to create podcasts about what they had learnt! Listen to them on our website and social media or scan this QR code:



LIBRARY REOPENS

We are so excited to be back in our school library after some building renovations! It has been amazing to see the children spending their break and lunchtimes reading all kinds of books, creating an awesome atmosphere to get lost in the written word.



Watch our Anti-Bullying Assembly



MAKE A
NOISE
ABOUT
BULLYING

#ANTIBULLYINGWEEK

Please share your 'Make A Noise About Bullying' activity with us online!

Anti-bullying
is **NOT** just for
Anti-Bullying
Week!



We have to take
action all year
round to bring an
end to bullying.



Anti-Bullying Week - 13-17th November
#AntiBullyingWeek #MakeANoise

ANTI-BULLYING
ALLIANCE





Halfway Houses News



POETRY DAY VIDEO

We had a fabulous time on National Poetry Day exploring a number of themes linked to both our curriculum topics and the National theme of 'Refuge'. We explored, created and performed these poems throughout the school day and then invited our parents in for a picnic and some poetry readings. Our parents loved it! On the following day, Mr Butler, from Sunny Bank came to film some of us reading the poems.

You can watch the video by scanning the QR code above!



BONKERS ABOUT BOOKS DAY

Our children wore their pyjamas and brought in old books that they did not want anymore; these are currently being sorted and added to our book collection in the library and to our class book corners. Our children played a game called 'DEAR' throughout the day which means drop everything and read and our teachers loved catching them at random moments... even our foundation children joined in and were on the way to get dinner when they had to stop for a story – they loved it!

A big thank you to everyone that donated!





FOOTBALL CRAZY

We had a non uniform day to show support for our local football team who made it through to the FA cup for the first time in their history! After school we had the opportunity to take pictures with the team mascot and star player Dan Bradshaw.



REMEMBRANCE DAY

Our Pupil Parliament went over to the local cemetery to place memorial crosses on the graves of the soldiers who have bravely fought for our country on behalf of the Royal British Legion. This is a job that we do annually and the children were very proud to be involved.



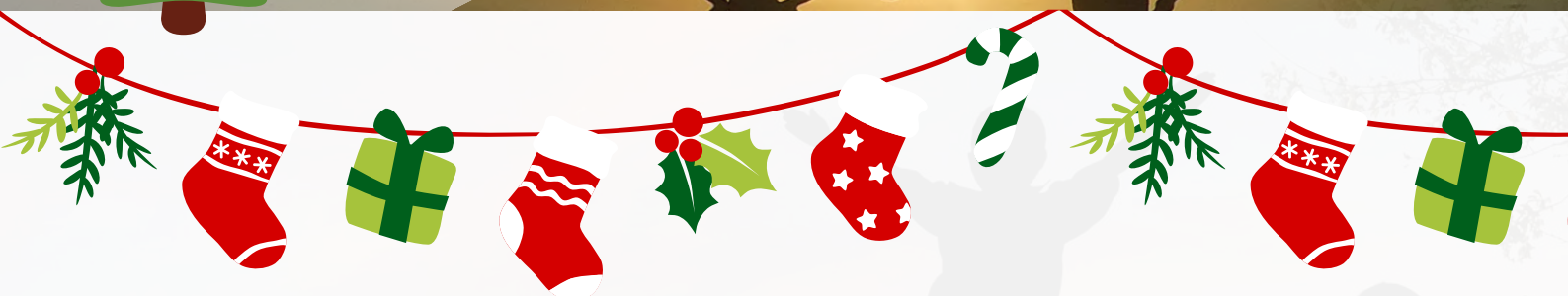
BABY CHICKS

We have been looking after our new baby chicks in the canopy for the past few weeks until they grew big enough to be outside with the other chickens. It was finally time to release them in to the big pen. When we got over there we had a big surprise.... 3 more new babies have hatched! We are looking forward to watching them grow!





FAMILY SUPPORT



December and Christmas can come with a lot of pressure – emotionally, financially and mentally, with lots of expectations of having the ‘perfect’ Christmas. This often means we forget to be present in the moment and forget to soak up the joy of the festive season.

Remember:

- **YOU DON'T NEED MATCHING PYJAMAS TO BE HAPPY**
- **YOU DON'T NEED AN INSTA PIC WITH SANTA TO HAVE A GOOD CHRISTMAS**
- **YOU DON'T NEED A CHRISTMAS EVE BOX TO BE A GREAT PARENT**
- **YOU DON'T NEED VARIOUS CHRISTMAS TRIPS TO HAVE FUN**
- **YOU DON'T HAVE TO HAVE A CHEESE BOARD**
- **YOU DON'T NEED A COLOUR COORDINATED TREE**
- **YOU DON'T NEED A MASS OF PRESENTS UNDER THE TREE**
-

If these bring you and your family joy, go ahead and have fun but if you can't do these things it does not make you a bad parent and it does not mean your children won't have a great Christmas.

We have amazing Family Liaison Officers in each of our schools, if you are struggling please reach out and we will do our best to help and support you.



T'was the night before Christmas and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse

So how can you calm children down and get them off to bed on Christmas Eve – amidst all the fun and anticipation for the big day?

Here are some top tips that may help:

A warm bath is thought to promote production of melatonin, a sleep hormone, and is a great sleep cue.

Some deep stretches in your child's bedtime routine, ideally after their bath, will support their sensory needs and help them to calm down when over-excited.

Finish the bedtime routine with a Christmas storybook. This will help make for a calm and special atmosphere.

Don't let them take a screen device to bed with them for distraction. It will only keep them awake for longer.

Ask older children to close their eyes and make a list in their head of 10 Christmas items. Light meditation exercise will move their focus away from trying to sleep.

For younger children, you could leave a gentle audio Christmas story playing for them to listen to as they drift off.



SUPPORT



SLEEP SUPPORT

19th January 2024 09:45-12:45 Presented By: Susan Cassingham and Kate Chatfield

Sleep problems can be a persistent and severe problem for children and young people. Improved sleep can lead to reduced stress within the family and improved educational outcomes for the young person.

This half-day workshop will:

- Introduce participants to a range of sleep problems in children and young people with additional support needs
- Identify possible causes of sleep difficulties
- Consider behavioural interventions to improve them
- Provide an opportunity to share ideas with parents and carers facing similar challenges

This workshop is £5 per participant and refreshments are provided.

ATTACHMENT

22nd January 2024 09:45-12:45 Presented By: Tracey Farley

A child's ability to engage in learning and be fully included in school and family life can be fundamentally affected by their experiences of early relationships or attachments.

This half-day workshop will:

- Explain some of the factors that can prevent a secure attachment from forming between a child and their primary care giver
- Outline some of the challenges that these children experience on a daily basis and the impact that this has on their ability to form meaningful relationships with both adults and their peers
- Consider some of the behaviours that these children exhibit and how they can be supported to overcome negative childhood experiences
- Provide an opportunity for parents, carers, families and professionals to reflect on how an ethos of emotional wellbeing may strengthen inclusion, reduce disaffection and promote resilience
- Discuss practical advice and ideas that can be implemented

This workshop is £5 per participant and refreshments are provided.

To book, please email midas@meadowfield.kent.sch.uk or call 01795 477788 (option 6).



STAYING SAFE ONLINE

Technology is at the very centre of all our lives today – especially our children's and at this time of year a new games console, tablet or laptop may be on your child's wish list. Learning how to use technology wisely is an essential skill for life. However, at a time when there is increased access to numerous different technology platforms, many children are at a greater risk of online grooming, cyber bullying and exposure to inappropriate or illegal content online.

The Island Learning Trust believe that both school and parents/carers need to work in partnership in order to safeguard children from harm online.

Parents/carers have a highly important role to play in keeping children safe online. There are many ways parents/carers can help minimise the risks associated with children being online and increase parents/carers awareness of online safety. The list below provides ideas to help parents/carers keep children safe online:

Age Appropriate

Only give your child access to devices, websites, apps, games and social media sites that are age appropriate. Access the PEGI guidance (<https://pegi.info/page/pegi-age-ratings>) on age ratings to inform your choices when buying games for your child, or deciding whether the games they are playing are appropriate, by following the age-ratings assigned to each game. Read each game's advice for parents and play the game yourself to help you understand what it involves.

Appropriate Content

Only give your child access to devices, websites, apps, games and social media sites that you feel comfortable with and not as a result of peer-pressure.

Communication

Talk to your child about why it is important to stay safe online. Explain that whilst the internet is a fun, exciting and knowledge-rich tool, it is also a place where people may wish to bring them into dangerous activities or expose them to unpleasant material. It is important to be clear that you are not saying your child may never use the internet again, or that everything on it is harmful – it is about teaching them to have a greater awareness and to be able to manage and report any risks. Keep an open dialogue with your child – letting them know they can always talk to you about anything that has made them feel uncomfortable online is key to keeping them safe.

Information Sharing

Talk to your child about what information should be kept private; for example, name(s), date of birth, address, contact details, school name etc., should never be given out to strangers online. Remind your child not to give out their passwords and ensure they change them occasionally.

Rules and Boundaries

Discuss with your child rules for being online and draw them up together, including which websites, games, apps, social media sites etc., are acceptable. If certain materials are off-limits, try to explain why, for example, because of excessive violence or bad language. If your child uses online gaming, consider setting rules, such as only talking to people you know and having the conversations on speaker, rather than through headphones.

Most of all join in and have fun together!

Part of our Gaming & Gambling Series



Brought to you by
National Online Safety
www.nationalonlinesafety.com

What you need to know about...

GAMES CONSOLES

What are they?

? 'Games Consoles' ?

Much like a television allows you to watch movies or a radio allows you to listen to music, a games console allows you to play video games. The most modern ones are names you might be familiar with – Sony PlayStation, Microsoft Xbox, and Nintendo Switch – and almost all of them can now connect to the internet and be enjoyed online with friends

Know the Risks

Online Content

While modern consoles don't strictly need to be connected to the internet, many of them also double up as an internet browser or provide the ability to stream TV shows and movies, so it's important that the appropriate filters and parental controls are in place to restrict children viewing any unsuitable content.

Addictive nature

Games consoles require video games, and both can ultimately contribute towards an addictive habit. Playing too much and too often can force children to become reliant on the good feelings released when playing games, making them more likely to want to play them more frequently, and for longer periods of time.

Hacking risk

It's almost impossible to avoid signing up to different services when using modern consoles. Keeping track of all these accounts can be confusing and in a worst-case scenario, fraudsters could gain access to personal information, addresses and bank details by hacking online profiles.

Online Chat

Once connected to the internet, players can talk to each other either over headsets or using text chat functions on the consoles. Without the proper protections in place, children could speak to anybody of any age and find themselves building relationships with strangers they know nothing about.

Safety Tips

Check contacts

Online predators and hackers often use sly tactics to build relationships with children get them to illicit personal details through gaming platforms or gaming communities. Be on the lookout for suspect communications such as intrusive personal messages or people you suspect might not be who they say they are.

Look for behaviour changes

Becoming withdrawn, irritable and anxious when not playing on a games console are trademark symptoms of gaming addiction. If children turn angry when asked to stop playing, that could also be a sign that an intervention is needed.

Keep details private

Games consoles will almost exclusively ask you to enter your details securely on the console itself, or through a trusted website tied to the console maker. If somebody claiming to be working for Sony, Microsoft or Nintendo asks you to share your passwords or account details, do not give it to them.

Use parental controls

Most gaming consoles will have parental controls which can be used to set up things like family management accounts. From here, parents can often set age limits on games and content, spending restrictions, limit play time and set up passwords and authentications to help keep children safe.

Further Support

Block and report

If someone has made your child feel uncomfortable, make note of suspect players' usernames. Often, you'll be able to ban or block these players in a game's settings. If you have proof of their intentions, don't hesitate to contact your local police force or authority with as much information and evidence as you can gather.

Seek Support

If you're concerned about your child playing too much on their console and think they may have developed a gaming addiction, try and offer them support. The World Health Organisation has classified gaming disorder as a mental health condition and there may be external providers locally who can offer you more targeted help.

Keep IDs safe

Be sure to talk to your child about the importance of keeping their identity safe. If they ever receive messages claiming to be from companies but something doesn't feel right, tell them not to respond and inform you. Things like odd spelling and grammar, strange email addresses, or asking for personal information are tell-tale signs.

Our Expert Mark Foster



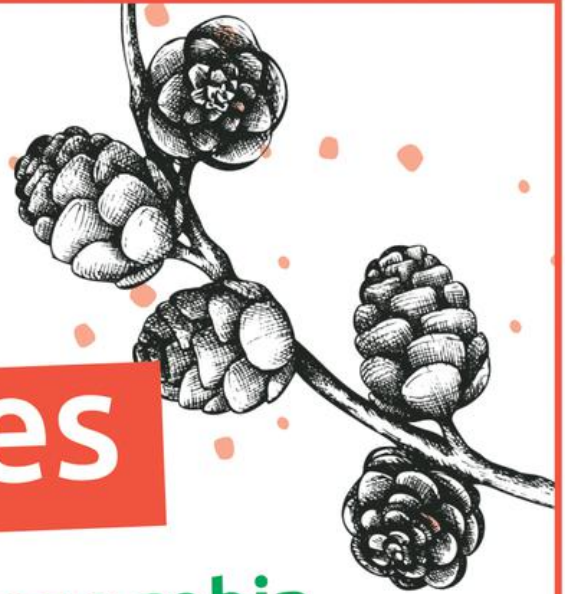
Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGbible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.

🌲🪵 Some Forest School Christmas
nature craft ideas for the holidays 🌲🪵



Forestry England

Festive pine cones



You will need:

- Pine cones
- Pipe cleaner
- PVA glue
- Green paint
- Biodegradable glitter

Pine cone Christmas tree

- 1 Mix some PVA glue and green paint together.
- 2 Paint your pine cone, then sprinkle on glitter.
- 3 When dry, wind a sparkly pipe cleaner around to look like tinsel.



Pine cone robin

- 1 Find some leaves and feathers from the forest floor.
- 2 Use glue to attach your items to the cone to make a colourful pine cone robin!

You will need:

- Pine cones
- Feathers
- Yellow paper
- Red paint
- Leaves
- PVA glue
- Beads



Did you know?

Pine trees are important for timber (wood) and provide food and homes for wildlife. Like all conifer trees they produce seed bearing cones.

forestryengland.uk



Forestry England



Twig stars

Create a star for the top of your Christmas tree!

- 1** Collect 6 sticks of the same length.



- 2** Take 3 of the sticks and tie them in place using wool or string to make a triangle shape.

- 3** Repeat with the other 3 sticks to make a second triangle.

- 4** Invert one triangle over the other and tie it on top.



You will need:

- 6 sticks of even length
- String
- Scissors
- Pine cones
- Biodegradable glitter
- Paint
- PVA glue

Decorate your star!

Try painting it gold or silver and add glitter to make it extra special!



forestryengland.uk



Forestry England

Forest art

Make forest artwork with branches, pine cones and leaves collected on your forest adventure.

- 1 Find a handful of sticks, all different lengths.



- 2 Arrange your sticks on the floor to make a Christmas tree.



- 3 What can you find for the decoration at the top?



Try this

Can you find anything colourful to add to the tree for baubles and tinsel?

How about some bright berries or some crunchy leaves?



forestryengland.uk