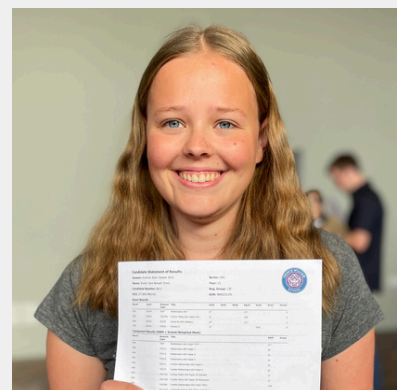
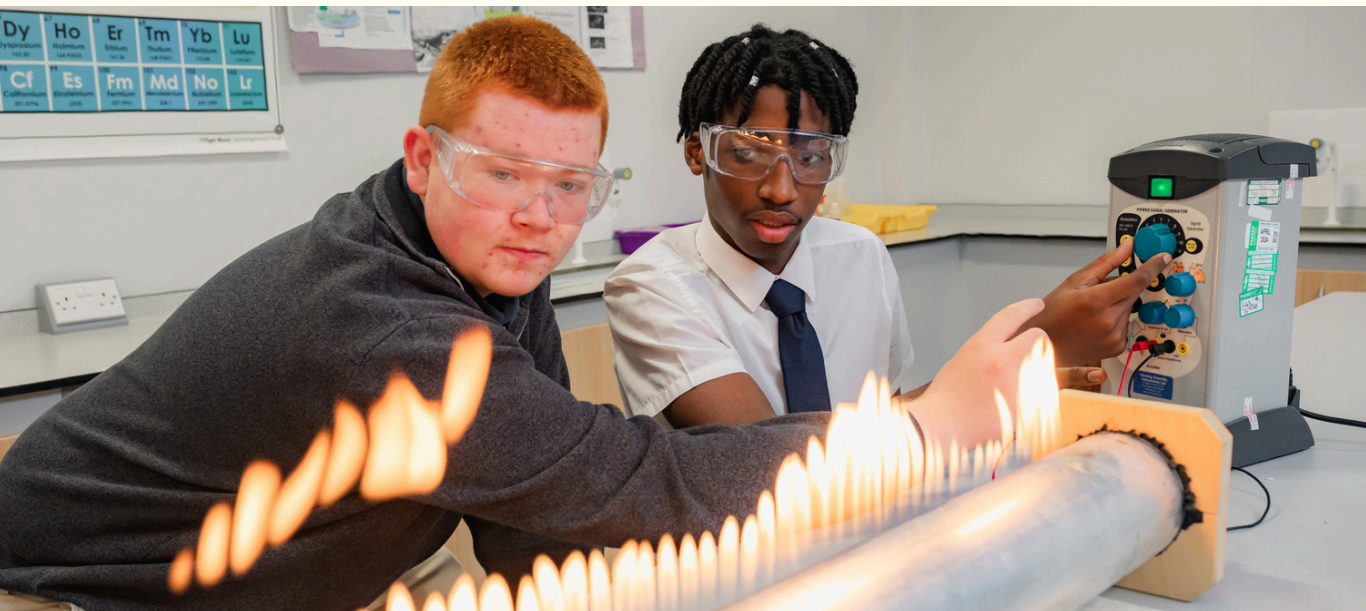


# Annual Report

November 2024





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# Welcome

## Chief Executive Officer



Joshua Coleman - Chief Executive Officer

“If you do what you love, you’ll never work a day in your life” is attributed to many - Mark Twain, Confucius and Mark Antony, to name a few. But it’s genuinely how I feel. I am privileged to be the Chief #EMATter.

There are daily highlights to my role and replaying a year in my mind as I consider which ones to share here, I’m overcome with a heady mix of pride, horror, happiness, sadness and relief. But mostly I’m humbled. Many of the individual circumstances of those in the EMAT community could best be described as unconventional or challenging but just look at what they achieve! Just look at the #EMATter outcomes, the pupil attendance rates and the commitment of colleagues.

Labels can stigmatise and exclude groups and individuals from or conversely create a homogeneous group that erases the individuals within it. If you ask anyone about inclusion, you’ll be surprised how many different responses you will get.

But underpinning everything we at EMAT do are the 3 I’s. Our values. They are innovation, inclusion and impact, and collectively they are distilled into one word: #EMATters. This encompasses everyone – colleagues, volunteers, pupils, families, suppliers, and contractors. It about living well together so children can be the best they can be.

I can’t wait to see what #EMATters can do in the year ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joshua Coleman'.



# Welcome

## Chair of Trustees

It has been a pleasure to reflect upon the past year at EMAT, as we have achieved much over the past 12 months.

Ofsted visited Shepherdswell Academy last November, grading the school as good, with outstanding personal development. I was proud to read that a sense of kindness and care emanates through the school atmosphere.

Once again we partnered with GB Olympians to host our Olympic Day in June, welcoming Tessa Sanderson CBE to this year's event at Corby Stadium. The preceding torch relays and Ability Games meant that all #EMATters had an opportunity to be involved in this inspiring programme of events.

The #EMATters Celebration Awards continue to attract high numbers of nominations and we've now introduced our #EMATter of the Month awards for more instant staff recognition. Nominations for the first two awards truly underline the commitment shown by our colleagues each day.

We welcomed Baroness Barran to open NIA6, our new sixth form campus, and students are already showcasing the independence that the campus style building affords them.

We continue to develop communication between layers of governance with a mixture of face-to-face and online events, and look forward to our strategy day next May where trustees will continue to look to the future whilst remaining flexible to adapt to expected changes in policy.

As we look towards the next academic year, our focus will be firmly on our equality and diversity commitment and our top-down commitment to building on our already strong culture of inclusion.

Kevin Crompton - Chair of Trustees

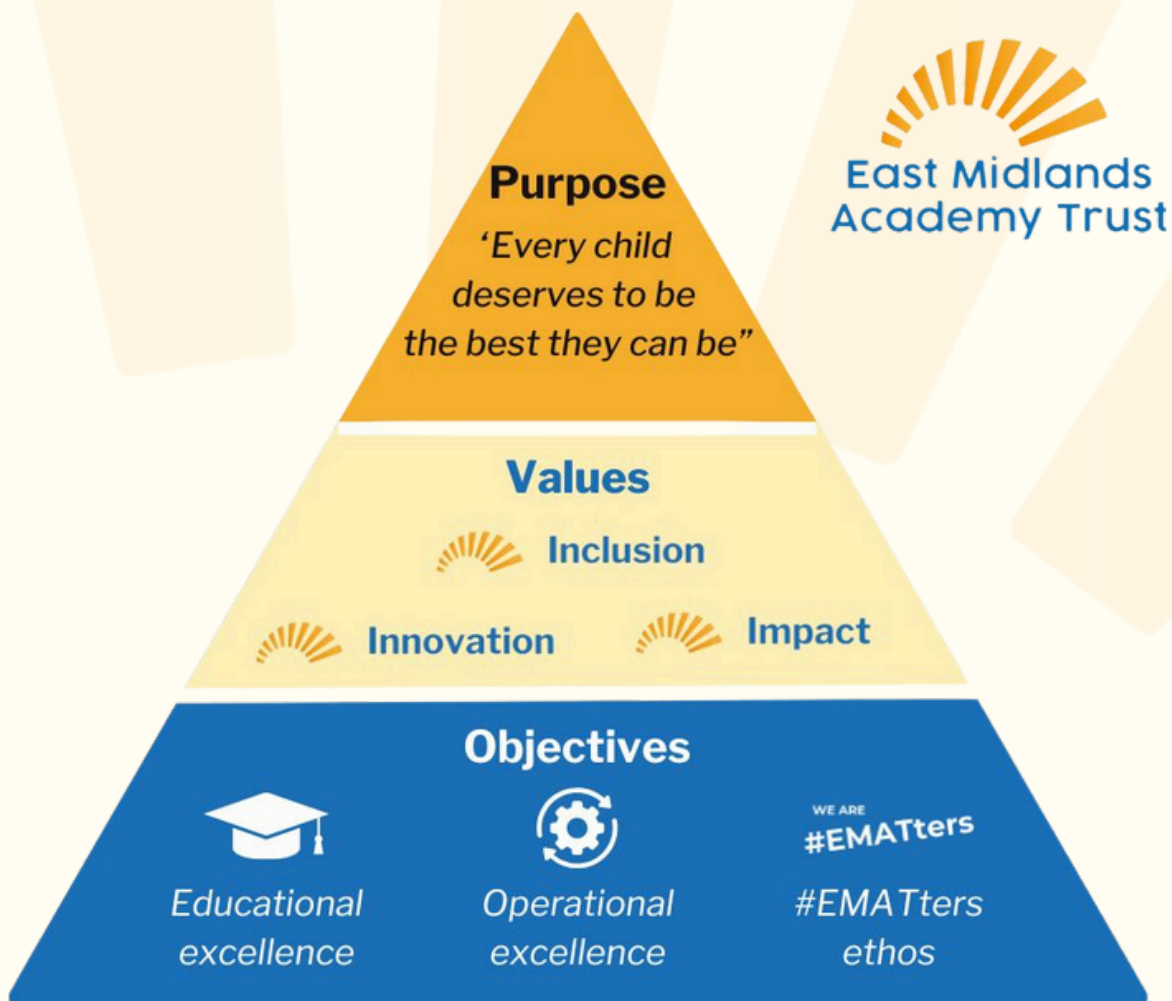


A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Crompton'.



# ABOUT US

We are driven by a strong moral purpose that every child has the right to outstanding teaching and leadership. We strive to be a high performing trust that demonstrates educational excellence, operational excellence and our #EMATters ethos, which is represented by our core values of inclusion, innovation and impact. We set high expectations for our leaders and teachers to support and stretch every child to ensure they reach their full potential.



# Successes and Achievements

'Good' Ofsted inspection for Shepherdswell Academy



More of our schools achieve recognition for their mental health and wellbeing support



We officially unveiled our new sixth form centre NIA6 with the help of Baroness Diana Barran





# Successes and Achievements

Pupils were joined by Olympic athletes including Tessa Sanderson CBE for our Olympic Day



We held our annual celebration awards - and launched our new #EMATter of the Month award

We hosted our first ever #EMATters Voices choir performance



We launched our inaugural NPQ programme to support staff in their career development





**Martin Serrão**  
Executive  
Headteacher



## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

We have had a year in which pupils, staff and our wider community have had their commitment, resilience and hard work recognised. The Ofsted report from an inspection conducted in October references the transformational nature of improvement at the Academy, which is testimony to collaboration, innovation and a strive for excellence. NIA is now 'good' overall. The new judgement will help us to build on the improvements already made and is truly representative of our inclusive school.

Our early years provision has been renewed as have the open areas and classrooms within the primary school. Primary pupils are collaborating in community projects which include mural installations at the school and in public spaces. These murals are an expression of our NIA culture and represent our values. These opportunities also allow our children to forge new friendships, improve teamwork and enhance their social skills. By interacting with their peers in a different setting, our children learn to communicate more effectively, collaborate and appreciate the value of teamwork. The NIA Royal Navy Combined Cadet Force continues to go from strength to strength and has expanded to include a Royal Marine contingent, which I am particularly pleased with, together with the formation of a military band. The Combined Cadet Force activities include leadership of our services of remembrance for those who have given their lives in service and those currently in conflict. This is an important expression of our British values and a demonstration of how well we live together.

This September, we opened a brand-new sixth form campus, NIA6. This campus provides us with an opportunity to deliver a unique key stage 5 experience for our pupils and others from local schools. It was an honour to have the new campus opened by Baroness Diana Barran, the previous Under Secretary for Education. The Baroness has had a keen interest in NIA's journey from inception and she was very pleased to meet and hear directly from our students.

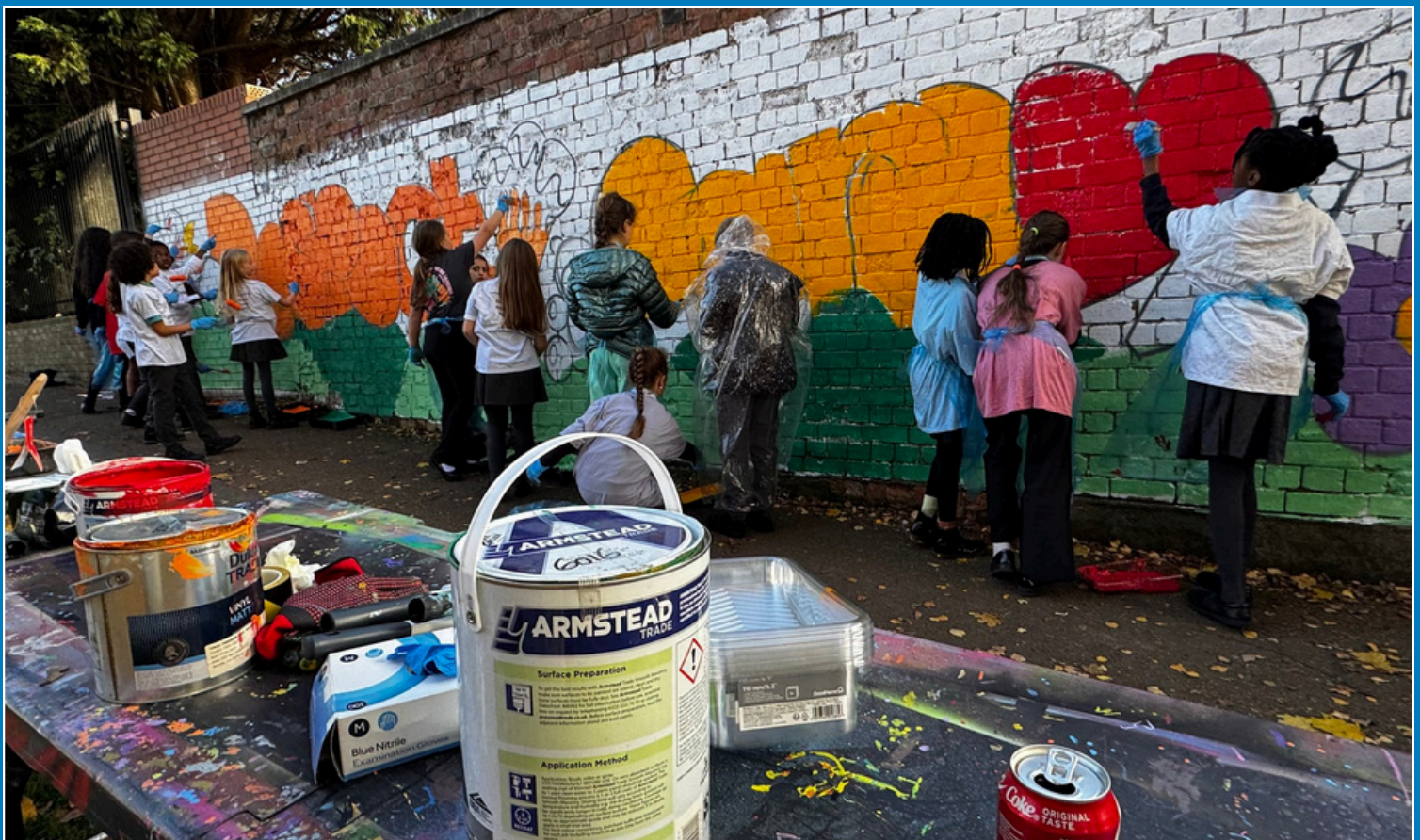
# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER (CONTINUED)

We are continuing to work effectively with all stakeholders, and it was a pleasure to host Melanie Barnett, the new Director Children's Services for West Northamptonshire Council, who commented on how safe, calm and orderly our academy continues to be.

NIA has achieved the Gatsby Benchmarks in record time. The benchmarks define what world class careers provision in education looks like and provide a clear framework for organising the careers provision at our school. The benchmarks are enshrined in statutory guidance and our pupils have careers information, advice and guidance at every phase.

Our shared belief that 'every child deserves to be the best they can be' is at the heart of our ambition to improve the quality of education. We have improved outcomes and reduced gaps between cohorts in most areas but recognise that further work is required in our journey from good to great!

I am very grateful for our team who continue to support us on our transformational journey.







Andrew Hill  
Chair

# MESSAGE FROM THE NORTHAMPTON INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD

The 2023/24 academic year at NIA has continued to focus on the improvement journey following on from the March 2022 inspection outcome. We have concentrated our improvement on attendance and punctuality, pastoral care and in particular PSHE and teaching and learning. The LAB, with the training support of the EMAT has become more skilful and knowledgeable and is well informed of the school's progress due to the detail provided by the Executive headteacher and SLT in our LAB meetings. This detail has provided LAB members with ample opportunities to challenge the school leadership in the most positive way and has contributed, along with LAB member school visits, to a continuously improving advisory body. Additionally, LAB members attended the in depth KCSIE 2023 update training completed by the Thompson Team in October 2023. The LAB Chair also attended EMAT's End of Year Review Record meeting in July which outlined the school's current position.

All members of the school community have improved the pastoral care given to our students. Evidence of this is seen in the parent and student surveys undertaken in October 2023 where pupils reported being safer and happier at school. Further evidence of this is the reduction in incidents of recorded negative behaviour, the change in timetabling which allows for more pastoral guidance in

PSHE, and the general air of order and politeness in and around the classroom. In addition, SLT have worked tirelessly on improving attendance, which is transmitted weekly to the LAB in the governors' attendance report with the July 1st information showing that NIA outperformed the national secondary average of 91.1%.

During the year there have been challenges. In particular, the discovery of RAAC in the 6th area of the school which led to the relocation of this facility. The school leadership and EMAT worked together to find a new building in town which opened in September 2024.





# MESSAGE FROM THE LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD (CONTINUED)

## EMAT Curriculum Review October 2023

The review was presented to the LAB with a number of key commendations and recommendations. I am pleased to report that, according to the summary, “NIA is improving in all respects. Leaders have a shared vision of what they want to achieve and they have established a clear direction of travel.” This improvement has been reported in detail to the LAB over the course of the year. However, the LAB continues to challenge the school leadership to achieve even greater consistency in teaching.

## Leadership and Management of the Academy

The LAB would like to commend and thank Mr. Serrao and his entire Leadership Team who have worked tirelessly to identify key SIP priorities which continue to move the academy in a positive direction. The changes in the senior and middle leadership teams, have brought positive rewards. Leaders represented on the LAB have been clear, detailed and forthright in their presentations and have been most professional in their responses to LAB members’ questions in meetings.

## The LAB

The Academy’s LAB has been strengthened this year by the addition of new members: Becca Williams, Emmanuel Terngu Vanger, and Paul Freeland who bring strong backgrounds in industry, education and community experiences to the Board. LAB meetings are well attended. LAB members have visited the Academy in situ to witness the key priority areas in action. While a number of visits have been made, the LAB Chair would encourage LAB members to be more pro active in this area. Visits for SEND, Pupil Premium, Careers, Safeguarding and Behaviour and Attitudes all reported a marked improvement under the new leadership. The LAB has not reached the targeted quota of visits which is an area for our own improvement for the next academic year. Members have attended enrichment activities such as the whole schools’ musical performance of ‘Oliver’. We will look to continue to increase our representation at events in the new academic year.

Our gratitude and sincere thanks on behalf of the students, staff, and LAB to Maqsud Ahmed, Jennifer Nimmo, Zahro Abdirizaq, Hannah Litt and Tari Okoye, who have all stood down as LAB members this academic year. We thank each member for their hard work and service to the LAB, and wish them well for the future.

# MESSAGE FROM THE LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD (CONTINUED)

## Conclusion

We believe that improvements in consistency in teaching and learning will come to fruition under the new coaching scheme arrangements organised by the leadership team. Personal development continues to be a strong point, and the variety and number of clubs and extra curriculum options is evidence of the commitment of the teachers and pupils.

The LAB will continue to provide challenging questions, to dive deep into data, commend the school leadership where appropriate and make suggestions where necessary over the course of the academic year 2024-2025.







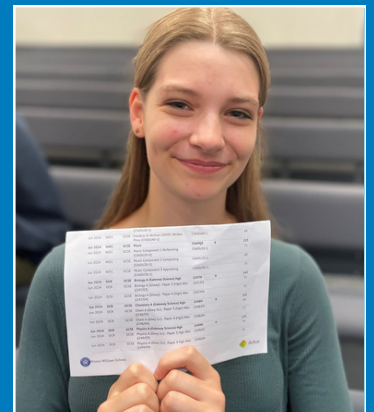
Anna Hewes  
Headteacher



# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

The last academic year was full of celebration, success and surprises, and what an incredible year to reflect upon. The Autumn term 2023 started with a Scholastic Book Fair, career's fairs and a trip for over 60 Year 7 students to Harry Potter World, where students were able to explore the sets, props, see the Hogwart's Express and visit Gringott's Bank. The Sports England compliant Sports Hall redevelopment really began in earnest, and I'm delighted to say is now up and running, being used to it's full capacity by our PE colleagues. A trip to Nottingham for a criminology conference was in store for our Y11, 12 and 13 criminology students for a fascinating insight into the Criminal Justice System. Our sports teams took place in various fixtures for the different year groups, including our Year 9 and 10 netball teams who were undefeated as the calendar year ended. European Day of Language saw KS4 and KS5 students taking part in a live session organised by GCHQ and the British Council, instilling a passion for languages into our students.

Spring term took a very modern twist, as a selection of our year 8, 10 and 12 students used VR headsets to explore space and our solar system, including visiting Mars and the largest mountain in the solar system, Olympus Mons. Sporting success continued with our year 8 boys cricketers winning the Northamptonshire Indoor Cricket Championship by two runs! A curriculum trip to Malaga was in organised for our Spanish students, and a wonderful spring concert rounded off the term, showcasing our senior performing groups, including Guitar Ensemble, String Ensemble, Flute Ensemble and Jazz Band, alongside some of our soloists.





# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER (CONTINUED)

All the sports, extra-curriculum activities and trips continued through to the end of the academic year, with charity walks in Dorset, Oundle Mathematics Enrichment Conference for Year 9 and Y10 mathematicians, and a fantastic school show of *Oliver!*, performed by students from all year groups.

Summer term is always a time of reflection for colleagues working in education, and it was with gratitude and recognition that the school bade farewell to Liz Dormer, who had been the headteacher for seven years, and had taken the school from strength to strength. I am delighted to be taking over from Liz, and the exam results achieved in the summer term, a true testament to her dedication and leadership. Our focus remains keenly on attendance, especially for our most disadvantaged learners, and the attendance figures at the end of the year demonstrate steady progress towards pre-Covid levels.





Richard Fincher  
Chair

# MESSAGE FROM PRINCE WILLIAM SCHOOL LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD

Prince William School continues to build on the success and stability of the past couple of years, delivering an even fuller and more engaging experience for the students. This included rolling out the broader PHSE curriculum last year. It is so important for school to be a rounded experience and we are acutely aware that these need to be as widely available as possible. There has been some real progress with more speakers coming in – the intention going forwards is to continue to increase the numbers of local and in-school activities.

Looking at subject-specific trips it's very good to see that modern language overseas visits have started running again, but we are aware that not every student will take those subjects or go on those trips. However, along with many other areas of enrichment these make school time more interesting and rounded for students.

One of the bigger news stories of the year has been the announcement that Elizabeth Dormor is retiring. Her impact on Prince William School has been remarkable. The Class of 24 – this year's A-level leavers – started at the same time. In 2017 no-one was quite sure what to expect because the turmoil prior to her arrival is still remembered. So much change and so many heads in such a short time! I join with many of you in wishing her all the best in a well-deserved (and probably knowing Liz, very busy) retirement in the West Country with her family.



Elizabeth Dormor

Obviously, this departure means there has been a sort-of new arrival. Anna Hewes joins us from the Sir Christopher Hatton Academy in Wellingborough, a school with a very strong record of excellence. As many of you already know she is an ex-pupil of Prince William which wasn't one of the recruitment criteria, but it certainly gives her a unique fondness for the place which inspired her to take up teaching. We are very pleased to welcome her back to PWS and look forward to working together to continue the work done by her predecessor.

One of the first significant external moments to land will undoubtedly be a visit from Ofsted. Since January 2024, Prince William has been in the 'Ofsted window' and their importance can easily be seen by the positive impact gaining the 'Good' status had on us. Can we hit the 'Outstanding' award? It's an incredibly tough measure and there is a drive throughout the school to get all areas running at this level. Working towards being an outstanding school continues to motivate us all because hitting those measures mean we are focussing on pupils' overall experience. We are very aware that taking the school forwards needs a concerted push from everyone involved, including family members and carers.

# MESSAGE FROM THE LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD (CONTINUED)

Inclusivity is always important in any community. The importance of everyone pulling in the same direction grows and we are going to keep asking parents to get involved if possible. The process of finding contacts in the world of work is well underway, but please come forwards with ideas to grow the school's impact on our students. Anything from talks to groups of students, sponsorship of events or resources or prizes for achievement are all warmly encouraged.

The school recently ran two parent forums. One was more general and had the head and senior team attending to answer questions and concerns. The other was particularly focussed on the SEN area and was run by the SENCO – Miss Pearson. Both were headed with a short presentation which dealt with a core issue, but the discussions were wider ranging and covered several topics. I spoke to attendees at both forums who felt they were useful and informative. In several cases they answered questions that were front of mind for parents and carers. The issues raised were relevant and noted for action by the teams. Attendance wasn't high, though the school certainly didn't take that as a signal that everyone else has no questions! If you have queries that you'd like to raise face to face, these forums will continue and are a good place to discuss issues.



This leads on to one of the bigger pieces of work the governing board are looking to work with the school on – communication. There are so many strands to this that we are going to need to break down what can be achieved. We want to understand how messaging can more easily reach the wider school community whilst keeping it manageable, and we want to work with the trust and school to make the website more accessible and a better first point of contact. As we progress, we will ask for feedback to let us know what is and isn't working.

## Governor roles

Lifting up the bonnet of a well-run school like PWS reveals an ongoing plan to make sure the good stuff stays that way and areas for improvement are constantly examined and addressed. It's known, rather prosaically, as the School Improvement Plan. Key areas have a governor assigned to liaise with the school and add an external pair of eyes. Here are a few notes from some of the governors on their findings over the past year.



# MESSAGE FROM THE LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD (CONTINUED)

## **Emma Tansley – Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is secure and well managed. The Bridge is working well but needs to find ways to accommodate more pupils but for perhaps shorter periods of time to those currently offered. Self-harm and eating disorders are the biggest ongoing concerns. But 'resistance' appears to be the biggest problem with the lower years particularly. Absence remains concerning, but we remain above the national average and the absence policy is being robustly enforced.

## **Jonathan Peverley – Careers**

The School has a very robust programme to offer career guidance to every pupil within the School. Having had less provision and support in the past, it is the support and engagement of the SLT that has helped drive this. Their vision to provide an independent careers advisor has been key to this success. Pupils are being offered individualised guidance and there is strong recognition that it is the pupil not the parent that should be the focus of their guidance. There is suitable support and guidance for parents so that they too can support the pupil. The offering of careers days (all Yr10 out of lessons) to better offer careers work is innovative and appears to be working, as is the Skills for Life programme.

## **Clare Oliver – Special Educational Needs**

SEND success/development this year is the development of the Bridge which provides a structured, stepped approach to enable students to move forwards. We have some students back in school now who previously struggled to attend at all.

The governing body extends its thanks to all those involved with the school and wish our leavers all the very best – from the Year 11s and 13s to the most senior member of the school.



Zoe McIntyre  
Executive Headteacher



# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER



Our motto is ‘Castle Never Stops Learning’ and 2023-24 has certainly been a year for growth and development at Castle Academy. With our Head of School stepping up to Executive Leader and supporting NIA Primary in its rapid improvement journey, this allowed opportunities for other middle and senior leaders to grow. Collaboration has been a key component of our success this year, as teachers formed positive relationships and links with their peers from NIA Primary, sharing ideas, planning and training experiences together.

As well as learning through collaboration, teaching and learning has continued to develop through refinement of our coaching offer to our staff. Through this refined approach and changes to our monitoring, evaluation and review cycle (including the introduction of ‘daily book looks’) we have seen an improvement to the overall quality of education provided at Castle Academy. This can be further evidenced by our performance in national assessments, where in all metrics we are at least in line with national data trends, and in many areas are performing above the national picture. This year we are most pleased with our Year 6 outcomes, including SATS tests, demonstrating a robust and positive approach to teaching and learning throughout a child’s primary school career with us.

We are proud to have earned two recognition awards this academic year. The Music Mark was awarded to us in recognition of our collaboration with Northamptonshire Music & Performing Arts Trust (NMPAT), as we have supplemented our Music curriculum with an opportunity for every child to learn the Ukelele in Year 3, and every child in Year 1 taking part in the ‘Let’s Get Playing’ project. We also received the Eco Award with merit due to our Eco Team’s focus on litter picking, biodiversity (involving planting in our eco area) and recycling.



# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER (CONTINUED)



This has been a positive and rewarding year as we continue to build on our strong foundation and push for academic excellence. We have focused on our identified priorities while providing a nurturing, inclusive, and enriching learning environment for all. Our curriculum provision continues to evolve, so all children can not only meet, but exceed, their potential.

Promotion and marketing of the school has been a key priority, resulting in increasing pupil numbers and more applications for reception places. Our nursery provision continues to have a positive impact on numbers.

Learning from involvement as a lead school in Behaviour Hubs programme has enabled the introduction of examples of good practice, so behaviour continues to be a key strength.

Butterfly Meadow, our specialist provision, has continued to adapt and change practice, so learners receive an excellent education and care offer and are well placed to make social and academic progress from their starting points.

We have had many key highlights:

- Sensory room installation in Reception enabling children to be more effectively supported with regulation.
- Eco-schools Green Flag with Distinction. Thanks to the fantastic work of our Eco-Committee, this is the highest level, given to schools who have gone 'above and beyond'. It has led to an increased focus on energy saving and recycling in school.
- Gold School Games Mark. We re-obtained our gold level through our commitment to physical activity, the development of competition across the school and beyond and ensuring all children can participate in sport.
- Bronze healthy eating award. Designed to improve the health and wellbeing of the whole school, this recognises our work across mental health and wellbeing, healthy eating, physical activity and PSHE.



We remain committed to creating a culture of continuous improvement. We continue to monitor and assess progress, focusing on further strengthening teaching and learning and subject leadership, expanding opportunities for children to excel and ensuring our school remains supportive and inclusive for all.

# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER (CONTINUED)



This has been another remarkable year for Stimpson Avenue Academy, filled with numerous achievements and milestones. We continue to provide an ambitious curriculum for all students, ensuring that every learner has access to high-quality education and opportunities to excel.

We have continued to developing teaching and learning through coaching, using a collaborative and reflective approach. This has helped to foster a culture of continuous learning and development amongst staff, which we will continue to develop next year.

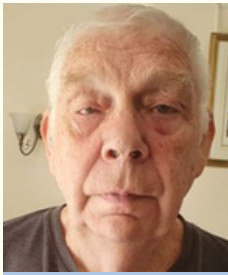
Some of the highlights throughout the year are:

- **School Games Mark:** We proudly earned the School Games Mark, recognising our commitment to promoting physical activity and competitive sport among our students. This award reflects the hard work and dedication of both our students and staff in fostering a healthy and active school environment. We will continue to develop this further as we work towards our Healthy School Award.
- **Eco Schools Distinction Award:** Our school was honoured with the Eco Schools Distinction Award for our efforts in environmental education and sustainability. This achievement highlights our commitment to creating a greener future and educating our students on the importance of environmental stewardship.
- **St Andrews Healthcare Lightbulb Award:** We received the St Andrews Healthcare Lightbulb Award, celebrating our innovative approaches to mental health and well-being. This award highlights our dedication to supporting the mental health of our students and creating a nurturing and supportive school community.



This year has truly been a testament to our school's commitment to excellence in education, sustainability, and pupil well-being. We look forward to building on these successes in the coming years.





David Hood  
Chair

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# MESSAGE FROM HARDINGSTONE, STIMPSON AVENUE AND CASTLE ACADEMY LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD

It has been a good and successful year for Castle, Hardingstone, and Stimpson academies and it has been a pleasure to be involved with the senior leadership team, teachers, and most importantly the pupils. All three academies are in a good position and working in line with their school plans for this year.

There has been a massive focus on attendance and lateness that has resulted in our attendance levels being consistently above the national average. The diligent process in dealing with this issue has been really successful across the schools and the Trust.

The number of governors on the Local Advisory Board (LAB) has remained at a consistent level but we will continue to try and recruit new governors from all walks of life. Governors, throughout the year, continue to have the option to attend training courses to improve their skills in order to support the development of the school and ensure that we fulfil our role effectively. Governor monitoring and evaluation visits are ongoing but we will be looking at ways to improve the number of visits across all three schools.

The termly evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of the governing body will allow us to monitor our successes as well as those of the school. The LAB know the schools' areas of improvement and are all seizing opportunities open to them to make improvements with a clear sense of value and purpose working closely with all stakeholders.

The views of our parents, children and all other stakeholders continues to be of great importance to the governors, who will always listen and continue to seek and monitor views through the delivery and analysis of surveys, pupil parliament and also through attendance at school events throughout the academic year such as coffee mornings and trail of knowledge.

I wish to conclude by thanking leaders and staff for their continued demanding work and ongoing commitment to the children and families of Stimpson Avenue, Hardingstone, and Castle academies.



Zoe McIntyre  
Executive Headteacher



# MESSAGE FROM ORCHARD ACADEMY AND SHEPHERDSWELL ACADEMY HEADTEACHER



It has been an extremely positive year at Shepherdswell Academy. We were delighted with our Ofsted inspection, which rated the school as Good overall, with an Outstanding rating in Personal Development. This reflects the dedication and hard work of our staff, pupils, and parents, highlighting our commitment to providing a nurturing and enriching educational environment.

The opening of the Shepherdswell Nursery - Otters was a significant success this year. Our youngest learners adapted well, and the nursery quickly became an integral part of our school.

Our extracurricular offerings continued to extend learning opportunities for all pupils, particularly the Space Camp for Year 2 students, which included an exciting sleepover in the school hall. The Carnival club also came 3rd in the Newport Pagnell Carnival, an event that showcased the pupils' creativity and teamwork.

We expanded our outdoor learning provision with the introduction of Forest Schools. This provides pupils with valuable hands-on experiences in nature, enhancing their learning and well-being. Our 40th birthday picnic was a memorable event, despite the rain. It was wonderful to see parents and families come together to celebrate this milestone.

We have continued to build our connection with Orchard Academy over the year and our joint PTA has organised successful community events including a Winter and Summer Fayre, raising money to buy resources for outdoor learning opportunities.



# MESSAGE FROM ORCHARD ACADEMY AND SHEPHERDSWELL ACADEMY HEADTEACHER (CONTINUED)



Orchard Academy's year began with the publication of our latest Ofsted inspection, where we were once again recognised as a Good school, and continued to be an eventful and transformative academic year marked by several key highlights and initiatives aimed at enhancing the learning environment and supporting the school community.

The school environment has been a focus with one of the significant changes being the redecoration of the school. This project was undertaken to create a more conducive learning environment that reflects and supports positive learning behaviours. The redesign focused on reducing cognitive overload for learners, ensuring that the physical space promotes focus and engagement. The school also actively participated in EMAT events, including the #EMATterVoices Choir event and Olympic Day events. These activities fostered a sense of community and provided pupils with opportunities to showcase their talents and school spirit.

To enrich the educational experience, we reviewed and adapted the extra-curricular offer to support pupils' learning in and out of the classroom. This included a variety of clubs, author visits, and educational trips. Notably, pupils had the chance to visit the British Museum, and there were residential trips to Outdoor Adventures and Whitemoor Lakes, where pupils engaged in team-building activities and outdoor learning.

In response to the needs of working parents, Orchard Academy extended its Wrap Care offer. By collaborating with Shepherdswell, the school now offers care from 7.30am to 6pm, providing a reliable and supportive option for families. Overall, the past academic year at Orchard Academy demonstrated a strong commitment to providing a supportive and enriching environment for all pupils. We are excited to see how these positive changes will continue to benefit everyone in the upcoming academic year.





Riyike Olateru  
Chair

# MESSAGE FROM ORCHARD ACADEMY AND SHEPHERDSWELL ACADEMY LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD

The academic year of 2023/24 has shown great collaboration with all key stakeholders of O&S and the LAB, which has resulted in strengthened trust, relationships, and overall growth for all.

It has been a positive year in Shepherdswell with an encouraging Ofsted visit and rating of “Good” with “Outstanding” remarks. The academy was reported to be a “nurturing school” where students “are thriving”. The staff were commended for the way they care for the students, with the school being recognised for the way they adapt the curriculum for all students to access, an improvement plan that the school had worked hard on. Shepherdswell opened their nursery for 3-4 year olds with better than expected outcome and are looking forward to continuing this provision next year to support Springfield and the communities in Milton Keynes.

Orchard is commended by the board for their persistent hard work and resilience this year as they implement new policies around behaviour and attitudes following a new leadership structure. The Academy maintained a focus on their improvement plan which has been challenging to complete but school leads continue to strive for success in the interest of the students. Orchard is also supported and challenged where appropriate on plans, actions and future strategies. Student surveys show positive responses around staff relationships and culture whilst behaviour is presented as an area requiring improvement.

## Leadership

A new leadership structure was implemented across O&S schools following Callum Brown’s resignation, with Hannah Auger (Orchard Academy) and Ellen Williams (Shepherdswell Academy) as Heads of School. The new Head of Schools have been able to settle into their new roles and the supportive network all three have created that has enabled the sharing of best practices. The students and staff have been able to benefit from this structure as they have been able to share resources.

# MESSAGE FROM THE LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD (CONTINUED)

In this time Shepherdswell have been able to achieve a “Good” Ofsted rating with “Outstanding” remarks, whilst Orchard has seen a marked improvement with student behaviour whilst getting the Academy into an optimal position ahead of 2024/25 Ofsted visit.

## Attendance

Attendance this year has seen an improvement on the year as staff have worked diligently to minimise absences/lateness, manage persistent absences, support families struggling with attendance and making the schools an enjoyable environment.

Shepherdswell have exceeded the national primary average of 94.4%, with SEND students exceeding the general school average of 96.3%. Orchard is in line with primary school average thanks to the hard work of the attendance officer to minimise persistent absences and developing a culture of routine for the children and parents. Staff governor Kirsty Weatherspoon has also been diligent with visits and reviewing data with children & family welfare lead.

## LAB

We have struggled this year with governor numbers on the board due to leavers throughout the year and difficult recruitment. Despite the low numbers the board was able to maintain quorum when decisions were required, and remaining governors were encouraged to attend to maintain the board’s active role within the 2 schools. With the collaboration of the board, EMAT and parents within O&S we have been able to recruit 3 new governors that will strengthen the voice of the board whilst adding to its professional experiences and diverse backgrounds that are representative of O&S’s community. The board would like to welcome Kirsty Weatherspoon, Bekky Salako, and Deepika Prasad. LAB visits to witness the key priority areas has been difficult as sudden governor resignations and difficult recruitment has seen multiple priority areas vacant. Key priorities in Attendance and Safeguarding were well visited through the year but Chair would like to encourage current and future governors to establish this as an area of improvement for the LAB next year. To maintain a strong relationship and trust with the pupils, parents and staff of O&S, the current and future governors are encouraged to attend enrichment events hosted by the schools.

## Looking ahead 2024/25

Orchard Academy is preparing for an Ofsted visit in year 24/25, and we hope the inspector is able to recognise the progress and improvements made in students’ behaviours and attitudes, staff development, attendance, SEND/EAL accessibility to the curriculum, and student enrichment.



# EMAT Trust Board



Jon Harris



Kevin Crompton



Barry Langfield



David Houghton



Ayo Salam

## Members



Kate Whittlesey



Martin Conlon



Stephen Morales  
Vice Chair of Trustees



Kevin Crompton  
Chair



Chris Hallmark



Gemma Everatt



Roheel Ahmad



Nick Bell

## Board of Trustees

We refer to our board members as Trustees, but you may also hear them described as Directors or Governors to reflect that EMAT is a company limited by guarantee and also an exempt charity which is accountable to the DfE rather than the Charities Commission.

The Trustees of EMAT have three core strategic responsibilities:

- That the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the Trust and the Academies it runs are clearly defined.
- That the Chief Executive Officer and Headteacher(s) perform their responsibilities for the educational performance of the schools.
- That there is sound, proper and effective use of the Academy Trusts financial resources.

# EMAT Committees

Following an external governance review in 2023, we restructured our Trust Board committees to more effectively use Trustee time and support the sharing of vital information.

We felt it important that the full Trust Board had oversight of standards and performance, so this committee was absorbed into the full board and an annual schedule which shared the focus of standards and performance and Trust Improvement throughout the year was implemented.

## Audit and Risk committee

In broad terms the A&R committee:

- Oversees the Trust's programme of internal scrutiny.
- Assesses the effectiveness of the external auditor and monitors the actions taken by the trust's leadership in response to those findings.



Chair Martin Conlon

Recent focus has been upon:

- The development of a strong risk management process that clearly sets out accountability and gives assurance that oversight is robust.
- Appointment of new external audit provider
- Review of Speak Up Policy and trust wide culture.

## Finance, Human Resources and Estates committee

The FHRE committee maintains oversight of the Trust's finances, the financial implications of Human Resources, payroll, administration, marketing, health and safety, data protection, premises, insurance, ICT and catering.

Recent focus has been upon:

- Scrutiny of spend and progress on PWS sports hall and NIA6 building projects
- Oversight of RAAC related developments at NIA, including the financial related requirements to relocate sixth form and the DfE's appointment of contractors to address the RAAC.
- The continued development of the people & culture plan to support the core objective of #EMATter ethos.



Chair Stephen Morales

In addition, the Trust Board delegates responsibilities to Local Advisory Boards (LABs) via the Trust Scheme of Delegation.



# Stakeholder Views

'My child has been in sixth form and I have been bowled over by the school. The way that the young people are treated as young adults in preparation for their next steps is great.'

Parent survey,  
Spring 2024

'The pupils were asked if they like being at the school, to which they responded with an enthusiastic "Yes!" and smiles.'

Mental health audit,  
February 2024

'What a fantastic event and opportunity for the children!'  
Olympic Day parent feedback  
July 2024

'My teachers push me out of my comfort zone and allow me to do my absolute best in all of my lessons.'

Student survey,  
Spring 2024

'Her impact on the school is unquantifiable. She appears to be one of those special people who enriches the lives of all those she encounters.'

Staff award nomination,  
September 2024

'Staff put all pupils' emotional needs and academic development at the centre of everything they do.'

Ofsted report,  
March 2023

'The support provided so far, has been exceptional, with experienced mentors guiding me every step of the way.'

NPQ learner,  
May 2024



# Financial Summary 2023-24

**£3.5m**

cash at bank  
inclusive of all  
investments



**0**



related  
party  
transactions

**Audit**

Clean audit with  
one low level  
deficiency  
identified

**£211k**

year-to-  
date surplus

**601**

EMAT staff  
headcount

**£1.3m**

reserves at  
year end

**£7.5m**

fixed asset  
investment

**5562**

pupil numbers  
across EMAT

**£779k**

self-  
generated  
income

**£35m**

total  
income

**£35m**

total  
expenditure

# FUTURE PLANS

We continue to look to the future and will focus on maximising the successes in our current schools while exploring opportunities to grow our community of schools.

Our priorities for the year:

- We want to further close the attainment gap between those categorised as Pupil Premium, SEND or disadvantaged and those who aren't
- We want to securely improve all schools' outcomes
- We want to build on the success of our Training Hub with a view to delivering Early Career Framework (ECF) and Initial Teacher Training (ITT) programmes
- We want to build on our foundation in SEND and Alternative Provision through our new virtual head of inclusion

