



**Issue 5
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Parent's Newsletter**

Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. Everyone returns to school on the 8th January



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Justin Stone: CEO

I can not believe that the Exeter Learning Academy Trust has been running for two years! It seems like quite a journey when as four Head Teachers and the Governors at the time set about creating an organisation that could serve our communities effectively with local accountability. Whilst it is still early days so much has been achieved during this time. First and foremost our goal was to ensure that the

schools continued to run smoothly and the transition from the Local Authority to the Trust did not affect the children. It has been lovely to see the children so settled, happy and working with real purpose during visits this term and how our new staff, or staff that have moved within the trust, are settling into their new roles. Each school is different and this is something that we have been keen to celebrate as we also look at those areas that it would be more efficient if they were aligned across the trust.

It was really heartening in our recent Directors meeting to hear the accountants explain to directors that at a time when many schools can not set a balanced budget and have over spent as a trust we have managed our resources well. That is not to say things are not tight but by careful management by the schools and the business teams in each school we are not having to make drastic cuts! In our Audit report there were only a few minor tweaks to be made to procedures. It has been the business side of the schools that have seen the most changes and I would like to thank all the staff involved for their hard work and dedication in minimising the impact of some of these changes.



St Thomas



Alphington

Director of Teaching and Learning-Debbie Buckingham

I hope you are enjoying the Christmas festivities and looking forward to your holiday. I cannot believe how quickly this term has gone. It has been a real privilege to be able to spend quality time in each school. Throughout my time as Head of Alphington, I was fortunate to spend many working with other schools across Devon as a Local Leader, supporting and monitoring a wide range of settings. This experience has certainly helped me in my present role. During this term I have spent a considerable amount of time in each of the four schools, working with teachers and leaders.



Bowhill

Across the academy there has been new appointments in every school and it has been heart-warming to see how well they have settled in. In my role I facilitate meetings for heads, subject leads, teachers and work with our academy ambassadors. Organising a range of events for children will be a focus for the Spring and Summer term. On occasions I still work for Babcock as a Local Leader which brings in revenue for the academy. Although it has been a major change after 35 years in the classroom and as a head, it has been an absolute pleasure to meet so many of your children and focusing solely on school improvement. At least once a term, I am required to report to the Directors, presenting a detailed analysis of the data from the schools, school improvement initiatives and any changes in government legislation. As our academy matures, I will be working in a more strategic manner with more schools.

Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility!

Exeter Learning Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we will continue to provide materials for parents and carers outlining how schools, parents and external agencies can work together to keep children safe. Parents and carers can already access safeguarding information on their school website.

What is Child Protection about?

All children have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse and harm. Protecting children from harm is a major priority for the government, Exeter Learning Academy Trust and each individual school. All school staff have clear guidelines and procedures to follow in relation to child protection. We all share the responsibility of making sure as far as possible, that children are protected from harm and abuse. Children cannot be expected to take full responsibility for their safety and must be cared for by those looking after them. Children have the right to say what they think about things that affect them and must be listened to carefully.

Mental Health Awareness

It's never too early or too late to start thinking about children's mental health, and how as adults, we have a hugely important role in helping them to develop their ability to cope with life's challenges as they grow. Lots of general advice and support can be found online such as: [Young Minds](#)



Young Minds offers free confidential online and telephone support to anyone worried about the emotional and mental wellbeing of a child or young person up to the age of 25. Call the free parents' helpline on 0808 802 5544 from 9.30am-4pm, Monday to Friday or email parents@youngminds.org.uk and Young minds will respond to your query within three working days.



MindEd is an online e-portal offering free, simple advice to help adults identify, understand and support children and young people with mental

health issues. Although it is aimed at professionals, parents and carers may also find the information helpful. www.minded.org.uk.

Internet

The virtual world of the Internet is a great place to learn, play games and get useful information; it is an integral part of modern life. However, like the real world, it also poses many dangers particularly for young children; parents can find it hard to know how to protect their child in this world.

The UK Safer Internet Centre gives excellent advice for parents and carers with tools and strategies to keep children safe online available from the website link below under these headings:

1. Having ongoing [conversations with your children](#) about staying safe online
2. Using [safety tools on social networks and other online services](#), eg Facebook privacy settings
3. Deciding if you want to use [parental controls on your home internet](#)
4. Understanding devices and the parental control tools on offer in a [Parents' Guide to Technology](#)



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