LYDIATE LEARNING TRUST

LLT News

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CEO Christmas Message

It is that time of year when many of us start to wind down for some much-needed rest and relaxation and a chance to spend time with family and friends over the holiday season.

As we approach the joyous season of Christmas, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the wonderful year we have had at Lydiate Learning Trust. This year has been filled with learning, development and countless memorable moments, some of which we share in the newsletter today.

I have observed the frenetic activity of Christmas, visiting our schools who are brightly decorated, engaged in carol services, plays, Christmas events and producing Christmas related crafts. There is always a moment in all this activity that could catch you off guard and put a "lump in your throat."

There are often times when we struggle to find the right words to express our gratitude and heartfelt thanks for all the hard work and long hours the people of Lydiate Learning Trust put in. Christmas is a time to ensure a great big thank you goes out to everyone.

I would, therefore, like to take a moment to thank staff members, trustees, governors, parents, carers, volunteers and all our lovely Lydiate Learning Trust children for all you contribute to the Trust. I am searching for meaningful words to truly express my sincere thanks because of the enormous amount you all contribute to Lydiate Learning Trust, and I have a lump in my throat now.

THANK YOU EVERYONE. Together we create a nurturing and vibrant community across all of our Lydiate Learning Trust schools. You all mean so much.

As 2025 draws to a close, I recall the way our ecosystem works together to support within and beyond and it is important we continue to work in this way going forward encouraging others to join us to increase engagement and to enable and empower both individuals and communities.

Finally, may the Christmas holiday be filled with laughter, warmth and happiness.I look forward to seeing you all in 2026 ready to embark on another exciting year of learning and discovery.

Wishing you a very happy Christmas and a safe, relaxing holiday season.

A Stahler

Ann Stahler
CEO, LLT



Students Unite for Anti-Bullying Schools Project Celebration

Hundreds of students, teachers and guests gathered at St George's Hall, Liverpool, to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Anti-Bullying Schools Project - a movement inspiring respect, inclusion and positive change across the UK.

Led by Knotty Ash Primary School, home to the region's only Deaf Resource Base, the project brings together over 100 schools using British Sign Language (BSL) to promote empathy, communication and unity among hearing and Deaf students.

Lydiate Learning Trust students from Knotty Ash Primary School, The Grange Primary School, Childwall Sports and Science Academy and Deyes High School all supported the event.

This year's theme, "Power for Good," reflected the project's mission to build communities rooted in kindness and mutual respect, as part of national Anti-Bullying Week.

The event opened with Abide with Me by programme Ambassador Steve McFarlane, accompanied by the Signing Choir, to mark Remembrance Sunday. Students performed inspirational songs including This Is Me, Mountain, Show Me a Sign and Step Into Your Power, alongside hearing students' lived experiences read by guest speakers.

The celebration concluded with a final rendition of This Is Me, uniting all performers and guests in a shared celebration of courage, difference and community.



Reflecting on the milestone, Roanne Clements, LLT Executive Headteacher, Primary, said: “Five years ago, we set out to give children a voice against bullying - a fully-inclusive 'voice in their hands'. Today, that voice is prouder, stronger and shared by hundreds of schools who believe in the power of communication and respect.”

Tony Grant, English football coach and former Everton player, added: “It’s fantastic to see young people using BSL to celebrate difference and stand against bullying. The energy in the room today is inspiring.”



A Year 6 pupil from Knotty Ash Primary School said: “Learning BSL has helped me understand my Deaf friends better and show kindness in a way that everyone can share. It feels amazing to use our voices and signs for good.”

A Year 4 pupil at The Grange added: “I loved performing with everyone! It showed me that we can all help stop bullying and that working and signing together makes us stronger.”









THE GRANGE
PRIMARY SCHOOL
& NURSERY

Voice 21 Oracy Centre of Excellence Recognition

The Grange Primary School has been named a Voice 21 Oracy Centre of Excellence, one of only 90 schools nationally to achieve this accolate.

This recognition comes as the government has announced plans to strengthen the national curriculum by placing greater emphasis on oracy skills, ensuring pupils leave school able to communicate effectively and confidently.

This recognition reflects three years of strategic work to embed oracy - the skills of speaking, listening, and effective communication - at the heart of the curriculum.

Led by Carol Minton-Allen and Rachel Fearon, the school has fostered a culture where oracy is integral to every lesson, empowering teachers to develop articulate, thoughtful, and confident learners.

The award was celebrated with a special assembly, where the official plaque was unveiled, symbolising The Grange's commitment to preparing pupils to thrive in a complex, rapidly changing world.



Pupils shared their experiences:

Lennon: "During Parliament Week, we debated sustainability and spoke with MPs and Lords. My oracy skills make me braver talking to new people."

Millie: "Oracy helps in Maths, as asking questions improves our understanding and problem-solving."

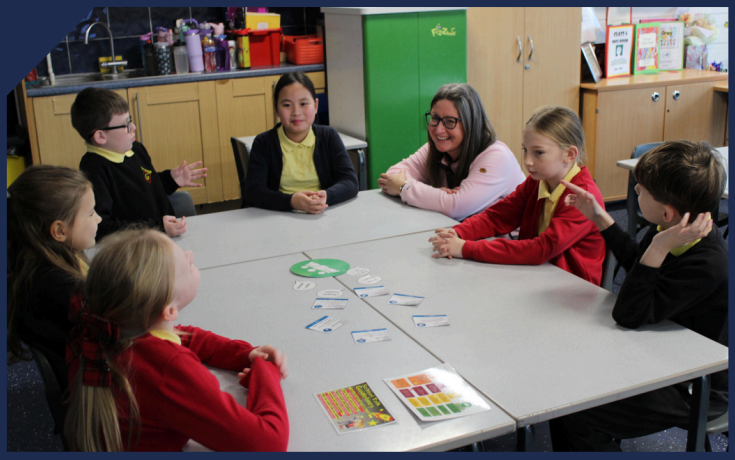
Freddie: "I used to be nervous speaking in class, but now I can present confidently to the whole school."

Leah: "I feel much more confident. My advice: take your time and have a go - you might surprise yourself."

Head of School Gwyn Evans said: "This award reflects the unwavering dedication of our staff and the enthusiasm of our pupils. We believe giving children a voice is fundamental to their future success, and we're proud to lead the way in oracy education."

Ro Clements, LLT Executive Headteacher, Primary, added: "The Grange's achievement is a testament to what happens when a school refuses to stand still and invests in skills that truly transform lives. We are incredibly proud to see The Grange recognised nationally - they have set a benchmark for excellence that echoes across our Trust."







KNOTTY ASH PRIMARY SCHOOL
& DEAF RESOURCE BASE

Geography Quality Mark Accolade

In September 2025, Knotty Ash Primary School was awarded the prestigious Primary Geography Quality Mark, recognising its outstanding leadership in the development of geography across the school.

This accolade reflects the school's commitment to delivering a high-quality, engaging geography curriculum that inspires curiosity about the world. Staff and pupils have worked collaboratively to enhance learning experiences, integrating fieldwork, enquiry-based projects, and creative approaches that bring geography to life.

The award highlights Knotty Ash Primary School's role as a leader in geography education, setting a benchmark for excellence in teaching and learning within the local community and beyond.

Knotty Ash Achieves School Games Gold Mark

Knotty Ash Primary School and Deaf Resource Base is celebrating after being awarded the School Games Gold Mark. Launched in 2012 and facilitated by the Youth Sport Trust, the award recognises schools for their commitment to developing competition and providing pupils with opportunities in local inter-school events. It also acknowledges dedication to volunteering, leadership, and officiating in school sport.

Schools are assessed across participation, inclusion, competition, workforce, and clubs. The support of staff, parents, and families has been instrumental in earning this recognition. Special thanks to Miss Hunter for coordinating the application and showcasing the school's achievements.

Head of School Mr. England said: "We are immensely proud of our pupils and staff. Achieving the Gold Mark reflects their hard work, teamwork, and spirit. We look forward to continuing to provide outstanding sporting opportunities and aiming for further success in 2026."





THE GRANGE
PRIMARY SCHOOL
& NURSERY

Children in Need Fundraising Success

Children and staff at The Grange Primary School showed tremendous generosity during this year's Children in Need fundraising. Pupils were invited to wear their own clothes or Pudsey-themed outfits, joining in a day full of engaging activities.

The day began with a school assembly explaining the importance of supporting children facing medical challenges and families who may need extra help. In classrooms, students crafted Pudsey ears and masks, while Pudsey himself made appearances throughout lessons, reinforcing the purpose behind the fundraising.

Head of School Mr. Evans said, "It was wonderful to see everyone coming together to support such an important cause. The children really embraced the day with enthusiasm and creativity and we raised over £230 for the charity. Well done to everyone!"

River from Year 4 said: "We had so much fun making Pudsey masks and joining in all the activities," Isaac from Year 6 added: "It felt great to support this charity and help children who need it."





Inclusive Attendance Conference

The Inclusive Attendance Conference at Lydiate Learning Trust HQ brought together school leaders and attendance professionals from across the North West for a day of insight and practical learning.

The event reinforced a clear message: attendance improvement is a whole-school responsibility. Across three sessions - The Post-Pandemic World, Creating a New Attendance Culture, and Redefining Your Approach with a Revolutionary Mindset - delegates examined how schools can move beyond compliance and build a culture where every member of staff contributes to sustained attendance gains.

Alan McKeegan, Director of Education, Secondary, said: “The conversation around attendance is changing. When everyone owns attendance, outcomes improve. The energy and openness in the room showed real momentum for change.”



Attendees welcomed the practical focus and chance to connect with peers. One attendee said “It was a really useful session with practical resources we can apply straight away.” Another added “It’s refreshing to leave with a clear sense of next steps and how to put the ideas into practice.”

The conference also introduced the Professional Development model for embedding attendance improvement through staff training and shared responsibility, supported by a growing national network.

The event reinforced Lydiate Learning Trust’s role at the forefront of inclusive practice and school improvement.

LYDIATE LEARNING TRUST

Next-Generation HR Platform Launch

LLT will move to its new HR platform in summer 2026 — a major step in modernising how we manage people, data and day-to-day processes.

iTrent is a trusted and widely used HR platform, relied on by major local authorities, universities, and large organisations across the UK.

The shift follows months of staff involvement, with colleagues across schools and central services shaping the specification, testing options and challenging providers to deliver a system that genuinely improves working life.

The implementation team is now deep into transition planning to deliver a system that cuts admin, reduces errors, speeds up routine tasks and puts clearer, more accessible information in the hands of every employee.

For staff, iTrent will provide a single, secure space for payslips, leave, personal details and training.

Managers gain better oversight of teams, making approvals faster and more transparent. HR can focus on strategic support rather than chasing paperwork. The system saves time, sharpens decision-making and gives everyone more control over their own information.

Jane Davies, Head of People and Culture, said: “Our colleagues helped select this platform as they want processes that are quicker and built around their needs.We’re committed to rolling it out with care and clarity.”

Ann Stahler, CEO, added: “This investment strengthens the Trust and will support every member of staff. iTrent will drive efficiency, accuracy and a better experience across all schools.” Further updates and training details will follow as the launch approaches.



DEYES HIGH SCHOOL

New Build Delivering Real Impact



A year after opening, Deyes High School is proving why it has become a benchmark for modern education design. Delivered by Kier for the Department for Education (DfE) and Lydiate Learning Trust, the 10,000 sqm school has quickly established itself as a high-performing, future-ready environment, improving outcomes, behaviour, and community connections.

In its first year, the school used just 67% of the DfE's energy target, making it highly efficient. Solar panels generated over 478,000 kWh of clean electricity — enough to power more than 66,000 LED lightbulbs continuously for a month.

Features like hybrid ventilation, a Bio Solar roof, heat pumps, and improved insulation ensure classrooms are consistently comfortable, energy-efficient, and cost-effective.

Students have also gained hands-on experience learning about construction careers and sustainable building practices, connecting classroom lessons to real-world applications.

The educational impact is clear. Attendance and attitudes to learning have improved, and low-level disruption has reduced. Classrooms feel calmer and more focused, supported by stable temperatures and strong acoustic control.

Head of School Mrs. Beaney said: “Over the past year, we’ve seen a real difference across the school - students are more engaged, focused, and enjoying their learning, while staff report fewer behavioural issues and more collaborative support between pupils. Our new building has quietly transformed the day-to-day environment. Deyes is built on family values, and our partnership with Kier has helped shape not just the school’s spaces, but the culture that makes this community thrive.”



Parent and carer engagement has increased, and the building’s efficient layout is delivering tangible gains - students now gain up to seven extra minutes of learning time per lesson. The school’s wider role has grown too. Over the past year, community groups have increasingly used the facilities for classes, meetings, and events. Staff morale is strong, and students report improved wellbeing, reinforcing the link between thoughtful design and a positive school culture.



Kier Senior Project Manager Andy Brayne added: “Delivering Deyes High School was about creating an environment that drives educational excellence and sustainability. This project sets a benchmark for future schools, combining energy efficiency with spaces that inspire learning and community engagement.”



CHILDWALL
SPORTS &
SCIENCE ACADEMY

Childwall Celebrates Champions of Change

Childwall Sports & Science Academy is advancing its Build a Kinder Future campaign through practical action that promotes respect, inclusion, and kindness across the school and Trust.

Childwall Sports & Science Academy Year 10 student Kameron attended the Anthony Walker Foundation's Tackling Racism in Schools Award Ceremony, which honoured student ambassadors and educators committed to challenging racism in schools.

The awards were presented by Dr. Gee Walker MBE, a lifelong campaigner for racial justice and co-founder of the Anthony Walker Foundation, alongside distinguished guests from across the region.

During her closing speech, Dr. Walker invited all School Student Ambassadors to the stage in a moving moment recognising their achievements.

Kameron's attendance, supported by Childwall's SLT, was part of Childwall's ongoing "Build a Kinder Future" programme, which equips students with the skills and confidence to lead anti-racism initiatives.



A group of students completed Year 8 ambassador training in November, which included workshops on peer leadership, inclusivity, and supporting younger students. The students will deliver workshops to all Year 8 students in Spring term.



Reflecting on the experience, Kameron said: “I felt proud to represent my school and be part of a programme that makes a real difference.”

Dr. Thomas, Head of School, added: “Kameron’s participation showcased the leadership and values we instil at Childwall. Seeing our students take their learning beyond the classroom into the wider community is inspiring.”



The event marked a significant milestone for Childwall Sports and Science Academy, reinforcing the school’s commitment to empowering students to drive positive change and foster an inclusive environment for all.

Childwall is now working across the Trust, with an initial visit to Deyes completed and a return visit planned for December. This will focus on developing content for a Trust-wide video, addressing the use of derogatory language, and initiating planning for a ‘What Is My Heritage and Identity Day’.

Meet Our New Staff

Daniel Mycroft-Armer, Executive Director of Education (Primary)



"I've spent two decades working across a wide range of primary settings, from small rural schools to larger provisions with more complex needs. Alongside my Trust role, I serve as Executive Headteacher of a three-form-entry primary school with both alternative and resource provision, giving me continual insight into the daily realities pupils and staff face.

I hold the National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership, which supports my work in curriculum design, leadership development and school improvement. My focus is simple: every child deserves high-quality teaching, a supportive environment and a curriculum that builds ambition and resilience.

I'm committed to strengthening collaboration across our schools and raising standards through evidence-driven practice, ensuring staff have access to professional development that genuinely moves the dial so every pupil thrives."

Suzanne Webb, Executive Director of Education (Primary)



"My career spans more than 30 years in the North West, beginning as a KS2 teacher before progressing into headship roles in both small rural and larger primary schools. Inclusion has always driven my work. I established a 42-place SEND unit and have supported a local primary referral unit as Vice Chair of Governors, helping schools strengthen provision for their most vulnerable learners.

I've worked closely with AMP SCITT for nearly a decade, supporting trainee teachers and contributing to programme development. In 2023, I joined its governing body to deepen that partnership and help shape the next generation of primary educators.

Within the Trust, I focus on school improvement, leadership support and creating environments where children and staff succeed. I'm committed to ensuring every school has the challenge, guidance and ambition needed to deliver exceptional outcomes."

LYDIATE LEARNING TRUST

Peter Bolton, Trust Facilities and Operations Manager



"I have seven years' experience working within the education sector.
During this time, I have successfully delivered over £3 million worth of capital projects across four schools.

Prior to working in education, I trained and worked as a mechanical engineer within the chemical and food production industries.

This background provided me with a strong technical foundation and a clear understanding of compliance, safety, and operational efficiency.

In my role with the Trust, I am excited to use my experience of managing large-scale capital projects to continue improving our facilities and to ensure that all areas of statutory compliance are maintained to the highest standards. I am passionate about creating safe, well-maintained and inspiring environments that support both staff and students to thrive.

Outside of work, I am a proud parent to two primary-aged children, and I actively support their education through my role as a co-opted governor at their school. I am very much looking forward to working with colleagues across the Trust and contributing positively to the continued success of our schools."





Celebrating Ten Years of Impact



Over the last decade, AMP SCITT's programme has grown in scale, depth, and national influence, and is now established a leading provider of teacher training.

Head of SCITT Alison Brady said: "We are proud to have trained outstanding teachers who make a real difference in classrooms across the country. Our specialist pathways have expanded to meet the evolving needs of schools and learners, providing targeted support in areas such as STEM, literacy, and leadership development. Alongside this growth, AMP SCITT has built a dynamic network of partner schools, local authorities, and educational organisations who share its unwavering commitment to excellence."





AMP SCITT: Our Journey

2014
Accredited by DfE as an ITT Provider (June)
Marketing & course development begins (September)



2016
Internships for undergraduates begin

2015
37 SCITT trainees start (September)



2019
Primary programme expanded to include 3–7 and PE specialism





2019
National Recognition Winners at the NASBTT awards

2020
Manchester Hub opens with Ashton Teacher Training Partnership (September)
Subject Knowledge Enhancement delivery begins

2021
Lead partner for Rainbow Teaching School Hub – ECF and NPQ delivery

2023
New Training Centre established at Vortex Court (March)





2024
SEND pathway developed, 100% employment by end of first course

2025
Cheshire Hub launches with NWAT, Apprenticeship route begins (September)
Assessment-Only Route introduced (November)



617 Teachers awarded QTS

90+ Partner schools

100,000+ Pupils engaged

LYDIATE LEARNING TRUST

ENGAGE, ENABLE, EMPOWER

KNOTTY ASH SCHOOL
Loving Learning Together

Grange