

Spring Two 2026

Newsletter

Welcome to our Spring Two Term Newsletter!

A message from our CEO...

Our Mission:

To build thriving communities by empowering every adult & young person with the education & opportunities they need to flourish & prosper.

As we move towards the Easter break, and the end of the Spring Term, I am delighted that we have been successful in securing School Based Nursery Grants for Gorsefield Primary School in Bury, where funding will be used to increase both 2 Year old and 3 Year old places, and at St John's in Failsworth where we will be extending provision and changing the age range to include places for 2 Year olds. This means more families and their children in our One Family being offered the opportunity to have a stronger start to school life. Thanks again to Mrs Gardner, our Trust Director of Inclusion and Early Years, for undertaking the hard work involved in submitting and securing these bids.

On the 1st March 2026 we welcomed St Stephen's CE Primary School to our One Family. Welcome workshops were held at both St Stephen's and Middleton Parish Church schools where both schools were presented with their Forward As One Lanyards, their Worship candle and Values Pebbles by Mr Peter Bond our Chair of Trustees.

I recently visited two of our sponsored schools, Middleton Parish Church School and St Paul's CE Primary in Bury. It was great to see how the staff and children at both schools have risen to meet the challenge of raised expectations. Classrooms and corridors in both schools were calm with staff leading the way in embedding expectations with all children at all times, including making reasonable adjustments for those children who have additional needs.

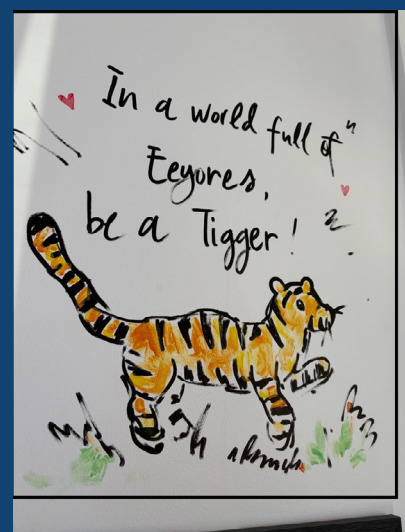
Well done!

Have a wonderful Easter and remember...



Karen

Karen Bramwell- OBE (CEO)



Spotlight on: Areas of Excellence

We are proud to celebrate several of our schools being recognised with Areas of Excellence in their Challenge Partners reviews. These achievements reflect the hard work, dedication and fantastic practice across our schools, and we are delighted to share their success.



St James' CE Primary School

AOE: Exceptional inclusion securing strong outcomes in a highly complex context

'Leaders have strategically prioritised inclusion. This approach has underpinned the improvements made within the school and supports the ongoing success of all pupils. Leaders have established a deeply embedded culture in which pupils, regardless of need, background or starting point, are fully included, achieve well and participate in all aspects of school life. Inclusion is not viewed as an additional strand of work but as the core principle that drives leadership, teaching, curriculum design and pastoral care.'



St Peter's Smithills Dean CE Primary School

AOE: Inspiring life-long readers through our living, breathing, reading curriculum

'Reading provision and outcomes are excellent at St. Peter's Smithills Dean Primary School. From the moment children begin, through a deliberately structured choice of high-quality reading books and sequenced diverse curriculum, they develop reading stamina and achieve well at the end of Year 6.'



Gorsefield Primary School

AOE: Learning Without Limits: Little Learners, Big Futures

'Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has been identified as an Area of Excellence at Gorsefield Primary School because of the clarity of its curriculum intent, the strength of its inclusive practice and the sustained investment in evidence-informed professional learning. The Learning Without Limits: Little Learners, Big Futures approach reflects a deliberate and coherent strategy to ensure that all children, regardless of backgrounds or starting points, experience ambitious, well-sequenced learning from the outset of their education.'



St. Paul's CE Primary School

AOE: The early reading journey - removing barriers

'St. Paul's mission is to teach every pupil to read and keep them reading. 'Reading changes everything.' St. Paul's achieve outstanding results by making sure that the teaching of reading is at the heart of the school's work. Staff teach Read, Write Inc. phonics for an hour a day, every day and run weekly practice sessions for staff. Leaders believe in 'keep up, not catch up' and leave no stone unturned to narrow the attainment gap, knowing that the ability to read is the biggest driver of social mobility. Crucially, leaders make pupils making the slowest progress their top priority. Each pupil benefits from ten minutes of daily tutoring until they can keep up with their peers.'

Updates from across our One Family...



Canon Johnson CE Primary School

Canon Johnson were treated to a special performance from the school bands! All three bands performed in a concert for parents and children, proudly showcasing their fantastic new skills.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed each performance and they were wonderful reminders of the confidence and teamwork that flourish through music. The school is looking forward to welcoming even more musicians next term!



Early Years had a wonderful day visiting Smithills Open Farm. The children enjoyed a range of hands-on experiences, including feeding sheep, llamas and cows by hand, which was a highlight for many. They also had the opportunity to gently stroke baby animals in the Pets Corner, helping to build confidence and care for animals.

They took part in a bumpy tractor ride to feed the donkeys, enjoyed playing on the huge adventure park, and everyone loved having a turn riding on a donkey. It was a fantastic trip that supported learning through real-life experiences and lots of fun. A big thank you to all of the parent helpers who kindly volunteered their time to ensure everybody stayed safe and had such an enjoyable day.

Updates from across our One Family...



St John's CE Primary School

St John's had a wonderful time celebrating World Book Day this year. The school was filled with excitement as children and staff came dressed as their favourite book characters, bringing stories to life in the most imaginative and creative ways.

They also marked the Easter season with a special visit to church, where they were warmly welcomed by Rev Aysha. The Worship Leaders played an important role in leading the service, demonstrating confidence and maturity as they shared a thoughtful and inspiring reflection on the meaning of Easter.



St Anne's CE Lydgate Primary School

St Anne's entered the Oldham Choral Speaking Festival again this year with pupils from Years 1 to 5. They are delighted to share that they were awarded the Adjudicator's Trophy for Outstanding Contribution to the Festival by a School!

The whole school took part in the school's Experience Easter Outside event. The pupils' thoughtful reflections from this experience were then used to help shape and inform their Easter Service in church.

Updates from across our One Family...



St Stephen's CE Primary School

St Stephen's recently had a visit from Angela Rayner to hear pupils' concerns about road safety around the Audenshaw Road site. Members of the School Council highlighted issues including speeding traffic, drivers attempting to beat traffic lights, and incidents involving pedestrians, as well as frequent road rage.

Rayner listened to the pupils' experiences and reaffirmed her commitment to working with Local Authorities and Police to improve safety for children and families.

During the visit, she also officially opened 'The Nest', the school's new outdoor learning hub designed to support pupils' wellbeing and provide opportunities for nature-based learning.



"It was a real privilege to officially open The Nest. Spaces like this make such a difference-giving children the chance to learn in a different environment, build confidence and enjoy their surroundings. It's a wonderful addition to the school and I look forward to seeing the children enjoy it for years to come." - Angela Rayner, MP.

"We were delighted to welcome Angela to St Stephen's. The opening of The Nest is a very special moment for our school, and it was great for our pupils to share their ideas and experiences directly. We're grateful for her support on the important issue of road safety" - Guy Lovgreen, headteacher.

Updates from across our One Family...

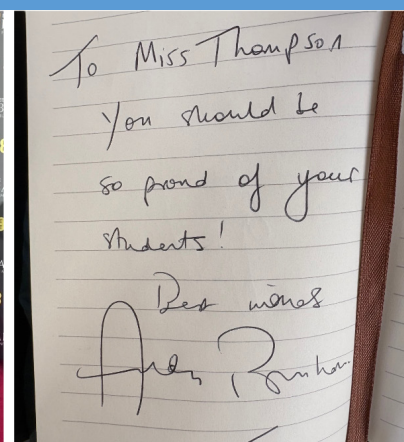


Parochial CE Primary School

This term, pupils from Parochial presented to an audience of over 2,000 people at Greater Manchester's Green Summit, where they also took part in a Q&A session on eco-conscious living with Andy Burnham. [Click here to watch the Q&A!](#)

The school has once again reached the final of the Debate Mate competition and will travel to London this summer. They are currently ranked seventh nationally!

Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Sells, also attended the BAFTA Awards, where her husband was nominated for his work and went on to win a 2026 BAFTA Film Award for British Short Animation.



St Paul's CE Primary School

At St Paul's Bury, parents were invited to take part in a special 'Experience Eid' event where they had the opportunity to learn alongside their children and gain a deeper understanding of how families within the school community celebrate Eid al-Fitr. Members of the Ethos Team supported the event, helping to create a welcoming and engaging environment for all who attended.

Volunteers from Year 5 also taught classes across school about Ramadan and Eid and shared how they celebrated with their family.



Limitless Learning Through God

Updates from across our One Family...



Greenhill Primary School

At Greenhill, Year 4 had a careers visit from Econ Engineering to learn more about engineering as a possible future career. They also got to go out and have a close up look at one of Econ's products - Goldie the Gritter! The Reception children also paid Goldie a visit as part of their 'People Who Help Us' topic.

All the classes have enjoyed their Learn Alongside sessions this half term where they could share their learning with their parents with a focus on PHSE.



Year 3 families had a fantastic Magnetic Forces evening facilitated by Miss Eustice where they were able to experiment with a range of magnets, making art and games whilst exploring the wonderful world of magnetism!

In other news, John Yiasoumis has completed his Apple Learning Coach accreditation and is now a certified Apple Learning Coach. The programme equips coaches with the skills to help teachers build personalised, student-centred learning environments. It will be exciting to see the impact this will have across the school community!

Updates from across our One Family...



St Paul's CE Primary School

St Paul's recently celebrated a very successful Challenge Partners review, achieving 'leading' across all areas. They were also awarded an Area of Excellence for 'The Early Learning Journey: Removing Barriers', reflecting on the ongoing commitment to support every child and ensuring all learners can succeed. The school also received a brilliant SIAMS inspection, with inspectors praising the strong sense of community, a clear Christian vision, and the way these values are lived out across daily school life.

St Paul's also hosted a Reading Day for our trainee teachers. The day provided valuable opportunities to showcase effective reading strategies and celebrate a culture of reading across the school.



St John with St Michael CE Primary School

Staff and governors at St John with St Michael's were incredibly proud to receive a glowing report following a recent Challenge Partners review. The report highlighted a number of key strengths, including the way teachers use carefully structured and explicit modelling to guide pupils through their learning, enabling children to approach tasks with increasing confidence. It also recognised the remarkable work of staff in developing pupils' reading fluency, alongside the highly effective wellbeing approaches and strategies in place to support all pupils.

The school rounded off the term with a fantastic day of mathematics during SJSB Battle of the Bands TT Rock Stars competition. With great costumes, high energy and lots of enthusiasm, it was a truly fun-filled event enjoyed by all!



Updates from across our One Family...



St Peter's Smithills Dean CE Primary School

Year 6 at St. Peter's recently took part in Young Voices at the Co-op Live Arena! Forming part of a choir of over 7000 young people from across the north of England. It was an amazing and spectacular occasion - and a rather late night!

Children from across KS2 danced their hearts out at Bolton Dance Festival this term in front of a packed audience at Bolton Albert Halls. They were fabulous!



The Year 5/6 boys' football team competed in the Regional Finals of the EFL Cup this term; taking on teams from as far afield as Lincoln, Doncaster and Wigan! They played really well and secured 5th place out of 12 teams. A superb achievement!

Year 6 also spent a day at Bolton Wanderer's Stadium giving a Red Card to Racism. They learned about different forms of racism, how to be an ally and the importance of being kind and treating everyone with respect.

At the end of this term, St Peter's Smithills Dean will wish one of their teachers, Miss Collier, a happy retirement. Miss Collier has worked at St. Peter's for nearly 10 years and we all wish her a happy retirement and a good rest!

LEARN with FA1 News



A message from our Director of Operations...

As the spring term draws to a close, I want to take this opportunity to reflect on another positive and purposeful term across our programmes at Learn with FA1. Each continues to thrive thanks to the shared dedication of our trainees and participants, Mentors, Visiting Fellows, Course Leads and our fantastic partner schools.

This has been an especially exciting period for our Initial Teacher Training programme. We are delighted to have already recruited our largest ever cohort of trainees who are looking forward to starting their school placements in September 2026. We can't wait to welcome them as they begin their journey into teaching. Our current trainees are now entering their most important term, taking on 80% of teaching responsibility as they move towards their final assessments for QTS. Their hard work, resilience and growing confidence in the classroom are a real credit to the support they receive from the outstanding Mentors across our partnership.

Our Early Career Teachers have also continued to make strong progress this term. With hundreds of ECTs and Mentors engaging with the programme across the region, the impact of high-quality instructional coaching is evident in the confidence and skill our early career colleagues are developing. Feedback from our spring events has been excellent, highlighting not only the expertise of our facilitators but also the commitment of ECTs to continually refining their practice. Across our National Professional Qualifications, we have seen inspiring dedication from leaders and aspiring leaders at every stage of their career. With several cohorts preparing for upcoming assessments and others well underway with new modules, it has been fantastic to witness the collaboration and reflective practice taking place within these groups. The achievements of recent NPQ graduates demonstrate the power of sustained professional development in strengthening leadership across our schools.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all our partners for their ongoing collaboration. Your commitment to offering high-quality clinics, conferences, communities and placements, as well as specialist opportunities and supportive learning environments is essential to the success of every participant working with Learn with FA1.

Thank you once again for your continued support; we look forward to the opportunities the summer term will bring.



Christina

Christina Derbyshire- Director of Operations

Key Dates

20th April 2026- ITT
Contrasting Placement

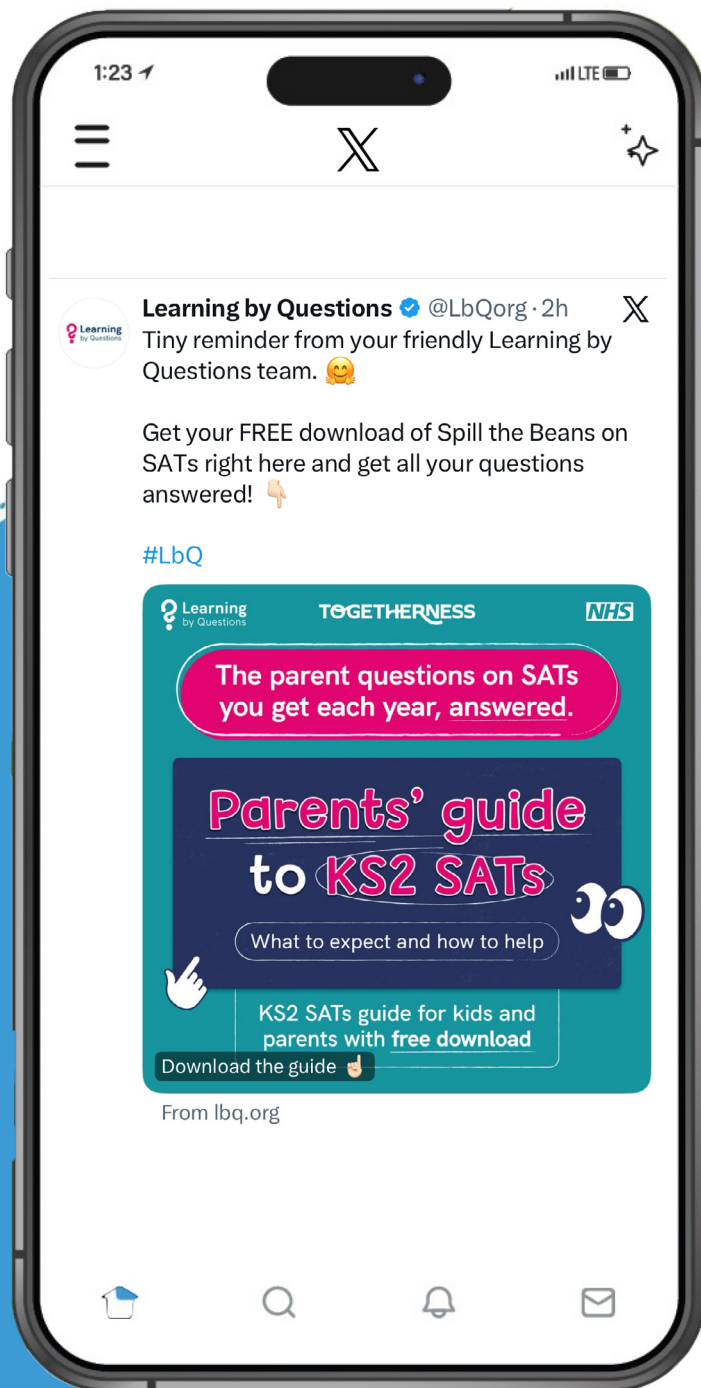
15th April 2026-
Assessment Window opens
for ALL NPQ programmes

28th April 2026- ECTP
Mentor Clinic

9th June 2026- ECTP Year 1
Final Clinic

16th June 2026- ECT Year 2
Final Clinic

Highlights From X...



Highlights From X...

