

Summer Two 2026

Newsletter

Welcome to our Summer Two Term Newsletter!

A message from our CEO...

This is my final CEO message to you all as I step into a new phase of life and embrace the adventure of retirement.

I would like to thank you all for everything you do for our wonderful children and for children in other schools across the North-West region. The way in which you share your expertise so generously benefits other practitioners and children through your work on Challenge Partner Reviews, the training programmes you facilitate, the School Improvement work that you undertake and the school visits you host. Thank you.

Thank you also for your generosity over the last few weeks. I have shed many a tear at the various events I have attended as I see your achievements first hand, and as I the words I the cards you have written and your very generous gifts.

I am completely overwhelmed and humbled.

I would like to wish you all the very best for the new academic year, and the future beyond that. I know that the Forward As One Church of England Trust will continue to be an organisation where all will flourish. Our talented and determined Trustees and our fabulous Central Team will ensure that is the case, and I would like to thank them all for the professional challenge and immense support that they have provided along the way.

Have a wonderful holiday and don't forget to water your trees!



Karen

Karen Bramwell-OBE (CEO)



Please accept this small tree as a gift to mark my retirement as your CEO. Just like our Trust family, it starts with deep roots in faith and love. I hope you enjoy watching it flourish, grow tall, and stretch out its beautiful branches.

Every deep root is a lesson learned. Every new leaf is a bright future.

Love Karen x

To Karen...

Today we celebrate someone who has shaped not just our Trust, but the culture, the values, and the heart of every school within it. Since 2012, Karen has led Forward As One with a rare kind of leadership - the kind rooted not in authority, but in kindness, faith and unshakeable belief in people. She has built a culture where warmth is not an optional extra, but the foundation; where openness is expected and where every single person is encouraged to flourish.

For Karen, leadership has never been about hierarchy or titles. It has always been about people. About kindness. About doing the right thing even when it's hard. And above all, about keeping children at the centre of every decision, every conversation, every moment of reflection and every ounce of energy she has poured into this Trust. If you ever tried to talk about something without mentioning the impact on children, Karen will gently - or not so gently - steer you right back, reminding us, again and again, why we do what we do. And she does all this with humour, humanity and the kind of determination that can move mountains. Or at the very least, move a group of headteacher who thought they'd already made up their minds.

Karen has championed collaboration over competition - and she's done it with such conviction that even the most competitive among us eventually gave in. Under Karen's leadership, collaboration didn't just outperform competition - it absolutely trampled it. If you even hinted at going it alone, Karen would appear - sometimes from nowhere - with that look that said, **"We don't do that here."** And she was right. Because under her guidance, our schools didn't just work together; they became a family. A slightly chaotic family at times, yes, but a family nonetheless. Under her leadership, schools didn't just work together; they grew together. They share, support, challenge, and lift one another. And that spirit of unity is now woven into the DNA of our Trust.

Karen gifted every school a tree to mark her retirement - and I think it's one of the most fitting symbols she could have chosen. In her message, she wrote:

"Please accept this small tree as a gift to mark my retirement as your CEO. Just like our Trust family, it starts with deep roots in faith and love. I hope you enjoy watching it flourish, grow tall and stretch out its beautiful branches. Every deep root is a lesson learned. Every new leaf is a bright future."

I don't think any of us could have said it better. This tree reflects our journey - the deep roots Karen helped us lay, the lessons learned along the way, and the bright future we continue to build together. Everyone will proudly plant the trees at their schools as a lasting tribute to Karen: a reminder of her leadership, her dedication, and her unwavering belief in what we can achieve when we work as one. And knowing Karen, she will absolutely be checking in on it - so everyone make sure it's watered.

Karen, your legacy is not just in the policies, the structures, or the achievements - though there are many. Your legacy is in the culture you created. A culture of compassion. Of courage. Of collaboration. A culture where people feel seen, valued, and supported. A culture where children are not just the priority - they are the purpose.

On behalf of the entire Trust, thank you. Thank you for your leadership, your humour, your wisdom, and your faith in us. Thank you for the roots you helped us grow, and for the branches you encouraged us to stretch towards.

We hope this next chapter brings you rest, joy, and maybe - finally - a chance to sit still. Though knowing you, that might last about ten minutes.

Karen, we wish you every happiness in your retirement. You will always be part of our Trust family, and your impact will continue to flourish for many years to come.

Thank you.

Farewells & well wishes....

As we approach the end of the year, we would like to take a moment to recognise and celebrate colleagues who are leaving us for pastures new, retirement or the next chapter in life!

Lipmunn Tang

Beacon Primary School

Isabella Cairns

Beacon Primary School

Layla Soden

Canon Johnson CE Primary School

Karen Bramwell OBE

Forward as One CE MAT

Christina Derbyshire

Forward as One CE MAT

Laura Hustwit

Gorsefield Primary School

Anette Woods

Gorsefield Primary School

Tamara Braithwaite

Greenhill Primary School

Charlotte Hughes

Greenhill Primary School

Victoria Rattigan

Middleton Parish Church School

Leann Hoyle

Middleton Parish Church School

Ryan Chan

Middleton Parish Church School

Amy Reddy

Middleton Parish Church School

Alexandra Tipar

Middleton Parish Church School

Kim Frankland

Parocial CE Primary & Nursery School

Phillipa Pritchard

St John with St Michael CE Primary School

Paul Morgan

St Paul's CE Primary School, Bolton

Fatima Adam

St Paul's CE Primary School, Bolton

Jeremy Atkinson

St Paul's CE Primary School, Bury

Beverley Holton

St Paul's CE Primary School, Bury

Alison Slater

St Peter's Smithills Dean CE Primary School

Amanda Blizzard-Grey

St Chad's CE Primary School

Paula Vaughan

St James' CE Primary School

Madeleine Hughes

St John's CE Primary School

Keeley Murphy

St John's CE Primary School

Rachel Lockley

St Thomas' CE Primary School

We will
miss you



A Summer of Wellbeing for the Whole Family!

Looking for simple, meaningful ways to spend time together this summer?

The **Mindful Me Online Feel Good Family Challenge** is an online wellbeing programme designed to help families create positive habits, strengthen relationships and make lasting memories throughout the summer holidays.

Perfect for families with **primary-aged children**, the challenge includes **21 engaging activities** that can be completed anytime, anywhere. Simply log in and enjoy a variety of guided videos, audio meditations, outdoor adventures and interactive digital activities designed to support emotional wellbeing while having fun together.



**Mindfulness
& relaxation**



**Kindness &
gratitude challenges**



**Outdoor adventures
& nature activities**



**Family games
& conversation
starters**



**Movement &
mindful activities**



**Creative family
challenges**

The activities are designed to fit into busy family life, with most taking just a few minutes to complete. Families can work through them in any order, revisit their favourites and enjoy access throughout the summer.

Access is available until 11th September for a one-off cost of £20.

Families who complete the challenge will receive a personalised **Feel Good Family Challenge Certificate**, and there's also the chance to win a **£100 One4all Gift Card**. We hope this challenge encourages families to slow down, connect with one another and enjoy a summer full of laughter, kindness and shared experiences.

Find out more and sign up here!

Updates from across our One Family...



St Peter's Smithills Dean CE Primary School

St Peter's Smithills Dean would like to wish **Miss Alison Slater** a long and happy retirement as she leaves the school at the end of this year. Alison has worked at St. Peter's for 33 years, joining as an NQT and working her way up to leadership. She has taught nearly **1000 children** and touched the lives of many more. Her kindness, compassion, leadership and friendship will be missed by her colleagues and the children. She will leave behind a long and lasting legacy and will be very much missed. But we wish her every blessing moving forward!



St Peter's Smithills Dean Y5/6 football team ended the year having won three competitions: the **Key PE Cup**, the **Bolton Wanderers EFL Cup** and a special **World Cup competition**.

The boys and girls who competed in these three events all played fantastically well but most importantly, played with due respect towards the opposition and referee. **They represented the school amazingly and should be very proud of their efforts.**

Updates from across our One Family...



Canon Johnson CE Primary School

What a fantastic Sports Day at Canon Johnson! The sunshine was shining as children from every year group took part in a range of exciting events, including sprints, three-legged races, egg and spoon races and much more.

Everyone showed so much **determination, teamwork and encouragement** throughout the day, with children cheering each other on and giving every event their best effort.

The school would like to wish a **big thank you to all of the families who came along to support** – your encouragement made the day even more special!

Well done to everyone who took part – we are so proud of you all!



St John with St Michael CE Primary School

It has been a busy and exciting half term across St John with St Michael Primary School! Pupils proudly took part in the **local carnival**, demonstrating great enthusiasm and resilience as they walked a long distance in the parade despite the warm weather. The school has also enjoyed a range of special leavers' activities, including a visit to the Cathedral and an unforgettable residential trip to **Robin Wood!** Throughout the term, pupils had the opportunity to take part in educational visits to **Tatton Park, Manchester Airport and Eureka!**, enriching their learning beyond the classroom. This term concluded with a wonderful **EYFS Graduation Ceremony**, celebrating the achievements and milestones of the youngest members of the school community.

Updates from across our One Family...



St John's CE Primary School

This term has been full of exciting learning experiences across St John's! Years 5/6 enjoyed a fantastic **Medical Mavericks** workshop, where pupils had the opportunity to use a range of real medical equipment, including blood pressure monitors and Doppler scanners. The pupils impressed staff with their creative **Potato World Cup** entries, decorating potatoes to represent countries from the class sweepstake. Years 5/6 also attended a Fire Safety assembly delivered by **Blue Watch** from **Hollins Fire Station**, where they learned about fire and water safety.

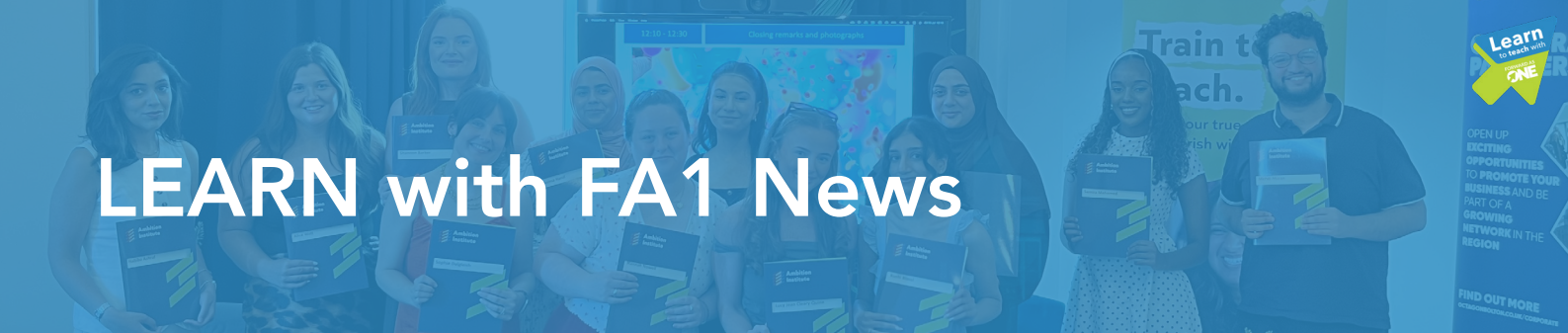
Years 3 and 4 took part in an engaging assembly about the water cycle, helping to reinforce their science learning, thanks to support from **United Utilities** and **Mad Science**. Ruby Class were delighted to welcome **Barry the Bream**, giving them a hands-on opportunity to learn about the different parts of a fish's body!



Thank you to all of our schools across the Trust for your hard work, dedication and support throughout the year.

We wish all staff, pupils and families a wonderful and well-deserved summer break.





LEARN with FA1 News

ITT: End of Year Celebration

As we reach the end of another successful Initial Teacher Training year, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate every one of our trainees on achieving **Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)**.

We are incredibly proud of the dedication, resilience and professionalism that this year's cohort has demonstrated throughout their training. It has been a privilege to watch each trainee grow in confidence, develop their teaching practice and make such a positive impact within our schools. Their commitment to becoming outstanding teachers has been evident throughout the year, and they should all be immensely proud of what they have achieved.

This success would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our **placement schools, leadership teams** and **classroom mentors**. Their commitment to nurturing, coaching and challenging our trainees has been instrumental in helping them develop into confident, reflective and highly effective teachers. The time, expertise and encouragement they have invested throughout the year have made an immeasurable difference, and we are sincerely grateful for the role they have played in shaping the next generation of the teaching profession.

As they begin the next stage of their careers, we wish them every success. Many of our trainees have already secured teaching positions for September, whilst others are preparing to embark on exciting opportunities teaching abroad. Wherever their journey takes them, we know they will make a significant contribution to the lives of the children and communities they serve.

Our graduation celebration at **The Bolton Octagon Theatre** was a wonderful occasion, providing the opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the year, celebrate together with colleagues, mentors and school leaders, and recognise the remarkable accomplishments of our newest teachers. It was fantastic to welcome everyone together once again to mark such an important milestone.

Looking ahead, we are equally excited to welcome our next cohort of trainees. We are currently preparing for around **30 trainees** to begin their Initial Teacher Training journey across our **Forward As One** and partner schools. We look forward to supporting another generation of aspiring teachers as they take their first steps into the profession.

None of this would be possible without the commitment and expertise of so many colleagues. My sincere thanks go to our outstanding LEARN team, **Christina Derbyshire** and **Lucy Jackson**, whose organisation, guidance and unwavering support ensure the programme runs so successfully.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our exceptional facilitators: **Liz Dwarampudi, Catherine Ward, Adam Heath** and **Eamonn Murphy**, together with all of our Subject Study facilitators from across the Trust. Your knowledge, experience and passion have inspired our trainees throughout the year. The quality of your support has played a significant role in the success of this programme and continues to strengthen teacher recruitment and retention across our schools and the wider profession.

Finally, thank you to every placement school, headteacher, senior leader, mentor, class teacher and colleague who has welcomed our trainees into their schools. By sharing your expertise, opening your classrooms and investing in the development of future teachers, you have made a lasting contribution to both this year's cohort and the future of education.

On behalf of Forward As One, thank you for another fantastic year. We wish our graduating trainees every success as they begin their teaching careers and look forward to welcoming our newest cohort in September.



Paul

Paul Cowburn-ITT Lead

LEARN with FA1 News

ECF: Celebrating a Successful Year Together

As another successful year of our **Early Career Teacher** (ECT) programme draws to a close, I would like to congratulate all of our ECTs on the commitment, professionalism and enthusiasm they have demonstrated throughout the year.

Whether completing their first or second year of induction, our ECTs have embraced every opportunity to develop their practice, reflect on their teaching and continue to grow as professionals. It has been inspiring to see the progress they have made, and we are incredibly proud of everything they have achieved.

Their success is a testament not only to their hard work and determination, but also to the exceptional support provided by their schools. Our sincere thanks go to every **headteacher, senior leadership team, induction tutor** and, in particular, **our dedicated mentors**. Your guidance, encouragement and expertise have been invaluable in helping our Early Career Teachers build confidence, refine their practice and establish strong foundations for long and successful careers in education. The investment you make in developing new teachers is vital to strengthening recruitment, retention and excellence across our profession.

Throughout the year, our ECTs have engaged enthusiastically with professional learning through conferences, clinics and instructional coaching. These opportunities have enabled them to collaborate with colleagues from across the Trust and beyond, share effective practice and deepen their understanding of evidence-informed teaching.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our outstanding **LEARN team**, whose organisation, care and commitment ensure the programme continues to provide a high-quality experience for every participant. In particular, thank you to **Ian Haydock**. Ian plays a key role in ensuring that participants receive timely updates, clear email communications and all of the essential links and information needed throughout the programme. Together, your dedication behind the scenes helps ensure that every aspect of the programme runs smoothly and successfully.

A special thank you also goes to our **expert facilitators**, whose knowledge, passion and experience have enriched every conference and clinic. By sharing your expertise and creating engaging professional learning opportunities, you continue to inspire and support our Early Career Teachers as they develop into confident, reflective practitioners. Your contribution is fundamental to the continued success of the programme and to supporting teacher development across our Trust and partner schools.

As we look ahead to September, we are excited to welcome a new cohort of Early Career Teachers while continuing to support those progressing into the next stage of their induction. We are proud to play a part in their professional journey and look forward to seeing the positive impact they will continue to have in classrooms across our schools.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to another successful year. Together, we are investing in the future of education by supporting, developing and retaining excellent teachers for the children and communities we serve.



Paul

Paul Cowburn-ECF Lead

LEARN with FA1 News

NPQs: A Year of Growth, Achievement and Impact

This has been another incredibly busy and successful year for our NPQ provision, with changes, exciting milestones and much to celebrate.

The academic year began with the introduction of a new model, moving to a single NPQ cohort each year. Despite this change, interest in professional development remained exceptionally strong, with around **300 participants** beginning their NPQ journey in November 2025.

We were delighted to celebrate the success of our Cohort 7 Specialist participants, who achieved an outstanding **94% pass rate** in their assessments. This is a fantastic achievement and reflects the dedication, commitment and hard work of everyone involved.

April brought a particularly busy period, with a double assessment window for both Cohort 7 Leadership and Cohort 8 Specialist participants. Together, these teachers and leaders submitted an impressive **165 assessments** and are now eagerly awaiting their results over the summer break.

Looking ahead, applications for the programme starting in November 2026 opened recently, and demand has been remarkable, with **186 places** offered within just three weeks.

Throughout the year, we have hosted an incredible **146 NPQ events**, supporting teachers and leaders across the region in their professional development. None of this would be possible without the unwavering commitment and expertise of our facilitators. Whether from within the Trust or from our wider network of partners, your knowledge, enthusiasm and dedication have helped shape the learning experiences of hundreds of educators. When we consider the thousands of children who will ultimately benefit from the improved practice and leadership in their schools, the impact of your contribution is truly inspiring - Thank You.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Learn team. Your hard work, resilience and passion underpin everything we achieve. Together, you make it possible for us to continue delivering high-quality professional development that makes a lasting difference to schools, educators and pupils alike.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to such a successful year. We look forward to celebrating even more achievements in the year ahead.



Sam

Sam Rush-NPQ Lead

Aspire Hub Updates



A message from our Senior Partner

As we move through the term, I want to thank you for the commitment and expertise that continue to define the Aspire Hub. The impact across our schools is clear and growing.

This year we have completed **50 QA Reviews** and I'm delighted to congratulate the ten schools newly accredited with Areas of Excellence. Their work - from breaking down barriers for disadvantaged pupils to systematising personal development - is a powerful reflection of the ambition across our Hub.

Our **Growing the Top schools** continue to continue to push the boundaries of excellence through deep-dive collaboration and peer-led challenge. The insights they generate are invaluable for shaping practice across the wider Hub.

The commitment to SEND development remains a national priority, and I encourage all leaders to create deliberate space for the five schools engaged in the SEND Developmental Peer Review to share their learning. Their reflections will strengthen our collective capacity to meet the needs of every child.

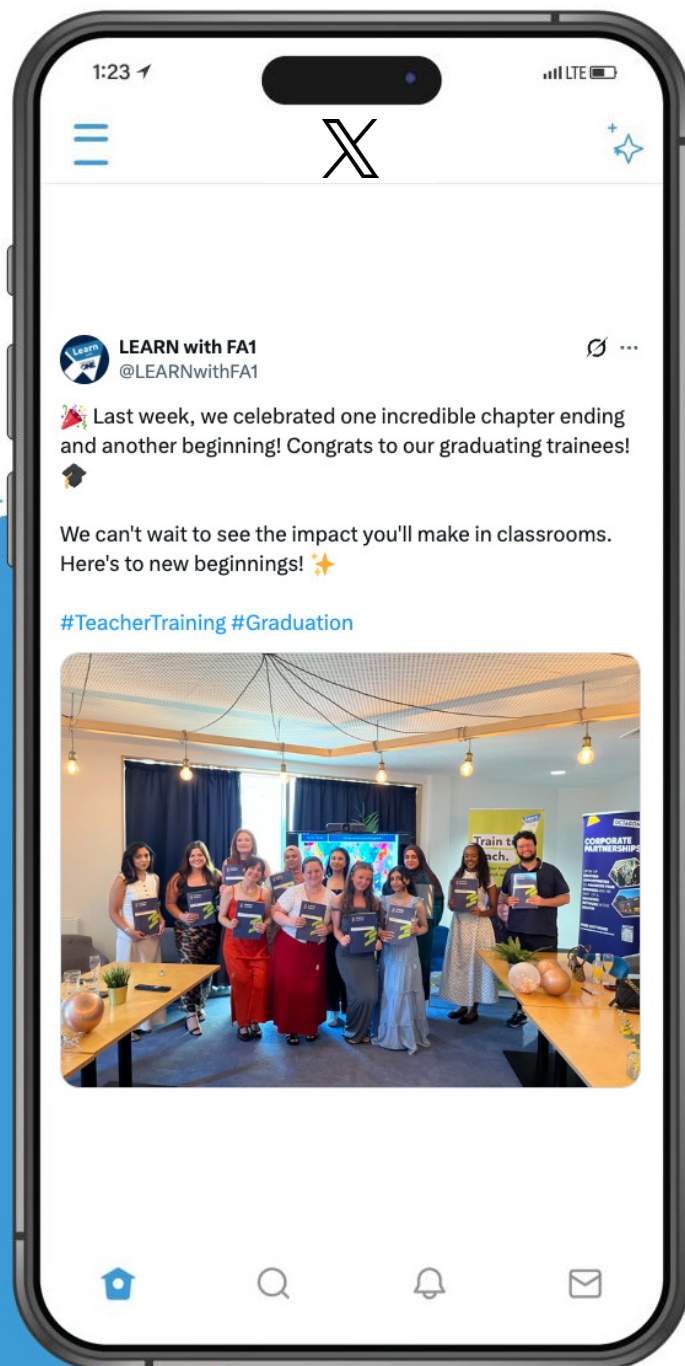
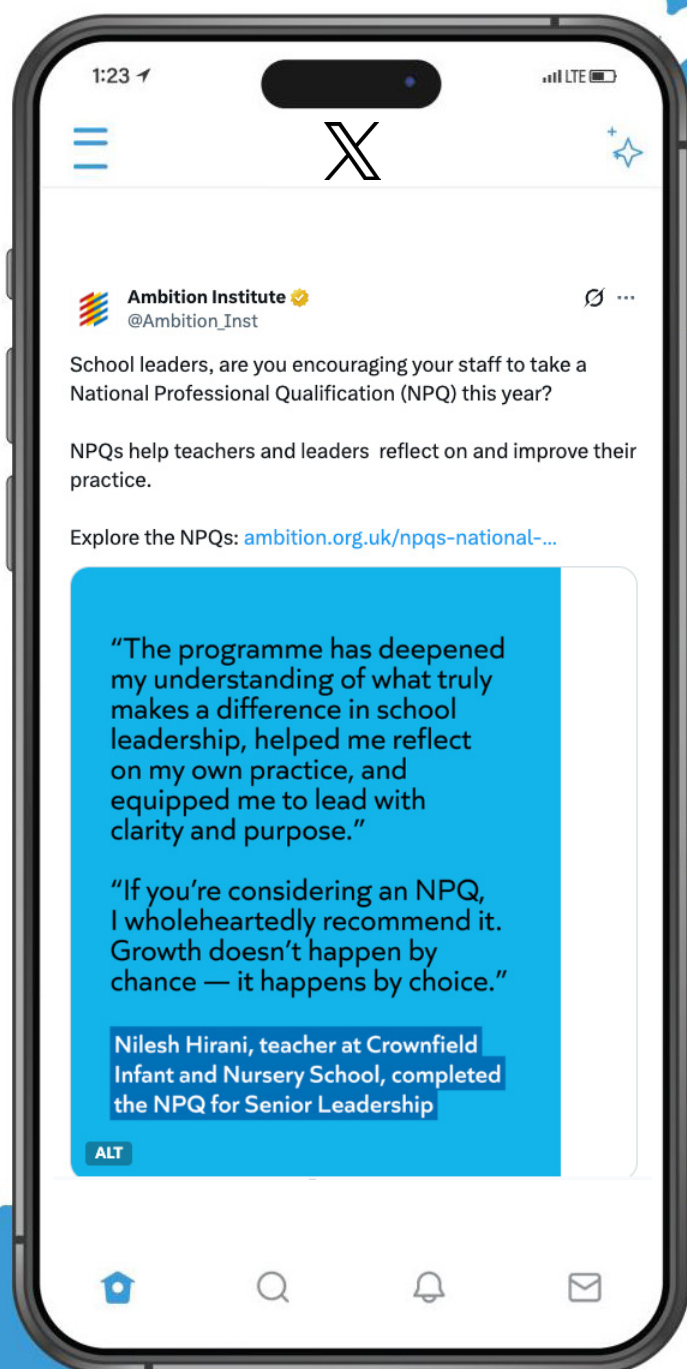
Finally, I want to acknowledge the remarkable contribution of our reviewers. Their outward-facing generosity is one of the defining strengths of our Hub. Thank you for your continued dedication. The work you lead every day is shaping futures, raising aspirations and strengthening the system for all.



Michelle

Michelle Ridsdale - Senior Partner

Highlights From X...



Highlights From X...

