

An update for parents and carers from First Federation Trust

# Trust News

July 2025, issue 10

## IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome - 1

School News - 2

Summer Activities - 7

Governance - 8

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## A note from our CEO & Trust Lead

With the holidays within touching distance, we'd like to thank you and your children for all for the hard work and dedication this year. We're starting to see an improvement in behaviour and attendance, and we've seen some excellent work from pupils in all areas of the curriculum.

We're pleased to announce that Mrs Ethelston's CE Primary in Uplyme has become a Lead School for Music in Devon (see page 3), and lots of schools have had positive SIAMS and Ofsted reports this year (see page 2). Well done to all.

As a Trust, we believe in providing the best possible education for all pupils, but we also want to nurture talent, creativity and sport, and we realise the importance of providing enrichment and personal development opportunities. It's been great to hear about some of the varied activities children have taken part in this year with rock climbing, canoeing, golf, dance, cycling and so much more. Children have been really brave and 'left home' to take part in residential which for some may have taken them out of their comfort zone but will have increased confidence in the process.

Schools are extremely fortunate to have some strong PTFAs (Parent Teacher & Friend Associations) who spend the year fund-raising for individual projects. We'd like to say thank you to them all for everything they do. Raising additional funds is extremely important and we very much appreciate their support. The PTFA for Newton Ferrers CE Primary successfully raised an impressive £32,000 this year. Well done to them and all involved in making this happen. Read more about how the school used funds on page 6.

It's safe to say with all of this effort throughout the year, children (and staff) are likely very ready for the holidays. We hope you all enjoy the summer and make the most of the weather. See page 7 for some recommended fun activities.



Paul Walker

**Portesham CE Primary  
Good Ofsted**



Portesham CE Primary School in West Dorset is Good in all areas of Ofsted with inclusivity, compassion, ambition and attentiveness at the heart of everything they do.

Staff have been recognised as having ‘an unwavering commitment to each pupil thriving both academically and socially’ and children are seen to ‘engage in learning and interact positively during social times’.

Victoria Prior, Head of School, said, ‘We have worked extremely hard over the years to improve our provision for children at Portesham, and we are immensely proud of our strong offering in education and personal development. Pupils are fortunate to have a broad range of extra-curricular activities through clubs and external visits including paddle boarding, cooking at a local restaurant, nature club, trips to the local farm and more.’

[Click here to read the full article online.](#)

Year 6 pupils at Blackpool CE Primary School in Liverton, Devon have successfully completed The Blackpool Spirit Award, a programme designed to help children grow into confident, compassionate, and responsible young people.

Children showed outstanding commitment and enthusiasm across a wide range of challenges, taking active roles within the school community, building connections with the local area, exploring new hobbies to support mental wellbeing, and taking positive steps to protect the environment. They also embraced independence during their residential experience, rising to every challenge with maturity and resilience.

As Courageous Advocacy Champions, they each selected a charity to support and worked incredibly hard to raise an amazing total of £2,669 for various organisations including Animals in Distress, Seaway Trust, Elm's Wildlife Trust, Guide Dogs and more.

[Click here to read the full article online.](#)



**Year 6 Blackpool CE  
Primary pupils raise over  
£2k**

## St Budeaux CE Primary has Good Ofsted and SIAMS



St Budeaux CE Primary has been busy these past few months.

Seen to be living up to its foundation as a Church school' driven by its Christian vision and values according to the latest SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) report by the Church of England, and Ofsted inspectors deem it as Good in all areas according to the latest Ofsted report.

Natasha Brooks, Head of School, said, 'We're really pleased that Ofsted has recognised how happy, safe and supported our pupils feel. We work hard to ensure children are meeting expected standards and to support children throughout their entire learning journey from Nursery through to the transition to secondary school. We pride ourselves on our values of friendship, love, forgiveness, respect and joy, and appreciate the recognition of how 'kind and respectful' pupils are.

[Click here to read the full SIAMS article online.](#)

[Click here to read the full Ofsted article online.](#)

Mrs Ethelston's CE Primary School in Uplyme, East Devon, has been selected as one of Devon Music Education Hub's new Lead Schools for Music. Lead Schools for Music will support the Hub to realise the aspirations of the Department for Education's National Plan for Music Education.

Selected in recognition of their outstanding music provision, Devon's Lead Schools including Mrs Ethelston's, will work closely with the Hub to create sustainable, high-quality music education provision in line with the Department for Education's national plan for this subject. Mrs Ethelston's is one of twenty-one primary and secondary schools in Devon to be selected.

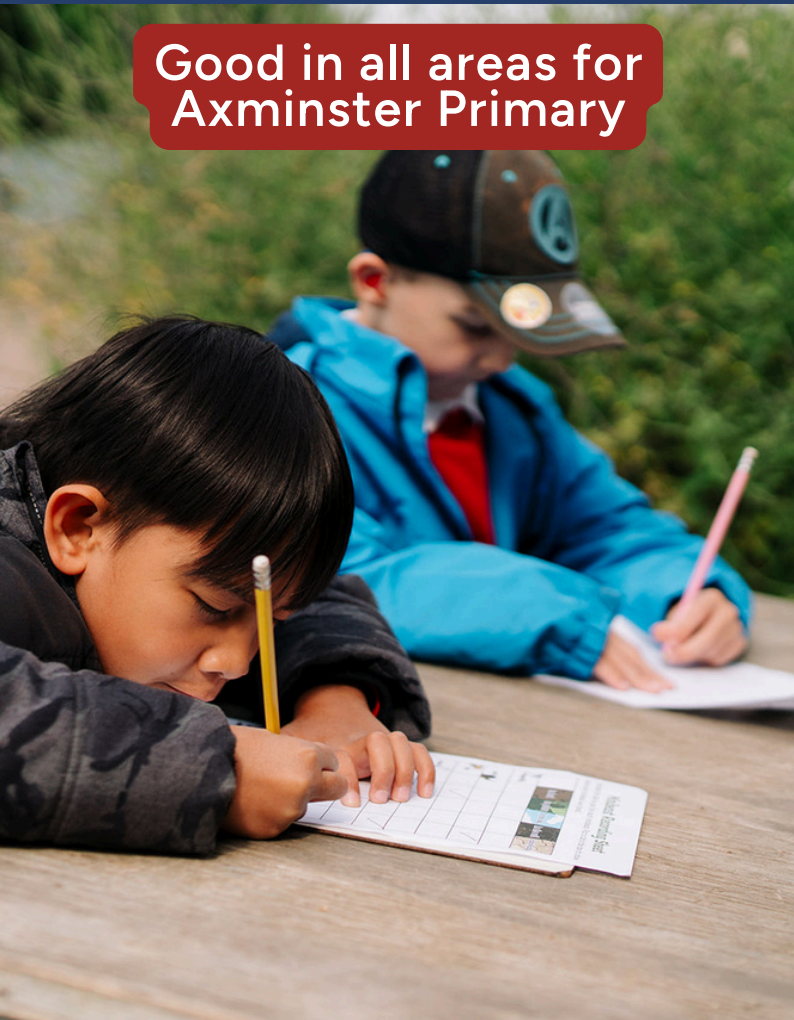
Mrs Allington, Head of School, says, 'We are very excited to work in collaboration with other schools in the area to really enhance musical opportunities in our community. We want to celebrate our musical successes and support the work of the Music Hub to raise the profile of music for all children.'

[Click here to read the full article online.](#)

## Mrs Ethelston's CE Primary Lead School for Music



## Good in all areas for Axminster Primary



Axminster Community Primary Academy in East Devon are Good in all areas including quality of education, behaviour, leadership and management.

Pupils are seen to behave well and 'learn how to care for themselves and others', and the school has made significant improvements to the curriculum which have been fully embraced.

Claire Hulbert, Head of School, said, 'Our core values of honesty, resilience, courage, kindness, respect, and community are at the heart of everything we do here at Axminster Community Primary Academy, and we are thrilled that Ofsted has acknowledged the happiness, safety, and inclusivity experienced by our pupils. Our dedicated staff work diligently to ensure our curriculum is tailored to meet the diverse needs of all learners, and we take immense pride in our pupils who have excellent knowledge which they retain and apply effectively.'

[Click here to read the full article online.](#)

The eagerly anticipated redevelopment of the Manstone Avenue site at Sidmouth CE Primary School in Devon is set to begin this July, with local company Skinner Construction due to complete the works.

The collaborative project has been partly funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and Devon County Council, with plans approved by DfE last year to replace and renovate existing buildings, creating a modern new space for pupils' learning and development.

Alex Spraggon, Head of School, says, 'We're really pleased to have a start date for the development works and look forward to the benefits the new site will bring to our school and local community. Work is due to be completed by May 2026 and will consist of a modern new-building and redeveloped area both indoors and out, where pupils will continue to receive the high standard of education and care we offer.'

## Redevelopment at Sidmouth CE Primary



[Click here to read the full article online.](#)

## Musbury Primary Good in Ofsted & becomes Nursery



Musbury Moles Preschool near Colyton, East Devon has been incorporated into Musbury Primary, and Ofsted concluded that leaders had taken 'successful actions to maintain the Good standards of education from their previous inspection'. Pupils are seen to be 'welcoming and kind' and 'courteous to visitors', and 'positive, trusting relationships permeate the school.'

Clair Murrell, Head of Musbury Primary, says, 'Musbury Moles is a well-established preschool based in a separate building on site here at the school. We've always maintained a strong, collaborative partnership but feel really excited to officially join forces with them and make it a school-based Nursery for children from two years old. We will continue to provide excellent learning opportunities in a safe and supportive environment, taking advantage of the wonderful outdoor space and highly qualified staff.'

[Click here to read the full Nursery article online.](#)

[Click here to read the full Ofsted article online.](#)

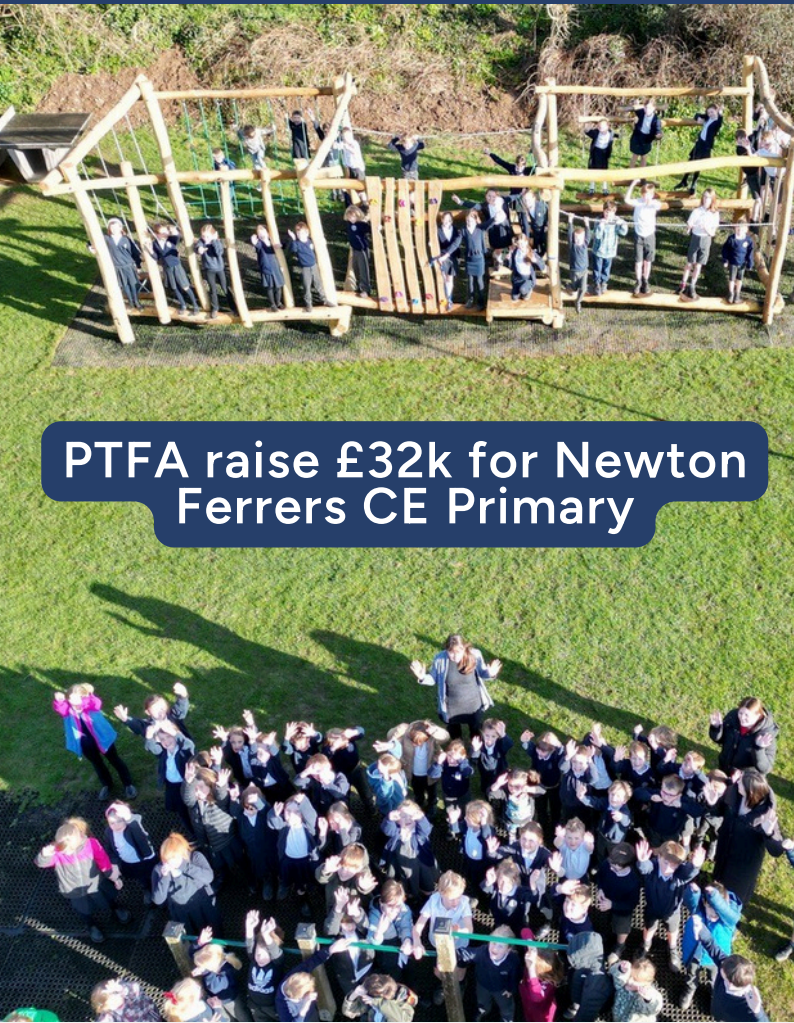
St Andrew's CE Primary near Chardstock, which is 'living up to its foundation as a Church school', is 'a special place where pupils and adults are nurtured to live life in all its fullness' and 'people are valued as unique and precious individuals' according to the latest SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) report by the Church of England.

Donna Butler, Head of School, said, 'At St Andrew's, our Christian values and ethos underpin everything we do. We are a fully inclusive school welcoming children from all faiths and backgrounds, and we encourage children to celebrate life through friendship, make good decisions, persevere, and be peaceful, loving and respectful. We're happy to see recognition of all this and more in this report, including how we offer a caring environment and nurture the emotional and mental wellbeing of our pupils.'

[Click here to read the full Ofsted article online.](#)

## St Andrew's CE Primary SIAMS





**PTFA raise £32k for Newton Ferrers CE Primary**

The PTFA at Newton Ferrers CE Primary School in South Hams, have raised a staggering £32,000 for the primary near Noss Mayo, Devon.

The school has used the funds for a variety of products which will further enhance the education and personal development for pupils. Money has been spent on a new trim trail (as pictured) which offers exciting playtimes, new books to support children’s reading, chromebooks, the production of events and plays, and a new sound system - all of which is extremely valuable for those who attend Newton Ferrers now and in the future.

Paul Walker, Chief Executive Officer of First Federation Trust, said, ‘I’d like to say a huge thank you for all the efforts the Newton Ferrers PTFA has put into raising funds for the school this year and all previous years. To raise over £32,000 is an amazing feat which is inspirational to all schools. As a Trust, we aim for every child to aspire, flourish and achieve within the heart of their community, and the money they, and all other PTAs, raise will help our schools achieve this. Additional income is always very much appreciated - thanks to everyone involved.’

Parents at Aveton Gifford CE Primary School in South Hams, Devon view it as being ‘the heart of the village, where staff flourish and adults are happy to stay’ according to the most recent SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) report by the Church of England.

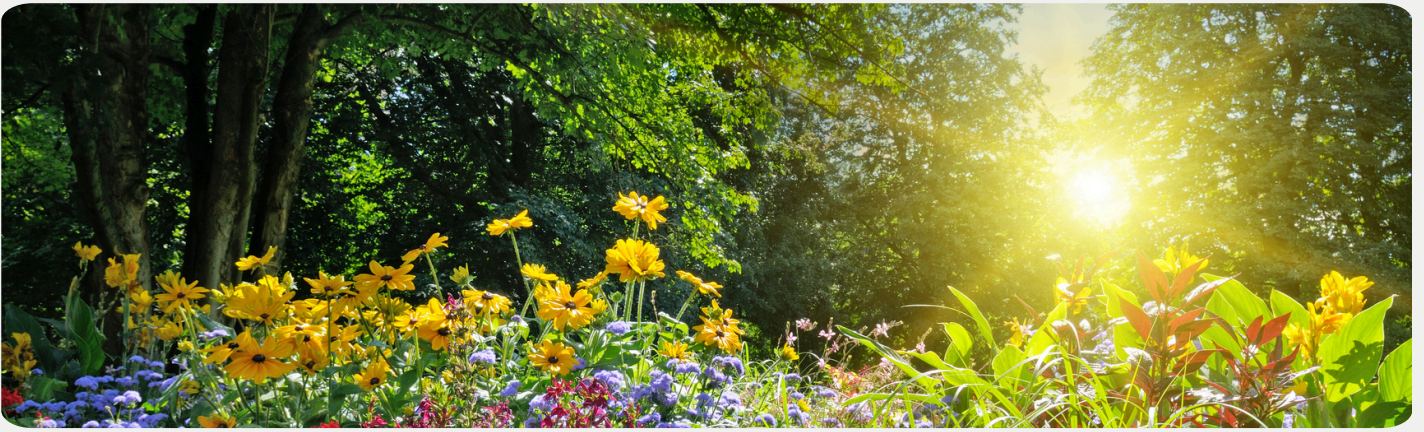
The school near Kingsbridge, which is seen as having a ‘culture of acceptance’, is ‘living up to its foundation as a Church school’ with a Christian vision that ‘shines through school life’. The ‘Visionaries,’ a group of older pupils, help to inspire younger children and ‘recognise the importance of modelling the values’.

Fern De Beer, Head of School, said, ‘Our values are compassion, joy, friendship, perseverance, thankfulness and trust and our vision is Sowing the Seeds for Success. We’re proud of our pupils for recognising Bible stories about ‘seeds’ and how they ‘link to everyday experiences’.



**Aveton Gifford CE Primary SIAMS**

[Click here to read the full article online.](#)



## Recommended Summer Activities

BBC have recommended some fun but very cost effective or even free activities to help keep you and your children occupied during the summer holidays while taking the time to relax. Here are just some of the ideas. Check out the website below and search for other ideas online:

[www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/articles/zyrsvwx](http://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/articles/zyrsvwx)



### Make a Summer Scrapbook

Find an old notepad or buy a cheap drawing book so that children can creatively record your memories either with a diary and drawings or encourage children to keep things they find on your days out and make a collage.

### Bake and Make

Why not try baking cakes together or make ice lollies to allow them to get creative and try new flavours. Use fruit for the lollies and vegetables in your cakes to show them how healthy can also be fun!



### Homemade Games

Creating your own games can be fun in itself - and then you have the reward of playing afterwards. Ideas include bowling with bottles, making your own playdough, paper plate ring toss and balloon tennis!

### Teddy Bear Picnic

You're never too old for a Teddy Bear Picnic! Gather your child's favourite soft toys and sit in the garden with cups, plates and a range of food which they can help serve.



### Family Sleepover

Whether you're brave enough to sleep in the garden or just gather together in one room, make a cosy pit of blankets and choose a night to have a sleepover with a movie and snacks.

## Governance

We'd like to say a **big thank you** to all our **governance volunteers** who give their time for free to support our schools and specifically to hub chairs and parent council members who have met with Ofsted inspectors this year - you all did your school and the Trust proud!

### Parent Council Members

Parent council members represent the voice of **a parent** not the voice of the parents. Their primary expertise is as a parent and they play a vital part in our governance structure. At least one parent council member is elected for each school, and at least one from each school is a member of the governance Hub Board.

Their role is to undertake monitoring visits to their school and report the outcome to their Hub Board. The focus of the visits is set by the hub board, directors and parent council member.

### Hub Boards

The Trust currently has six Hub Boards. Each includes a member of the Trust school improvement team, a chair appointed by the Trust, a foundation representative, parent council members and some include members appointed based on their skills.

### New Hub Board Members

We'd like to introduce the following **new hub board members** who have joined us this term or are about to join.

Welcome to:



Laura Fuller and Sally Henley  
Parent Council, Gatehouse Primary



Lee Thomas  
Parent Council, Westcliff Primary

### Parent Council



Alan Cooper  
Dorset Hub, Portesham CE Primary



Bruce Roberts  
Foundation Rep, Mrs Ethelston's  
CE Primary



Sarah Rock-Evans  
Foundation Rep, Sidmouth CE Primary



thank you

## Governance



### A grateful goodbye to retiring hub board members

Thank you to the following hub board members who have finished or are finishing this term for their contribution to the Trust Governance:



Eleanor Carr - Parent Council  
Musbury Primary



Jo May - Parent Council  
Gatehouse Primary



Grahame Sherman - Parent  
Council: Bere Alston Primary



Andrew Mann - Parent  
Council: Mary Dean's CE  
Primary



Sarah Wyatt - Parent Council  
St Andrew's CE Primary



Rebecca Selby - Foundation Rep  
Sidmouth CE Primary

### Governance Vacancies

We currently have some governance vacancies on our hub boards. Please look out for information from your school and contact us if you are interested in applying for one of these positions - we always welcome new volunteers!

Searching for ways to develop yourself professionally this year? Wanting to contribute to your local community? Or wondering how you can support the education of children and young people? Becoming a governance volunteer could be the answer!

We always welcome approach from people interested in taking on a governance role. Please email [admin@firstfederation.org.uk](mailto:admin@firstfederation.org.uk) to register your interest.

Discover more: [www.firstfederation.org/governance/](http://www.firstfederation.org/governance/)



Thank you to all our governance volunteers who give their time for free to support our schools.

# Keep in touch

Follow us on social media and via our website to keep up-to-date with our latest news



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