



# LIFE Matters

Brentwood Road, Romford, Essex RM1 2RR

Tel: 01708 463866 E: [info@lifeeducationtrust.com](mailto:info@lifeeducationtrust.com) [www.lifeeducationtrust.com](http://www.lifeeducationtrust.com)

Chief Executive Officer Julian Dutnall LLB BA MA NPQH

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## Summer 2019

### From the CEO

This has been a hugely significant year for the growth of the Trust. In September we added Dame Tipping and Margaretting Church of England Primary schools to our team and The Bridge became a school in its own right. We celebrated a series of extremely positive examination results. Benhurst, The Bridge and Frances Bardsley all had inspection visits from Ofsted with Benhurst and Frances Bardsley both showing that they have maintained the strong quality of education they provide for their children and The Bridge gaining a Good outcome with an Outstanding grade for Personal Development, Behaviour and Safety in their full Inspection.

LIFE also became a Department for Education approved Sponsor in April and will be welcoming Roxwell Primary School, our sixth school, on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Maire O' Regan is doing a great job as the Executive Headteacher of Margaretting and Roxwell, and Roxwell is showing great signs of improvement. 2019 Examination results in all Primary schools including Roxwell are very pleasing.

Our staff team is expanding and we have welcomed Nichola Brickell as Marketing Officer. In September Denise Broom will become Director of Operations and Ian Gurman will become Director of Education. Their experience and excellence in their respective areas has helped us grow in the measured and steady way that we have. Rachel Grimwood and Sharon Chapman will become employed by the Trust as Ethos and Culture Manager, and Sports Coordinator respectively.

The central team will move into refurbished offices on the Frances Bardsley site which will aid closer communication and sharing of ideas and expertise.

We say farewell to Steve Odart and David Mansfield who served on the Board throughout the year and to Denise Green who served on the Finance and Facilities Committee and welcome Tony Morgan and Rob Bristow to the Board for September. Mr Mansfield will become a Trust Member and replace Tony Morgan in this role to ensure strong and independent lines of accountability and challenge.

Whilst we were unsuccessful in our bid to run the Bishops Stortford Learning Village, we were one of only three sponsor Trusts who were interviewed for this prestigious new venture following applications. The feedback from Hertfordshire County Council has encouraged us for the future and praises our innovation and creativity.

The ethos of the Trust has been refreshed following a fantastic time working with the leading design company *aba*, and we will be focusing on Dare To Achieve as our strapline with three beliefs: Courageous Optimism, Boundless Creativity and Heartfelt Compassion.

Finally we are delighted that we have submitted our application to register LIFE Education International as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Faith Spinks who brings a wealth of experience from the charity and education sectors will join us in September to oversee the development of this new venture supported by a strong team of trustees.

**Best Wishes**  
**Julian Dutnall, CEO**

## From the Chair

It has been another amazing term for LIFE. I am so pleased that the Ofsted inspections at Benhurst, The Bridge and FBA have been so overwhelmingly positive and I want to extend my gratitude to all those involved for all their hard work. I know that hard work and dedication form the bedrock of success - whether personal or as a school or trust - and not just something that happens when inspections loom! Thank you to all of you for your contributions to success. This contribution may be a parent or carer who has ensured that their child has attended school, or completed their homework. It may be a member of support staff who has gone 'above and beyond' to help things run smoothly and who keeps a special eye on vulnerable children. It could be the hard work of governors and board members, giving their spare time to support us. It will be teachers who have worked to achieve encouraging progress in their pupils and students, and it will most certainly be those children and young people themselves who have worked and tried hard to do their very best. I remain proud and humbled to be part of the LIFE family.

As a Trust, we are forming ever-stronger alliances and relationships with other organisations: both those who can help us in our development, and those who we can help and support. Julian and the senior team have been busy thinking about how we can continue to grow and make a positive difference for our pupils and students and I am confident that we are on the right journey for our schools. There is much to look forward to next year; there will be more to celebrate and enjoy; there will be new relationships to form and new challenges; there will undoubtedly be more hard work!

In the meantime, however, there are the summer holidays to enjoy. I extend my best wishes to all those anticipating exam results, both parents/carers and the young people themselves. For many, this is the culmination of years of commitment and effort and I will be thinking of you all. I hope your summer is restful and I look forward to continuing the work of LIFE with renewed vigour in September.

**Louise Douglas,  
Chair**

## From our Business Manager

Whilst I appreciate that 'numbers' do not excite everyone, as we approach the end of the financial year I would like to reflect on our achievements in finance as well as our future developments.

The additions of Dame Tipping and Margaretting schools to the Trust brought operational challenges as both schools moved from LA to Trust financial systems. However, they embraced the change and with the support of their other Trust finance colleagues are now confident in this area. We hosted the first Trust finance meeting at FBA bringing everyone together to discuss the audit programme, share experiences and allay any fears! We will hold termly meetings to discuss the programme of work in relation to ESFA requirements.

HR processes have become more streamlined and will continue to do so with the appointment of Vicky Smith as Trust HR Manager. Last term the Pay and Personnel Committee discussed the positive staff surveys that had been received. This was further endorsed by FBA receiving the 'Staff Wellbeing Award' at the Havering Learning Partnership Awards in June.

Although the Trust was unsuccessful in securing capital funding from the DfE, our schools still have various building projects taking place during the Summer. Dame Tipping will return in September to a new hall floor, Margaretting to a refurbished Early Years area, Benhurst to refurbished toilets and other facilities and FBA to a Wellbeing Centre and LIFE core team corridor.

We are also delighted that we have secured funding from Havering for a purpose built facility for The Bridge to be located on the FBA site.

Last, but by no means least, we look forward to working with Caterlink, our new catering provider and sampling the new menus!

**Business Manager,  
Denise Broom**



## From our Director of Standards

2018-19 has been a great year, by almost every measure, for the Trust's schools and for the Trust as a whole.

### Outcomes

At time of publishing, we still await the GCSE and A Level outcomes for Frances Bardsley, but the Trust's primary schools have achieved an excellent set of results, as reward for all the hard work and dedication of the staff and pupils. Benhurst saw a return to the heights of their 2017 outcomes at Key Stage 2 and their best KS1 results ever; Dame Tipping consolidated their improved results of 2018 and saw significant rises in the numbers of pupils achieving greater depth; and Margaretting, once again, achieved the phenomenal standards of recent years.

### Ofsted Inspections

We had three inspections this year, all of which were full of praise for the schools involved.

In March, inspectors said of Benhurst "You are ambitious for the school and, together with the senior leadership team, you have fostered uncompromising determination for every child to succeed" and "The behaviour I saw in lessons was exceptionally calm and purposeful".

In May, in The Bridge's first ever inspection, the report states "Parents are hugely supportive of the school and have great respect for the headteacher and staff. One parent described the school as 'an absolute lifeline'" and "Teachers have strong questioning skills and challenge pupils to think deeply about what they are learning".

Of Frances Bardsley Academy, in July, the inspector wrote "Pupils have high aspirations. One pupil said that 'there is a real focus here on empowerment for women. Inspectors observed this in practice" and "There is a strong culture of safeguarding that runs through the school".

The work of the Trust, overall, was commented upon positively in every inspection, with The Bridge's report stating "The Trust's model of self-evaluation, the 'health checks', is effective in uniting school leaders, governors and trust staff in a common approach to providing support and challenge to drive the school forward".

Congratulations to everyone involved!

**Ian Gurman,**  
Director of Standards

## From our LIFE PE Coordinator

The Frances Bardsley Year 9 Sports Leaders organised an afternoon of Rounders for Years 3,4,5, and 6 pupils at Margaretting CofE Primary school in June. The afternoon included skills sessions and team coaching and finished with a mini tournament in the afternoon.

The highlight of the summer term was the LIFE Education Trust Athletics Festival on Tuesday 16th July. The Frances Bardsley Sports Leaders organised the activities and a team of recorders kept the scores. Pupils from our four primary schools, Benhurst, Dame Tipping, Margaretting and Roxwell took part in an afternoon of athletics events. including running, standing long jump, speed bounce, chest push, fun relay and sprint relays.

Throughout the afternoon points were awarded with final places resulting in 3rd place for Dame Tipping with 39 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> place to Roxwell and Margaretting with 55 points and 1st place going to Benhurst 64 points. Well done to all the teams!

**Sharon Chapman,**  
LIFE PE Coordinator

# LIFE Ethos in Action

At the start of the summer term we launched the LIFE Passport to enrich children's experiences and skills. Through the scheme, pupils have been challenged to try various activities which help build character and resilience. We hope that the passport will help our young people to build their personal skills and qualities during the school day and at home.

We have received a fantastic initial response from many pupils who have produced some amazing passports and all those who participated will be awarded with a LIFE Passport Achievement Certificate. We look forward to the next term and more exciting activities!

## Emotional Resilience and Wellbeing:

When times are tough, we can lose hope and optimism. It is important to remember people, experiences and happy memories to get us through these times. Many of us are unaware of the bank of resilience that is reserved within us. When stress arises, and what feels like a tsunami of events overwhelm us, it is easy to feel burdened and hopeless. The LIFE Ambassadors have been focusing on emotional resilience this term, with emphasis on being able to talk to one another and connect with those around us. Each school has hosted an afternoon tea event to offer an occasion for chatting in a non-judgemental, empathetic environment to create a pleasant experience and promote wellbeing for their community.

It is the accumulation of good memories and emotional awareness that helps us to cope when times are challenging. LIFE Ambassadors are currently working together to create bespoke chairs which are covered in images of happy times, favourite things, and beautiful landscapes. These are visual examples for when we need to take time out. We can rest on these "Seats of Wellbeing" and reflect on positive moments and identify what is good, helping us to have a happy, healthy and stable life. This technique promotes traditional, cognitive, problem solving intelligence and encourages natural personal healing.

The LIFE Ambassadors will be continuing to develop empathetic projects for the Autumn term as we continue the journey of life together.

**Rachel Grimwood,  
Ethos Development and Culture Manager**



# Frances Bardsley



**Year 8 Normandy 8**

The summer term is always extremely busy at FBA and this year has been no exception especially with a visit from OFSTED.

The examination season went extremely well and we are delighted with the dedication and tireless work of both staff and students. The girls celebrated at the Year 11 and Year 13 prom and we all have our fingers crossed for our best results yet.

Students in all years have been involved in a wide range of extra-curricular activities at home and abroad. There have been numerous theatre visits, the PE Coach Miles trip to Thorpe Park and DofE Bronze expeditions to Little Baddow and the New Forest. In June, we held the third Big Activity Day of the year with students going to Stubbers and Colchester Zoo and taking part in a treasure hunt in London. Over 150 students in Year 8 went to Normandy during the heat wave in France and had a fantastic time in the chateau.

**Emilie Darabasz & David Turrell,  
Heads of School, FBA**



## Dame Tipping

### Here Comes the Bride

The church bells were ringing as Year 1 and 2 joined Reverend David and Reverend Alan at St John's Church for the Dame Tipping Wedding. The children had a fun filled and enriching experience learning about long-lasting relationships as part of our RSE curriculum. The children enjoyed planning the day; making cakes and confetti bags for the special occasion. A big thank you to Reverend David and Reverend Alan.



### What a Treat!

We were blown away by Class 5 and 6's fabulous performance of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. The show was enhanced by the fabulous setting at the barn, complete with a light up rainbow tree! We were so impressed with the standard of acting, singing, dancing and comedy and the children seemed to really enjoy performing in the show. Many thanks to Mrs McCormack for making it all happen.

**Kathryn Waters,  
Headteacher**



# Margaretting

## New challenges

As the new head teacher of Margaretting C of E Primary school I have enjoyed the challenges experienced in the first half term of my new post. It has been exciting getting to know the children, parents, staff and governors of the school, the vicars and the community and I feel at home already.

Every day in school brings with it new challenges in times of change and pressure on teachers and education in general. However having a strong coherent staff, kind parents and a supportive governing body makes the job easier and more manageable.

The children are polite but able to express their thoughts and wishes for the school assertively and thoughtfully. I enjoy my weekly afternoon tea with children where I meet six children who tell me what they are enjoying about their learning but also express their wishes for the future of the school. Some ideas are very creative and would need extensive funding and some ideas I put in place as soon as is appropriate. I learn a lot about how our school works from these fun short moments of communication and a hot chocolate! Children are so honest and so observant. This is what makes teaching the best job in the world.

As we head towards the busy half term leading towards Christmas, we look forward to singing at Westminster Cathedral and at the Mayor's Christmas concert. We are also in the process of organising our Christmas Bazaar which will be held in the school hall on the 25<sup>th</sup> November at 12 noon. Please come along and support the school.

Feel free to see the school at any time and join us for hot chocolate! It is a special place to visit and you are always welcome.

**Maire O'Regan, Headteacher**



# Benhurst

In April, we received news that Benhurst had been shortlisted for the TES Schools Award for Innovative use of Technology to enhance outcomes.

On the day of the awards, we celebrated with the children by holding a special technology day which included peer to peer sessions where older year groups trained younger year groups. The children wore party clothes for the day and decorated the hall with bunting and posters. At the end of the day, we held a special assembly to share our learning and celebrate our success.

Although we did not win the award, to be shortlisted was a fantastic achievement which everyone was really proud of. The children had an amazing day as did the staff at the awards evening at the Grosvenor Hotel, Park Lane!

**David Denchfield, Headteacher**



# The Bridge

The Bridge had its first, full, three day Ofsted Report this Academic Year. It was a challenging time but the final result was exceptionally pleasing and a validation of all the hard work and commitment from staff and students here at The Bridge.

This Term students and staff set about creating a beautiful garden, planting herbs, fruit trees and using their very own home grown produce to create wonderful fruit and savoury pastries.

I am also delighted to report this term that The Bridge hosted a number of workshops for staff and students covering a wide range of topics such as; Sexual Exploitation, Gang and County Lines and First Aid Training.

A variety of trips and visits were organised and very well attended by our students. They included a trip to London to visit the Victoria and Albert Museum for year 10 GCSE Art Group, a trip to Queens Theatre led by our Head of English, Janick Yeung, and a whole school trip to Colchester Zoo organised by our Science Teacher, Loraine Holland. An excellent day out was had by all and a fitting finish to a very productive and successful year.

**Toni Cox, Head of School**

