



LIFE Matters

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Autumn 2019

From the CEO

This has been an incredibly exciting term for the Trust. Having become a sponsor last year, we welcomed **Roxwell Primary School** officially into the Trust on 1st September. Maire O'Regan is now the Executive Headteacher of Roxwell and we are already seeing rapid improvements there and working towards a strong outcome in our Church SIAMS inspection which we expect this academic year. Kathryn Waters left as Headteacher at Dame Tipping this term and we are grateful for all she has done at the school. Amy Holmes becomes Head of School and will be supported by David Denchfield from Benhurst as Executive Headteacher. The Trust will also have a full time Human Resources Manager, Vicky Smith, from January 1st.

In November we attended **The National School Awards 2019** at the NEC in Birmingham to be considered for **MAT of the Year** alongside three fantastic Trusts that are all much bigger and more established than LIFE. Although we didn't win; it was an incredible honour to be one of the finalists.

Another real highlight was **The LIFE Celebration Event** on Friday 8th November at FBA. Pupils from every school were commended for their courageous optimism, boundless creativity and heartfelt compassion. We also had great performances from the schools and awarded our first Primary scholarships of £100 each to pupils from our Primary schools to reward their achievements. Pupils from all schools did extremely well in the summer.

Recent data from the Department for Education recognised another record year at both GCSE and A level for Frances Bardsley as well as amazing results at Margaretting.

We have met more frequently this term as leaders and governors. This has enabled us to plan joint events and discuss best practice.

The Trust works closely with other local MATs in particular the approved Diocese of Chelmsford Church of England MATs; an Essex group of CEOs called MAT2MAT; and the Havering based Success For All and Empower Learning Academy Trusts. Through these networks we have learnt about how to make our own Trust as effective and empowering for our pupils as possible.

The **Local Governing Bodies** in all schools met at least once during this term. Many of our senior staff and parents as well as other community members now serve on LGBs for Trust schools which helps us learn from each other and share good practice. Please get in touch if this is something that appeals to you.

The main Board meeting took place on the 26th November. Key items included reviewing the Strategic Plan; our Finance Plan; Governance and Networks for schools.

The work of LIFE International has developed under the management of Faith Spinks. She has supported Margaretting in their work with other European schools funded by a European Community grant and preparations in each school for the British Council International School Award. Plans for the trip to Tanzania in Summer 2020 are also developing well.

Trust schools will be very involved in the first **Havering Festival of Education** which takes place in the week beginning Monday 23rd March 2020.

As we come to the end of the term, we are reminding everyone of our vision; that every child and young person **dares to achieve the extraordinary**. We exist to make sure that all of our schools are places where pupils excel and grow with the skills and knowledge needed for the future.

Best Wishes
Julian Dutnall, CEO

From the Chair

I am writing at the end of an incredibly busy, but hugely fulfilling term. I am so proud of our pupils, students, staff, families and volunteers for all that they have achieved and for the amazing work that has been undertaken. I have thoroughly enjoyed meeting with those involved in each school, both adults and children, and feel a strong sense of pride in the LIFE family. I am really privileged to be involved and to work alongside such talented and committed individuals. We have had successes in terms of being the runners-up in the MAT of the Year Awards and have welcomed a new school into our midst. We have seen events such as our Celebration Evening where our children and young people have had the opportunity to showcase their creativity. We have seen new initiatives begun and new ways of working and studying introduced. Above all, in big and small ways, we have seen our core beliefs of courageous optimism, boundless creativity and heartfelt compassion demonstrated on a daily basis.

I look forward to 2020 knowing that, together, we will achieve great things with, and on behalf of the children and families that we serve. I hope that, whatever plans you have for the next couple of weeks, you will find time to rest and recharge your batteries, and above all to celebrate your part in our success.

**Louise Douglas,
Chair**

From our Business Manager

It has been a very busy term for the LIFE Business team, with Roxwell CofE Primary School joining the Trust. This addition came at one of the most important times in the financial calendar; the start of the new financial year, and the close of the previous one. We were very pleased with the excellent outcome of the external audit which was conducted by Moore Kingston Smith during this term. This rigorous process is determined by the DfE and highlights the financial health of the Trust, we are grateful to the financial staff in our schools as this process went very smoothly and gave us a good outcome. September also brings the annual publication of the Academies Financial Handbook from the ESFA for 2019. This handbook outlines the principles of good financial management and provides the foundations of the high standards of Governance, financial control and accountability we must achieve.

We have enjoyed our first term working alongside our Trust colleagues in the new LIFE corridor, with FBA also enjoying newly refurbished areas since returning for the Summer holidays. Margaretting returned to a refurbished and much improved early year's area and Dame Tipping now has a new hall floor for the pupils to enjoy. The changes don't stop there as The Bridge will be relocating to a new building on the FBA site next September. Mrs Cox and I visited a similar school under construction in Reading and it helped us in discussing the design and finish we would like for the new premises.

This term we are also looking into securing Condition Improvement Funding from the DfE. This funding will support capital projects within our schools and ensure that they are kept in good working order to provide a safe environment for our students. We will be informed of the outcome in April for projects to be completed during the Summer.

**Director of Operations
Denise Broom**



Director of Education

Last year was an exciting one in so many ways, with the addition of new schools, sponsorship status and three Ofsted inspections. However, this autumn term has been no less exciting, but in different ways, as we continue to shape how we grow together, relate to one another and reflect the Trust ethos and values, whilst preserving everything that is great and unique about each school.

We have new leaders, and new layers of leadership, across the schools with David and Maire currently acting as Executive Headteachers and Amy, Melissa and Sarah all doing a brilliant job of stepping up into more senior roles. With that in mind, we are developing both internal and external training and support for all of LIFE's leaders, including for our Local Governing Bodies.

As the last edition of LIFE Matters went to press, we knew that pupil outcomes across all our schools in 2019 had been excellent; and this edition coincides with the publication of the national School Performance Tables, which confirm just how well they did. There is much to celebrate in every school, but special mention should go to Frances Bardsley, who achieved "Above Average" status for the first time, and to Margaretting Primary School, who were "Well Above Average" for progress in Reading, in Writing and in Maths! In fact, they were #1 in the Essex league table of 529 schools for progress in reading and #2 and #4 for writing and maths. An incredible result for a school that dares to be creative and extraordinary, rather than simply chasing test results. Congratulations to Maire and all her staff.

On a personal note, I'd like to thank all my colleagues for their hard work and support and to wish them, and all readers, a very Happy Christmas, restful holiday and great New Year.

**Ian Gurman,
Director of Education**

LIFE PE Coordinator

In September Frances Bardsley gained the Platinum School Games Mark for the second time. This was for their work in the physical education curriculum, clubs and volunteering.

The Life Education Trust Year 5 Primary Games Event in October saw sixty primary school pupils from Benhurst, Dame Tipping, Margaretting and Roxwell take part in Netball, Football, Tag Rugby, Tennis and Basketball activities. The FBA Year 10 Sports Leaders Group helped to run the event as part of their Sports Leader Award.

I have been visiting Dame Tipping this term to work with a Year 3 group on Gymnastics. We have worked on travelling and balance and the group are working towards presenting their sequences.

The Frances Bardsley Inter Form Indoor Rowing competition took place in December with 200 girls taking part in teams. In third place were Beech with 31 points, second place were Oak with 33 points and the winners were Elm with 37 ½ points.

**Sharon Chapman,
LIFE PE Coordinator**

LIFE Education International

It has been a great first term for LIFE Education International. Starting as the new Programme Manager I have really enjoyed visiting the different MAT schools, getting to know some of the amazing staff and hearing about some of the internationalism already happening in our schools, while also looking to see how we can incorporate it even more.

We've also been working hard on initial planning of our first overseas teacher training conference. In July 2020, in the first week of our summer break, a group of teachers will travel from here to Geita in Tanzania. In this area it can be difficult to recruit quality teachers. These teachers also then lack the opportunity to take part in ongoing teacher training and development, which directly impacts the education they are able to deliver to the children. We will be working with around 20 local primary teachers and 20 local secondary teachers who are all very keen to develop their teaching, classroom management and school administration skills. Our group of teachers going out there will have the opportunity to spend time in these local schools getting to know the teachers and better understanding the education system there before taking some time to train and invest in those teachers. We look forward to this becoming a long term relationship and seeing fruit from this partnership both in Tanzania and in our own classrooms too.

We have launched our own website and continue to be busy building that, but if you want to see more of what we are up to then please do find us at www.lifeeducationinternational.com.

Merry Christmas – Joyeux Noël – Feliz Natal – Crăciun fericit – Iselogbe – Christmas MobArak – Nadolig Llawen – TraTra ny Noely

FaithSpinks
Programme Manager



LIFE Ethos in Action

Air Quality Project LIFE Ambassadors

According to the World Health Organisation, 2.4 million people die from air pollution each year. Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. As a result of the increasing threat to our health, the LIFE Ambassadors are focusing this year on a project to raise awareness of the issue and to see what impact individuals have on the air in their environment. The project is being managed by the students who are planning a green room, plant cleansing plant boxes and a possible living wall at each school. They will be sharing their findings with their peers offering presentations in assemblies and articles in newsletters to understand how humans impact pollution, the Ambassadors have written impact statements listing products that affect our air quality. We spend 90% of our time indoors, we have become the indoor generation. Dust, dirt or gases in the air, which we find in our homes and workplaces can harm us as we breathe it in causing asthma and other breathing problems. We cannot change the world but we can all make small changes that affect the world. Students will be measuring the PM (particular matter) within the atmosphere examining how we can change our habits to create cleaner air

It is the time of year when life becomes hectic and the expectation of Christmas can be overwhelming. Christmas may be something that we look forward to, or it may be a time that we find a bit tough. Through the layers of tinsel, the truth can sometimes mean a time of loneliness and inability to cope. Recent bereavement, relationship breakdown, and financial worries can all contribute to anxiety and poor mental health. The LIFE Education Trust reflects through the belief in heartfelt compassion, that we need to support those in our communities whose wellbeing is suffering. This year we will be raising awareness by visiting corporate offices in St Mary's Axe to sing carols and collect donations for the Heads Together and CRISIS Homeless Charity. The LIFE Ambassadors will also be supporting the local Samaritans at Romford Station as they promote their Christmas Campaign to make sure that whatever anyone is going through, the Samaritans will face it with them; 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Rachel Grimwood,
Culture and Ethos Manager

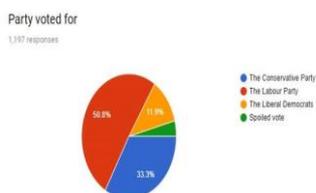


Frances Bardsley

Mock General Election

As the country headed to the polls on Thursday 12th December, the staff and students at FBA took part in our own Mock Election. We were really pleased to see students engaged with current affairs and taking part in form time and lesson activities that examined the manifestos from the three main political parties. This then led students to choose who to vote for on the big day.

Our results were quite different from the official results; however, we had a fantastic turn out of just under 1200 staff and students.



Anne Frank Exhibition – The Appleby Gallery

Once again, we were delighted to host the Anne Frank Exhibition at FBA. A group of students in Year 9 were selected and trained as Peer Guides to show students in Years 7 & 8 around the exhibition. From this group, 8 students were selected to develop into the role of Anne Frank Ambassadors.

Part of the programme was working with a film maker to create and shoot a short film with an anti-prejudice message.



Emilie Darabasz & David Turrell,
Heads of School, FBA

Dame Tipping

This term has been filled with enriching experiences for our school. Performing as a choir at the LIFE Celebration Event evoked a passion for singing and gave the children a huge boost of confidence. Since then we have been keen to strengthen the links with our local community by sharing the joy of singing. This term we have performed in and around the local community, singing for the patients, families and staff at Saint Francis Hospice and attending the Carols on the Green, which is organised by our local neighbourhood team HABCOS.



This term also saw the introduction of our project based homework across the school. The homework has been linked closely to the topics in each class and the children have been able to choose from a range of activities that best suit their learning preferences. We wait in anticipation each half term to see the amazing range of homework that we receive. We cannot wait to see what adventures next half term has in store!



Amy Holmes,
Head of School

Margaretting

Margaretting Primary School has had a very successful term. We were really pleased to return to school in September, to see the £180,000 refurbishment of our EYFS and library area. The classroom and library are now bright, air conditioned spaces and a real joy to teach and learn in. The staff love the new facilities and the children are fascinated by the sky lights in the library.

We welcomed new staff this term as many of our staff went on maternity leave and had lovely babies in the summer term. Our new staff have settled in very well and two of them have enjoyed a week in Hungary learning about the exciting Erasmus Project that the school will undertake in four countries very soon. Four children will travel to Greece in February and study fairy tales from around the world in a Greek school. Some of the other children have been studying a variety of subject areas, one involving chocolate. The recent visit of a professional chocolatier to the school has made sure that lots of the children can make their own delicious chocolate.

The nativity production and the performance at Westminster Cathedral made sure that we were in the festival mood by December. What a great term!

**Maire O'Regan,
Headteacher**

Roxwell

The children and staff at Roxwell Primary School have worked very hard this term. We joined LIFE in September and welcomed Mr Dutnall and the LIFE family at a special assembly. We also presented Mr Dutnall with a LIFE coloured clock.

Our aim this term was to get to know our community better and we have launched many community projects. Year 1 and Year 2 have hosted an afternoon tea for the people of Roxwell village and there was a great atmosphere at the event. The EYFS class have produced pieces of artwork which they have distributed around the village for people to keep. 'Free Art Friday' takes place some Fridays and the local community have responded to say how much they enjoy it. We have even had gifts to the school from our neighbours! Our chosen charity this year is supporting the repair of the Roxwell church roof. The Head Boys have come up with some great fundraising ideas and the non-uniform day and the up and coming Roof Raffle are making a big impact on this charity.



Roxwell is delighted to be part of the LIFE Educational Trust and look forward to continuing to work with the Trust in the future.

**Maire O'Regan,
Executive Headteacher**

Benhurst

After a year of research and many discussions, we launched our new curriculum in September. The Cornerstones curriculum is based on topics which are designed to engage, develop, innovate and celebrate children's learning. New topics start with a trip or exciting event at school which have been a huge success. The children have really enjoyed this new approach to learning and look forward to the launch events and practical activities. One particularly memorable lesson this term was in Year 3, where the children were tasked with dissecting owl pellets and identifying the types of prey the owl had consumed. It caused much excitement and was a lesson the children will never forget! Other events included a VE Day Tea Party, a visit into space through a wonder dome and exploring an alien crash site on the field. Learning at Benhurst has never been so exciting!

**David Denchfield,
Headteacher**



The Bridge

The Bridge has enjoyed an excellent start to the new academic year with a record number of vulnerable students re-engaging with education here at The Bridge. There have also been a number of firsts for us this term. The introduction of a Personal Trainer in September, ensures our students will benefit from a healthy body as well as a healthy mind. Our very first outdoor learning challenge took place at the Olympic and Greenwich Parks, thanks to our Maths Teacher Klara. The school's Enrichment and Enterprise Projects have been met with great enthusiasm. Students have made and created a wealth of produce, using ingredients from the school garden, which they proudly displayed and sold at our Parents Evening, raising over £100.00 for our chosen Christmas Charity, The Salvation Army Appeal.

**Toni Cox,
Head of School**