



SPRING TERM NEWSLETTER

WELCOME

Welcome to the Easter edition of the Trust newsletter. The spring term has seen most of our children learning at home, with a mixture of computers, iPads and paper packs to support this. The Trust's digital offer, combined with devices from the government and further support from local businesses and charities meant that everybody who requested a device had one and that some families with more than two children, could have additional devices. For those children with key worker parents and guardians, their learning continued, as before within the academies. Whether at home or at school, all of the children have said they enjoyed the chance to see their friends online through photographs, class or whole school assemblies, but especially so when all children arrived back at school on Monday 8th March. It was wonderful to see the excitement and happiness from our children and even more so to hear the laughter and sounds of children playing together outside. The academies seemed to open up with life at the same time that the spring flowers of daffodils, crocuses and snowdrops opened along with the days becoming lighter.

For me, the return of all of our children, the arrival of Spring and the hope that Easter always engenders in terms of new life, is obviously shared throughout the newsletter. I hope you enjoy seeing the range of home and school photographs, all of the learning opportunities throughout the curriculum subjects and of course, the wonderful reading being undertaken on World Book Day and every other day...



MISS K MORLEY
CEO
TEES VALLEY EDUCATION





BRAMBLES PRIMARY ACADEMY

Brambles Blended Learning

Since the 4th January, the way that we have worked at Brambles has changed significantly. While we had many of our Key Worker children in the academy, still many of our children worked extremely hard from home. In such a strange time for many, our children have shown incredible effort and resilience to complete work via our online learning platform 'Showbie'. Thank you to the children, families and staff.

Year 1

Year 1 have linked their learning to pirates and have learnt many different things and when they returned to the academy, the children enjoyed an engagement day that involved dressing up as pirates and going on their very own Pirate adventure using a real treasure map. During their online learning, they focused on geography, particularly being able to identify the various continents and countries around the world. Through the use of videos and, in line with Online Safety Week, the children were guided in discussion about how to stay safe online. Libby then created a laptop of her own and used the screen to identify the steps to staying safe online.



Year 2

Year 2 learned about the brilliant art work of Mackenzie Thorpe. Through Showbie, they looked at the example pictures and Lilla recreated one of these at home with her mum. Great work Lilla! All of the teachers were really impressed with your work!

Both in school and at home, the children made models with 3D shapes. Year 2 also focused on a mathematics and life skills including money. The pupils made the same total amount with as many different coins as possible.

Year 3

During the most recent lockdown, Year 3 undertook a huge range of Blended Learning opportunities. At home, Mason worked hard to investigate forces and magnets, Sienna practised more/ less than 100 and Ella demonstrated how to follow her REED approach by highlighting key words and answering questions related to Isaac Newton. The children in the academy made volcanoes using clay. They painted and blended them to add extra detail. Once completed, we found a recipe online and created a volcanic eruption using baking powder, washing up liquid and red food dye. We had fantastic fun!

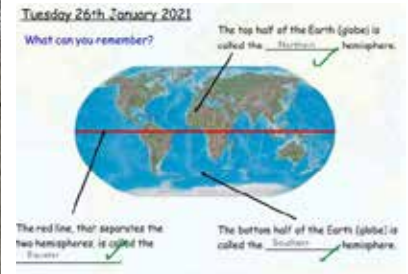




BRAMBLES PRIMARY ACADEMY

Year 4

Children in Year 4, both in the academy and at home, took part in a wide variety of engaging and enjoyable activities. As part of their Science topic 'Solids, Liquids & Gases', the children were given the challenge of creating their own 'Window Water Cycle'. Supporting this Science work, the Geography topic 'Hot & Cold Places' allowed the children to learn about different climates in different parts of the world. In Design & Technology, the children were asked to make their own bird feeder using recycled materials and we received some excellent examples that had been created at home.



Year 5

In Year 5, we have been exploring all about materials and their properties. Lennon has worked really hard at home to test whether different materials are soluble or insoluble in water. He conducted his own experiments including testing everyday items found in his kitchen like flour. It turns out that flour is insoluble, meaning that it does not dissolve in water. Instead of dissolving in water, flour will absorb water to form a sticky suspension. Also, the Year 5 pupils worked hard throughout the spring term to keep up their reading and maths work both in the academy and at home. Our reading process and calculation work was completed online and the children engaged with the tasks through Showbie.

Year 6

Throughout the lockdown, the Year 6 pupils engaged with learning both in the academy and at home. Their focus for the term was America and they completed tasks that looked at how America was colonised, how it won independence, and more recent events such as the Black Lives Matter campaign and the impact of Social Injustice in the country. They then studied some of the key tourist destinations which allowed Grace to create a very detailed and engaging presentation all about Disney World in Florida. They also completed some writing about the British lockdown hero Captain Sir Tom Moore, Oliver completed an incredible Biography of Captain Tom and the impact he had on the country throughout the past year.

Inspirational Man

At the grand old age of 100 Captain Sir Tom Moore will be remembered as the pandemic hero.

His determination to complete a goal was what made him a hero.

He lived his life to the fullest and accomplished so much in his magnificent life.

He was an Army man first and then a sales manager for a roofing materials company in Yorkshire. Then a managing director of a Fens-based company manufacturing concrete.

Moore raced motorcycles competitively. He purchased his first when he was 12 and wore the number 23. He rode a Scott motorcycle, winning several trophies.

Moore was a member of the Keighley and District Photographic Association between 1934 and 1936, as his father had also been.

He was also a contestant in the Christmas Day 1983 edition of the BBC Television game show Blankety Blank.

RIP Sir Tom: we will remember you



World Book Day

As World Book Day was celebrated while some of our children were still learning from home, we at Brambles decided to encourage two weeks of World Book Day celebrations beginning on the children's return to the academy. Teachers have all chosen their favourite children's book and have created a video of themselves explaining why it is their favourite book and reading short sections of it. They have chosen a wide range of books from *Room on the Broom* and *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* to *Harry Potter* and *The Firework Maker's Daughter*. This allowed children to see a wide variety of books as well as see teachers from across the entire academy.



DISCOVERY SPECIAL ACADEMY

Healthy Minds Week

This year, within the academy, we have had a focus on promoting health and well-being, building children's understanding of their own emotions and the emotions of others, and helping children to understand themselves better. Children are encouraged to express and communicate their emotions through language and Makaton and using our academy communication boards. We shared a range of activities together to mark Healthy Minds Week, including art and creative activities, yoga and mindfulness and sensory sessions.



Physical development

A range of Physical Development opportunities are offered throughout the academy day. 'Squiggle while you Wiggle' is an early writing programme which uses dance and large movements to help children develop the fine motor control needed for writing. To further support development of fine motor skills, Dough Disco involves moulding dough in time to music, performing different actions such as rolling, squeezing and flattening to strengthen children's fine motor skills to enable them to develop pencil grip.

To develop gross motor skills, Physical Education lessons include the teaching of a range of movement skills, ball skills, athletics, team games and dance. Our outdoor areas continue to be well used during playtimes, in addition to their use as part of the curriculum. There is a strong link between positive emotional well-being and physical activity as it promotes better sleep, increased energy and managing anxiety, and children enjoy the range of physical opportunities the academy offers.



World Book Day

As we were not altogether to share World Book Day, we chose one story to share to bring us together as a whole academy community. We all enjoyed reading 'Ssh! We have a plan!' by Chris Haughton. Children in the academy enjoyed reading and sharing the story in their classes, with a range of activities linked to the story including sensory and literacy work and a dramatical performance by our Key Stage 2 classes. Children learning at home enjoyed the story on the academy website with personalised learning provided in a paper learning pack and on Showbie.





DISCOVERY SPECIAL ACADEMY

Reading and writing shed

We have recently installed a brand-new reading and writing shed in our playground. Reading and communication are key focuses within the academy and we encourage children to enjoy books in a wide range of environments. Children can share stories with each other and staff and enjoy mark making during outdoor learning sessions and playtime.

Outdoor kitchen

The outdoor kitchen is very popular with our children. An outdoor kitchen, or mud kitchen, is an outdoor, pretend kitchen area. It provides more than just the chance to explore mud, get messy and have fun, they also provide a whole variety of different learning opportunities for children. Sensory, imagination and creativity skills are developed as children create and explore in the kitchen. Maths, Science, problem-solving skills and communication are promoted as children 'cook', for example, looking for the equipment, filling and emptying containers, sharing and turn taking.



Chinese New Year

To celebrate Chinese New Year children took part in art and music sessions. Traditional Chinese dragons and decorations were made which children used in an outdoor dance session to mark the special event. Sensory work and Attention Autism sessions with a Chinese theme ensured every child could get involved and experience the special occasion.





DORMANSTOWN PRIMARY ACADEMY

CELEBRATING READING AT DORMANSTOWN

"There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's loot on Treasure Island." - Walt Disney

Despite COVID-19, the children and community of Dormanstown have been having oodles of fun with books.

Reading Spines

Within the academy, each year group has a reading spine – a core set of text which allow them to explore a variety of authors purely for the enjoyment and love of reading. Over the last 2 academic years, the children have been using these to further develop their fluency and expression, through a variety of speaking and listening activities which involve little to no writing; allowing the children to explore their love of genres and authors freely within the sessions.



Our Library

The Academy's library tent had to be taken down due to COVID-19, however, like a butterfly emerging from a cocoon, our library area has been re-born, as the home for our very own (very hungry) caterpillar. Children worked during lockdown, via remote learning and in school to create pieces of work based on the classic Eric Carle text, which is now in its 52nd year of publishing! Life cycles, changes, symmetry, colour-mixing and narrative writing were explored across the

academy to not only re-establish the library as our reading hub, but also allow the children to explore the joys reading can bring beyond looking at the words on the paper.



World Book Day

Further to this, a reading competition was held for children to dress up as their favourite characters and read in the wackiest of places they could find. Sitting in trees, balancing on cupboards, hiding in bedrooms and swimming in baths were just some of the hilarious places our children took part.

Despite the hardships of COVID-19, the children truly have tried their best to engage with their learning, and books have been at the forefront of this. What an unexpected, yet enjoyable term the children have had!





DORMANSTOWN PRIMARY ACADEMY

LADIES OF STEEL

Our wonderful friends, the Ladies of Steel, provided a stationery pack for all the children in school during lockdown and other children, undertaking home learning, could request a pack also. More amazing support for our families.



SAFER INTERNET DAY

During the recent national lockdown, all our children from Y1 upwards were able to borrow a school iPad to access home learning. As an academy we had to ensure all children continued to be safe online at home, as well as access home learning. All classes continued their planned work which included e-safety. There was a particular focus on this for Safer Internet Day. Younger children were able to listen to stories such as 'Chicken Clicking', others watched videos and carried out role play about being safe and understanding what can be trusted online, which is really important in these times of 'fake news'. Children were able to respond with posters, poems and speech bubbles.

Children, and staff, have developed their knowledge, using technology to teach and learn. All classes have had live daily lessons for them to join, as well as teaching videos, staff telling stories and daily PE challenges to watch and take part in. These new skills will continue to be used in lessons now we are back in school.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

This year's theme was 'Express Yourself', and children followed the 5 day ELSA challenges linked to this. Each day they did a different challenge to help them learn about mental health and use strategies to improve their well-being:

Day 1 - Draw a picture or tell someone how you are feeling today.

Day 2 - Listen to some music and draw how it makes you feel.

Day 3 - Visualise a place that makes you feel calm and relaxed.

Day 4 - Stand in front of a mirror and make as many facial expressions as you can.

Day 5 - Talk about photographs of things that make you happy.

Children in school and at home shared and discussed their outcomes.



GEOGRAPHY IN YEAR 3

In Year 3, we have been learning about the earth, earthquakes and volcanoes in geography. Firstly, we learnt about the different layers of the earth. We cut up a peach to help us understand the layers of the earth are like a peach: a stone for the core, the flesh for the mantle and the skin for the earth's crust, and we made models of the layers in the image using tissue paper. When we learnt about volcanoes, we made a model from papier-mache, and the most exciting part was when we made them explode! This helped with our learning and allowed us to explain how a volcano erupts using key vocabulary. Children at home also enjoyed accessing all our learning.

BRITISH SCIENCE WEEK

We celebrated British Science Week during the 5th -14th March, and the overall theme for the week was 'Innovating the Future'. Each year group followed a theme, linked to a local company, and an enquiry questions was their focus. The themes were:

EYFS - The World around Us - What grows in your garden? (Westfield Farm)

Year 1 - Bridges and Structures - How can we improve the Transporter Bridge? (Sparks Tees Valley)

Year 2 - Floating and Sinking - What material is best to build a boat? (RNLI - Redcar Lifeboat)

Year 3/ KS2 Base - Protecting the Environment - How can we be greener? (R&C Council)

Year 4 - Electricity (Wind Farms) - How do wind turbines produce electricity? (UK STEM)

Year 5 - Chemical Engineering - How is plastic made? (SABIC)

Year 6 - Electricity - How can we produce electricity in a more sustainable way? (UK STEM)

The aim of the week was to break down stereotypes and raise ambitions for the STEM industry, as well as the children having fun and working scientifically.



PENNYMAN PRIMARY ACADEMY

Keeping Active During Half Term

During half term we sent out an Activity timetable with lots of different physical activities for children and their families to be able to access to keep active. These included live movement sessions with Tees Valley Sport, a live street dance session, The Joy of Winter Games in partnership with MFC Foundation and the EFL Trust. Children could keep active taking part in the Train like an Avenger challenge, cardio wall challenge, Boccia noughts and crosses, gymnastics plus an orienteering and continuous running challenge.

Pennyman Primary Academy is taking part in the travel to Tokyo virtual Challenge from Team GB, Paralympics GB and Sport England. Tokyo is the host City for the next Olympics. The challenge encourages children to try new things, get active and have fun. Year group teams are competing against each other and a staff team. All participants log their activity for their team and the race is on!



Blended Learning

The children at Pennyman have embraced the adaptations to their blended learning during lockdown. Seesaw Online Learning Platform is the educational tool used by pupils to access their learning at home. Every day the children have enjoyed live teaching complimented by the home learning work packs distributed at the start of each half term. Further school subscriptions have been added to our catalogue of online learning resources allowing us to even further enhance our 'blended learning' offer which now includes Sumdog, Classroom Secrets Kids, Seesaw, Times Table Rock Stars, Spelling Shed, SORA, Purple Mash and Phonics Bloom.

Learning around National Online Safety Day has further developed the pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe whilst online. Mrs Coates produced a Seesaw tutorial for parents to support their child in accessing their learning and a Seesaw tutorial for pupils to navigate and maximise their learning whilst promoting independence. We are so proud of our Pennyman learners and the resilience and perseverance they have shown in abundance to continue to be the best they can be during this challenging time.





PENNYMAN PRIMARY ACADEMY

Lockdown Chess

The Year 3 and Year 4 children attending the academy during partial closure have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to develop their strategic thinking, adjust to new situations and strengthen their planning abilities through weekly live online chess lessons delivered through Teesside CSC (Chess in School and Communities).



World Book Day – 4th March 2021

We love reading at Pennyman and World Book Day is always a highlight of the reading calendar. This year children in school and at home have been able to undertake lots of amazing activities and to be involved in some exciting events.

We have had a guess the character photography competition with great book prizes; children have had the chance to dress up or create props for their favourite stories; teachers in school filmed a fantastic Masked Reader video for children to access from home and all students were able to participate in a live author workshop with Cressida Cowell author of How To Train Your Dragon.

Our youngest readers in EYFS and KS1 have all received a free World Book Day Book to read at home, and we have been able to electronically send £1 book tokens so all children can make the most of the World Book Day offer.

All our Pennyman community had an amazing time, and the work, photographs and messages the children sent showed how much they enjoyed the day!



British Science Week 8th – 12th March 2021

Each year, the British Science Association runs a ten-day celebration of science, technology, engineering and maths called British Science Week. This half term, everyone at Pennyman has joined in with schools from across the UK to take part in events and activities to develop their skills in these areas. Children have learnt about lots of famous scientists such as Louis Pasteur, Marie Curie, Margaret Hamilton and Stephen Hawking. They have researched a variety of STEM careers: vets, dentists, nurses, doctors, conservationists, engineers and forensic scientists. Everyone especially loved doing practical investigations!

EYFS, Mr Blackburn's and Miss Gates's classes did lots of role play activities; Year 1 tested the effectiveness of different toothpastes; Year 2 and Mrs Hutchinson's class learnt about how germs travel when we sneeze and how to keep ourselves safe using the 'Catch It, Kill It, Bin It' rule; Year 3 were investigating whether the appearance of food affects how it tastes; Year 4 and Mrs Newbold's class looked at different types of plastics and how to recycle them; Year 5 designed their own Robobugs and Year 6 had a brilliant time using ink chromatography and fingerprint analysis to find out who stole our jar of sweets! Lots of our families also joined in with our celebrations by completing science activities at home and sending us photographs of their amazing work on Seesaw.



WILTON PRIMARY ACADEMY

Daily Reading

Reading is so important and during the latest lockdown is something everybody has been able to continue and participate with, whether they be at home or in the academy. Daily reading lessons have continued with the teachers working hard to develop their technical skills to be able to read and share videos with the children.



Zoom Session with Author Valerie Bloom

This term we were really lucky to secure a zoom session with the author Valerie Bloom. The children in KS2 completed some research about Valerie and prepared some questions to ask her about her life and her writing. Isaac and Grace were lucky enough to have their questions read out and answered by Valerie. After reading some of the poems Valerie has written in her new book, *Starts with Flaming Tails*, the children then wrote and presented their own poems to make a class anthology.





WILTON PRIMARY ACADEMY

World Book Day

Throughout World Book Day, the children read and listened to their favourite stories. These were shared with children in the academy and at home. Some children chose to dress up as their favourite book characters too! The children in year 3&4 took part in various activities based on the character Tom Gates from the books written by Liz Pichon. They had a live chat with the author and took part in a doodle along with Tom Gates where they had to create a new character for the books. In the book 'Tiny Bit Lucky' Tom made doodles of animals and objects from string. The children then designed a new character this way for one of Liz Pichon's books. Tom Gates also wrote a recipe for brilliant biscuits so the children also tried that using their maths skills and team work!

Mrs Stephenson's class had a live chat with Cressida Cowell, author of How to Train your Dragon. She shared some tips for writing exciting stories and the children loved hearing how she came up with some of her ideas.



Blended Learning

Within the blended learning offer, our children are spending more time online in front of a laptop or iPad screen. Whilst this is a fantastic way for staff and children to share work and keep in touch, it is more important than ever to remind children how to keep safe on the internet. Internet safety day was the focus of assembly, each class followed this up with completing work around how they could keep themselves and others safe online.



Task Master Challenge

As well as making sure the children continued to have access to their curriculum during the lockdown, we also ran a Task Master challenge. This was a series of fun challenges for the children to take part in at home. The activities covered a wide range of activities including who can butter a slice of bread the fastest without using any cutlery, finding/making something that looks like you and reading in an unusual place! Lots of children took part and enjoyed sharing their successes. Some children also entered a competition run by Cleveland Police with the theme Express Yourself and to share what you are looking forward to doing once the restrictions are eased.





TVED Reading

Our Top 3 Online Resources for you to read at home:



Discover expert advice, educational resources and free eBooks to support children's learning at primary school and at home, from Oxford University Press.



There are classic children's stories that you and your family will love, including Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy and Owl Babies, along with newer favourites such as Oh No, George! and Everybunny Dance!



Epic is the leading digital reading platform—built on a collection of 40,000+ popular, high-quality books from 250+ of the world's best publishers—that safely fuels curiosity and reading confidence for kids 12 and under

Let us know which book you chose to read?

The First Steps In Reading:

Your child may be too young to start reading independently, but you can still point them in the right direction. Here are our top tips for encouraging a love of reading in our youngest pupils:

Reading aloud to your child

Talking about the words and pictures, and sharing ideas about the book

Reading yourself

Children who see adults reading, and enjoying it, are much more likely to want to read themselves

Surrounding your child with books

You don't need hundreds of books at home, but go to the library or bookshop regularly to borrow books, spend time together, browse and make choices. In this way, reading becomes a habit.





TEES VALLEY EDUCATION



Why do we read?

Reading is one of the most important skills your child will ever learn, and is a skill which will stay with them and benefit them throughout their lives. Here are 5 of the key reasons why we should all read for enjoyment:

1. Reading exercises our brain.

Reading strengthens brain connections and builds new connections.

2. Reading improves concentration.

Children have to sit still and quietly so that they can focus on the story when they are reading. If they read often, they will develop the skill to do this for longer.

3. Reading improves vocabulary and language skills.

Children learn new words as they read. They absorb information on how to structure sentences and how to use words and other language features in their writing.

4. Reading develops a child's imagination.

While we are engaged in a story we are also imagining how a character is feeling. Young children then bring this knowledge into their everyday play.

5. Reading is a fun.

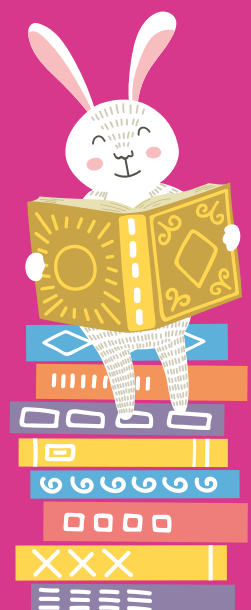
A book or an e-reader doesn't take up much space and is light to carry, so you take it anywhere so you can never be bored if you have a book in your bag.

Reading over the Easter holidays

As we approach the end of term, it is important that you continue to encourage your child to read.

Why not try to complete some of our reading challenges, and have fun reading some new books together!

1. Sit back, relax and listen to an audiobook.
2. Draw, paint or make your favourite character
3. Make a comic strip of your favourite book, or tell your own story.
4. Write a letter or Tweet an author. You could get a reply from them!
5. Read in a strange place. Take a photo, and send it to your school.
6. Read aloud to a family member. Practice using your voice for expression.





International Women's Day

On March 8th, we celebrated International Women's Day across the Trust by taking part in Teesside Universities International Women's Day virtual event. Alternative materials were developed for an IWD careers project which focussed on an exercise aimed at inspiring girls and also encouraging them to think about their aspirations and ambitions. Girls in Year 6 are currently working through activity sheets along with some examples and inspiring stories from inspirational women from our area.

Going forward, to give our girls a voice, the stories will be shared on Teesside Universities IWD webpage.

This year, Teesside University also developed an inspiration wall on their webpage. To link with they invited us to be part of developing an aspirations wall based on the girl's work, using specific elements from their projects – we look forward to sharing this with you!



International
Women's Day



Perhaps you might like to try some of the activities the girls will be working on:

Creating a vision board

Thinking about what you want to achieve, collect some pictures to go on your vision board. These could be online or from old magazines. Select pictures that represent what you want to achieve. Be as creative as you want. Then, put them all together. The format of this is up to you – it could be a poster, it could be something you create on a computer. Add all of these to your board. The next step is to think of words that go with your goals. These are called affirmations and will help you picture what success will look and feel like. Here are a few example words: happy, successful, empowered, strong, healthy. Add the words to your vision board.



Storyboarding

Think about your story and the steps you will need to take to achieve it. For example, it could be travel, study, or work. It depends on what it is you want to achieve. Start with where you are now and where you will be when you achieve your goal. Use the template we've given you to draw your story. Don't stop at one page if you want to do more, keep creating if you want to!



Creating a film

Unleash your inner director! Think about how you would turn your career plan into a film. Using your storyboard, think about how you would turn it into a movie. This could be the dialogue in each scene, what music would be used, costumes or even who would play your supporting roles. You can even think about if it would be an animation or live action production. The sky's the limit!





TEES VALLEY EDUCATION

I cannot put into words how happy we all are to fully open our academies once again and to welcome our wonderful pupils. Tees Valley Education is a family with you our pupils, parents, teachers, staff and communities at its very heart. As with all families the last 12 months have brought challenges, sadness and a huge loss of social contact but we are getting through the pandemic with resilience and everywhere I look across our academies I see the brilliance of our diamond standards shining: Commitment, Curiosity, Courage and Care.

Your trustees, governors, leaders, teachers and all staff at the Trust have been extremely busy over the last 12 months as we have all been determined to build an even better future for our pupils, learning from all we have faced together. We know how to deliver educational excellence and support wellbeing but we have seen how this can be enhanced, for example with the use of different technologies. We are all determined that, with our children at the very heart of everything we do, we are going to change, develop and build an even better Trust for you all.

This newsletter again highlights just a few of the great achievements and activities across all our academies and Trust – I am so proud of everyone and I hope you share in my pride.

We all hope the start of a return to some normality is here and I kindly ask, as we break for the Easter holidays, that you take a moment to look outside at the renewal and rebirth that this time of year brings which we welcome this year more than ever.

Stay connected, stay sensible and stay safe.



Mr J Brine
Chair of the Trust Board





TEES VALLEY EDUCATION

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