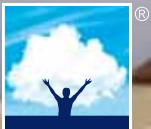


Blue Skies

Sailing for Gold
in Argentina



United Church Schools Trust
The best in everyone™



United Learning Trust
The best in everyone™

Internet safety –
a way of life

Smoothing the way for
primary children



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To contribute to the next edition of Blue Skies please email: joanna.mills@ult.org.uk

Welcome

Welcome to the latest issue of Blue Skies. The 2010/11 academic year has been a busy and exciting year for the United Church Schools Trust and the United Learning Trust.

Starting the year with our best ever GCSE and A levels, we have celebrated outstanding school inspections and fantastic extracurricular achievements across the group. We have also continued to grow, with the Emmanuel Schools Foundation joining us in the North East and St Mary's Preparatory School joining us in Lincoln.

In this issue, we bring you all the latest news and we shine a spotlight on our ICT learning programmes and the superb work our academies are doing to make the transition from primary school to secondary school as smooth as possible. We also give you an insight into our bespoke professional development programmes as well as the innovative initiatives our London academies are employing to drive up literacy standards among students.

After 21 years steering the group through a period of substantial growth and establishing it as one of the largest education charities in the country, Sir Ewan Harper has stepped down as Chief Executive. You can read about the mark Sir Ewan has left on the organisation in the pages that follow. The process for

appointing a new Chief Executive is currently underway, with an appointment due to be made in the autumn.

It is without doubt the end of an era but we are looking forward to our growing group of schools and academies continuing to work together with shared values and objectives to bring out the best in everyone.



Charlotte Rendle-Short
Acting Chief Executive of UCST



Kathy August
Acting Chief Executive of ULT



James Nicholson
Acting Deputy Chief Executive of UCST & ULT



On the cover: Sailing for Gold in Argentina

Hampshire Collegiate School student Annabel Vose and her team mate, Megan Brickwood, have secured the Ladies World Title at the 420 World Sailing Championships in Buenos Aires.

In difficult choppy conditions Annabel and Megan thought their chances of a medal from the event were over on day one; breaking their mast just before the finish line in race two. Luckily they managed to hold on to their sixth place position in the race, crossing the line just in front of the rest of the fleet to hold on to second place in the overnight standings.

Annabel said: 'When we crossed the line in the last race we knew we'd done enough to get the Gold but we thought there was another race. It wasn't until our coaches told us that that was it for the day that we could believe we really had won!'

Parents Robert and Jane Vose, who are thrilled with Annabel's success, expressed their gratitude to the school:

'Annabel could not have reached this level of achievement in her sailing without the fantastic support of Hampshire Collegiate School. They have always recognised and celebrated her achievements. The teachers and tutors all go that extra mile to support Annabel, allowing her to attend overseas sailing regattas, some of which extend beyond the holidays. They even managed to schedule the AS Maths revision class so that Annabel could fly back from Argentina in the morning and not miss it. The school helps Annabel to find the right balance between completing her academic work and fulfilling her sporting commitments.'

Thank you for 21 flourishing years

At the end of June, we said goodbye to Sir Ewan Harper, who has been the group's Chief Executive since 1990.

Under Sir Ewan's leadership, the organisation has grown from just seven independent schools to a flourishing and vibrant family of 11 independent schools, 20 academies and one City Technology College. Supported by his wife Lady Harper, Sir Ewan has inspired thousands of pupils to have a lifelong love of learning.



Paying tribute to Sir Ewan

The Rt Revd & Rt Hon The Lord Carey of Clifton, UCST Chairman

'As you step down from your office, no words are adequate in expressing our admiration at your achievements for us, and with us. You have always sought to "bring out the best in everyone"; and by giving us your best, you leave us in such a strong position today.'

The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury and UCST Patron

'Ewan has given of his time, resource, energy in hugely generous quantity to many causes but very particularly to the task of Christian education in the UK; his efforts have borne abundant fruit.'

Mr Edward Gould, ULT Chairman

'May you and Jenny have time to enjoy the "beauty" and reflect on the marvellous opportunities you have given thousands of children while leaving your mark on the educational scenery of this country. So many owe you their warmest thanks.'

Lady Prior, UCST Vice-Patron and former Chair 1993-1999
'Ewan has combined the strong business brain with deep understanding of the needs of education in both the public and private sectors. He has pointed the way ahead and all educationalists will be well advised to look closely at what he has achieved.'

Mr Tony Cann CBE, Promethean UK Founder and Vice-Chairman, Bowland Charitable Trust Trustee and Chair of Governors, Accrington Academy

'Very few people have real vision. Only a small proportion of these make the vision happen. Even less have a vision that contributes so much to the lives of so many children. Ewan is one of these.'

The final word from Sir Ewan

As my time at the group draws to a close, my wife Jenny and I have found that the quiet lunches and dinners which we had planned with groups of heads and senior leadership teams have been both moving and enlightening.

We have found a growing sense of belonging, people who might only have been in a school or academy for a year or two speak with conviction about why being part of our group matters to them.

They are drawn by all that sits behind our strap line: 'the best in everyone'. It is the uncompromising commitment to belonging to the best and making sure that anything we have and do is available for everyone.

I am constantly reminded that our approach to education, with its expectation of a deep love of children irrespective of which bed they are born in, is at the heart of our vision and commitment. We come away from our time in UCST and ULT feeling very proud of the people leading and working in our schools and academies.





Lincoln Minster's Music School and Sports Hall is officially opened

In June, Lincoln Minster School's new £10 million music school and sports hall was officially opened by Sir Ewan Harper. Named in honour of Sir Ewan, the Harper Music School and Sports Hall boasts a Sport England sports hall, 17 practice rooms, five classrooms, music technology features and a recital hall.

Speaking at the opening, Principal Clive Rickart hailed the long-term impact the facilities will bring. He said:

'There is a genuine passion for music and sport of all kinds, for achievement and performance at Lincoln Minster School and this energy has been the driving force behind the School's continuing growth and development.'

Construction under way

Students and staff at Midhurst Rother College, Shoreham Academy and Kettering Buccleuch Academy are one step nearer to moving into their new buildings as construction gets underway.



Turf cutting ceremonies have been held at each of the three academies with local dignitaries joining students and staff to celebrate the beginning of construction. We were particularly delighted that the Duke of Buccleuch who is President of Kettering Buccleuch and whose estate is closely associated with the academy, could join us at its ceremony in May.

As well as cutting the first turf where construction is beginning, students buried time capsules filled with objects of special significance including photos of students and staff, the academies' uniforms and copies of the local papers.

The plans for the new buildings are very exciting and we look forward to working in partnership with West Sussex County Council, Kettering Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council as the plans become a reality.



Children dig in to spruce up Midhurst Rother College's new entrance

Midhurst Rother College's entrance received a face-lift when more than 50 nursery school children spent the day planting flowers outside the College.

The nursery school children, who may well be MRC students one day, were the first people, other than the construction workers, to walk up the College's new drive.

Balfour Beatty, which is overseeing construction of the new building, provided the flowers and their workers were on hand to help staff and children. Every young gardener was given a set of gardener's tools and a sticker that said: 'Today I helped make the garden of Midhurst Rother College beautiful!'

Official opening of new amphitheatre at Hampshire Collegiate School

Parents, pupils and governors attended the opening of a new amphitheatre in the grounds of Hampshire Collegiate School.



The amphitheatre was officially opened and named 'The Orchard Theatre' by Charlotte Rendle-Short. After cream tea, served in the afternoon sunshine, the audience enjoyed music and drama performances by pupils, in a relaxed and informal setting.

The amphitheatre will be enjoyed by pupils of all ages across the Junior School for a variety of lessons including drama and music. It is already well used each break time, where it has become a quiet place to sit and read, play chess or have a chat. For younger pupils it has become a castle, a fortress, and even a ship – imaginations have run wild!



Lincoln schools set to merge

In March, we announced that UCST's Lincoln Minster Preparatory School will be merging with St Mary's Preparatory School this September. The combined prep school, which will be called St Mary's Preparatory School, will have up to 370 pupils and, when combined with Lincoln Minster's senior school, will create an 'all-through school' of approximately 950 pupils.

Announcing the merger, Charlotte Rendle-Short explained that the two Lincolnshire schools 'have long shared a commitment to excellent standards and an ethos of nurturing children in all aspects of their development'. She went on to explain:

'In merging with each other, our objective is for the new St Mary's to become a leading preparatory school with a national reputation while also keeping stable the cost of education for parents.'

Top of the class

The impressive progress our ULT academies had made at GCSE last summer became apparent when the Department for Education's Achievement and Attainment Tables were published in January.

Three of the top four most improved academies at GCSE in 2010 were ULT academies. At the top of the table was Barnsley Academy which saw the number of students achieving five or more good GCSEs including English and maths increase from 19% to 51%.

The second spot went to Paddington Academy and the fourth to Stockport Academy. A fourth ULT academy, Walthamstow Academy, also featured in the top ten.

Academy name	Year open	2009 (End of) KS4	2010 (End of) KS4	Change between 2009 and 2010
Barnsley Academy	2006	18.9	50.7	31.8
Paddington Academy	2006	34.5	63.2	28.7
Darwen Aldridge Community Academy	2008	23.0	49.2	26.2
Stockport Academy	2007	25.5	50.5	25.0
Bristol Brunel Academy	2007	24.6	44.9	20.3
St Matthew Academy	2007	22.8	43.1	20.3
West Lakes Academy	2008	27.3	47.3	20.0
Walthamstow Academy	2006	30.8	50.4	19.6
Bacon's College	2007	52.6	71.9	19.3
St Michael and All Angels CofE Academy	2007	27.1	46.2	19.1

Source: DfE, 12 January 2011

A third ULT academy in West Sussex

ULT is delighted to have been chosen as the sponsor of The Regis School which is set to become an academy in January 2012. The proposed academy will become ULT's third academy in West Sussex giving us the opportunity to extend the partnerships we have already developed in Shoreham and Midhurst.

Both Bognor Regis MP Nick Gibb and Peter Griffiths, West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Schools, have expressed their support for the proposed academy. Announcing the decision, Diane Willson, Chair of Governors at The Regis School, said she hoped the links with ULT would give the school the capacity to accelerate the progress already underway.

Ringed endorsements from school inspectors

This academic year, a number of our schools and academies were inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate and Ofsted and we are delighted with the results.

Surbiton High School, Guildford High School and Sunderland High School all received the highest accolade from inspectors who praised every aspect of life at the three schools. There were ringing endorsements of their academic standards, extracurricular activities and the provision of pastoral care for all pupils. At Guildford High School, teaching was described as 'extremely high quality' and pupils were said to be making 'exceptional progress' whilst Surbiton High School was said to be 'brimming with energy and joie de vivre'. Inspectors found strong evidence of progress being made at Sunderland High School and described the governance, leadership and management of the school as 'outstanding'.

The newest member of the UCST family, Rowan Preparatory School received a glowing report. Pupil achievement was given the highest grading with inspectors finding countless examples of pupils excelling both in the classroom and in a wide range of extracurricular activities.

There were also excellent reports for Arnold School and Hull Collegiate School. Arnold School was rated 'outstanding' in five areas including the standard of its pastoral care, its governance and its Early Years Foundation Stage. Inspectors visiting Hull Collegiate School found much to praise including the school's curriculum, the quality of teaching and the high standard of advice and guidance it provides its pupils.

UCST's nursery and pre-schools also received very encouraging reports when Ofsted inspectors visited. Both Ashford School's Bridge House Pre-School and Hampshire Collegiate School's The Nightingale Nursery were judged 'good' with inspectors describing the environment at Bridge House as 'welcoming, inclusive and stimulating'. Inspectors visiting Nightingale Nursery were particularly impressed with pupil outcomes rating this category 'outstanding'. UCST's boarding houses at Hampshire Collegiate and Lincoln Minster Schools were also given a clean bill of health.

As part of its accreditation for membership of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC), Lincoln Minster School received a fantastic report with inspectors commenting that

the school has 'undergone a remarkable transformation in the past fifteen years'. The inspectors therefore had 'no hesitation in unanimously and enthusiastically recommending Principal Clive Rickart for membership of HMC.'

There were also some outstanding judgements following visits by Ofsted to ULT academies

- Salford City Academy was judged 'good' by inspectors who described the academy as providing a 'good and improving standard of education'.
- In its first full inspection since opening, Accrington Academy was judged 'good with outstanding elements', with inspectors highlighting teaching, governance and pastoral care as particularly impressive areas.
- Inspectors found strong evidence of improvement at Sheffield Park Academy, Sheffield Springs Academy and Stockport Academy and, as such, all three were removed from their Ofsted categories; in each case, the academy beat the two-year time limit set by Ofsted.
- Inspectors making monitoring visits to Kettering Buccleuch Academy and to Shoreham Academy found both academies to be making 'good' progress and identified some 'outstanding' features in the provision of education. Inspectors reported that Shoreham Academy is making significant improvements in a number of areas including teaching, attendance, behaviour and the Sixth Form. The academy's partnerships with local primary schools were singled out for praise, with inspectors commenting that the academy has had 'a positive impact on improving the learning of primary school pupils'.

These are highly encouraging reports which are testament to the hard work and dedication of students and staff and the excellent support provided by our partners and parents. We were particularly pleased with the inspectors' judgements of the support provided by ULT and UCST. Across the reports, inspectors consistently highlighted the benefits membership of the group brings.





New stained glass window at Salford City Academy

The Faith Room at Salford City Academy has been transformed through the addition of an exquisite stained-glass window. Jointly commissioned and funded by the academy and the Diocese of Manchester, the window reflects the academy's Christian ethos. It is based on the Parable of the Sower, and symbolises the academy's commitment to providing young people with an outstanding education.

To celebrate the installation of the new windows, the Rt Reverend Nigel McCulloch, Bishop of Manchester, performed the dedication on behalf of the Diocese of Manchester.

Speaking at the dedication, Sir Ewan Harper described the stained glass windows as a symbol of the friendship between the academy and the diocese. He said:

'The depictions on the window are a perfect illustration of how our Christian ethos embodies the values of hard work, opportunity and education – values which are widely accepted by people of all faiths and none. This was an important occasion and one which emphasised the Christian roots of the United Learning Trust.'

William Hulme's Grammar School is most popular school in Manchester

In January, the Manchester Evening News revealed that William Hulme's Grammar School is the most popular school in Greater Manchester. In 2010, there were 370 first choice applications for 120 places in Year 7 and 134 first choice applications for 25 places in the academy's Reception.

Since becoming an academy and abandoning its fees, the school for 3-18 year olds has seen a flood of applications. Principal Peter Mulholland puts the school's popularity down to its ability to combine the best of the independent and state school sectors:

'We have the best of both worlds: the ethos of an independent school, strong extracurricular activities, great academic results and the traditional values combined with the advantages of a state school.'

MBE for United Learning Trust Director of Enterprise and Internationalism



Mrs Jane Delfino, ULT's Director of Enterprise and Internationalism has been awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to education.

Over the past five years, from her base at Manchester Academy, Mrs Delfino has developed ULT's internationally recognised reputation for teaching Enterprise, Business and Entrepreneurship. She has been nominated for the 2011 Lloyd's Bank First Women Award and was awarded The Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion in 2007.

Congratulating Jane on her award, Kathy August, Principal of Manchester Academy and acting ULT Chief Executive, said:

'Jane's magic is her ability to take an opportunity and work with our students to bring it to life. Manchester Academy has a reputation for taking on seemingly impossible challenges and turning them into opportunities. Whether it is Prince Charles' Mosaic Enterprise Challenge or The Queen's Award for Industry, Jane has been at the forefront of these initiatives which have given our students national and international recognition for their achievements.

'Jane is an inspiration to be with. She exudes confidence which spreads to our students, but she couples this with a common sense approach that gives our children the practical assistance they need to begin to establish themselves as tomorrow's successful businessmen and women.'

Mrs Delfino said she was 'thrilled' to have been awarded an MBE and said:

'It is very personal to me but it also reflects on the hard work of the students I have the pleasure to work with and the businesses whose contribution and partnership makes our initiatives come to life. Whatever we achieve owes so much to them and their dedication to our students.'

Ashford School wins award from the Good Schools Guide

The Good Schools Guide, which publishes a comprehensive list of schools across the country, has awarded Ashford School the coveted Lucas Trophy in recognition of its excellent teaching of maths and the performance of students, specifically boys, at A Level.

Head Mike Buchanan described the award as 'fantastic' and said everyone at the school was 'very proud to have achieved such wonderful recognition'.

Lambeth leads the way in partnership links with China

Along with other schools in Lambeth, Lambeth Academy has signed an Area Schools Partnership Links Agreement to establish educational and cultural links with the city of Tianjin in China. The partnership aims to promote cultural understanding, create friendships and exchange good practice in teaching and learning.

It is envisioned that all the schools and colleges participating in these links will have shared values such as self-help, equality, honesty and social responsibility both in their teaching and in the curriculum.

Lambeth Academy Principal Stephen Potter said:

'The Area Schools Partnership Links with China presents us with an opportunity to improve our record of school performance. Good practice and the improvement of teaching and learning are more relevant than ever at a time when people are being urged to be global citizens.'

On signing the Agreement, Guoliang Yan, Director, Tanggu Education Bureau, China said:

'The Area Schools Partnership Links have been in development for some time now and it is amazing to see them come through to fruition. I am truly amazed by the hard work and determination of our British partners at Lambeth Academy and for making our whole delegation welcome to the London borough of Lambeth. The Area Schools Partnership Links will be of huge benefit for all of our pupils and teachers in China and the UK.'





Cherie Blair inspires Paddington Academy students

Paddington Academy students enjoyed a visit from Cherie Blair who told them the story of her career. The wife of the former Prime Minister described how she succeeded as a barrister and handed out tips to aspiring lawyers.

She also spoke about her organisation, the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women. The charity was set up in 2008 in response to Cherie's experiences meeting women from around the world and the realisation that, with the right support, women can overcome the challenges they face and play an important part in the economies and societies in which they work and live.

Oli Tomlinson, Principal of Paddington Academy, welcomed Cherie Blair and said:

'It is really important for our students to hear first hand how through hard work and determination it's possible to carve out a successful career. Mrs Blair is an impressive individual in her own right and her talk will spur our students on to aim high.'

Mrs Blair answered questions from curious students about what it was like to live at the infamous 10 Downing Street and how she had to cope with being in the public eye every day. She told students how nervous she was when meeting the Queen for the first time and how she and Tony Blair went from work rivals to husband and wife.

Sixth Form student Joana Marques said:

'She was different to what I thought she would be like and was very down to earth. I found out that she is a lot more than just the former Prime Minister's wife. She is a barrister, charity founder and a dedicated mum of four. To juggle all of those things is really admirable.'

Lambeth Academy mentors introduce students to the world of work

Janice Mabert has been working as a mentor for 18 months at Lambeth Academy. One of her success stories is a Year 13 student called Samuel Lee. Here she explains what it is like to be a mentor and how she introduced Samuel to the world of work.

I previously worked in marketing and moved away from the corporate world to open my own consultancy business. I then worked with Business Link and helped start-up businesses in Bromley. I found it very rewarding and when I found that there was a part-time position available for a mentor at Lambeth, I jumped at the chance.

Mentoring is all about offering a helping hand and being an advisor. I meet with all my students once every six weeks. When I first speak to my students I tell them about my own career, regrets, mistakes etc. I want them to feel that I am not superior to them and that I had only learnt by my mistakes as time went on.

When I first met Samuel I knew he was very bright but he was also very frustrated and angry. He didn't know what he wanted to do other than open his own restaurant. I took him through a business plan that he would have to complete if he was going to persuade a bank to lend him enough capital for him to open his own business. He could then see how he would end up on the business side of things and not get a lot of time to cook.

I encouraged him to consider looking at many different industries and have an open mind and be willing to learn. Our challenging and changing environment has meant that it is even more important that our students stand out from the crowd. I opened his eyes and taught him that what he was learning could be applied to the outside world.

After a very successful interview, Samuel won a place on a six week internship with Credit Suisse as part of the Career Academy programme. The adventure proved to be quite revolutionary for him. It gave him a good insight into how businesses play an important role in society and to understand how the business world works. Samuel particularly enjoyed wearing a suit and tie as it really made him feel like he belonged.

Samuel has gone from strength to strength since his experience at his work placement and I am delighted with his progress. It is very important for employers to offer young people opportunities within the workplace. Spending time in a real working environment opens people's eyes to things that they have never thought about before. These opportunities keep young people focussed, encourage them and give them the

confidence to strive out into the world of work. A lot more companies should be getting involved with internships – not just large ones but small to medium sized ones as well. It is not just about the student learning from the experience but, more often than not, the company can gain a fresh and independent view from the standpoint of a different target market as well.

There is a move now to start mentoring even younger children as a lot of support can be required at this early stage when they are about to start senior school. Mentoring at that age would be very beneficial as it would mean the students would start off on the right foot. More often than not students value the importance of school too late in their academic careers.

The last word from Samuel

Having a mentor has shown me the importance of guidance. At first I was unaware of how much my mentor would help me. Miss Mabert has shown that it is vital to always have an open mind and be willing to learn.

I feel that everything I have learnt from her will definitely help me to succeed in the future. I have learnt to prioritise, to work hard whenever I want something and that I should be willing to question everything in order to develop a better understanding of business.

The overall experience of having a mentor has helped me more than I could have ever imagined. It has given me more confidence and an eagerness to learn from everybody and every experience I may have.



Samuel is hoping to continue his studies in Business and Finance at university this year.

Reading programmes raise standards in ULT's London academies

With a student's ability to succeed at school completely reliant on their ability to read and write, ULT's academies have developed comprehensive literacy programmes which are starting to produce some fantastic results. Here, we look at how ULT's three London academies are promoting reading.

Walthamstow Academy

In September, Walthamstow Academy can have anywhere between 20% and 30% of Year 7 students with a reading age of less than nine and a half years. At Walthamstow Academy the message is clear: all students must be able to read and write if they are to have any chance of succeeding at school. The academy has therefore made literacy a whole-school responsibility and all teachers, parents and students are made to understand the importance of literacy and take responsibility for it.

As a starting point, the academy conducted a whole-school literacy audit to identify the strengths and weaknesses in its literacy teaching. The results of the audit formed the basis of the Academy's Literacy Intervention Programme.

Students who are really struggling with their literacy benefit from small group or individual tuition in which they follow a phonics-based interactive programme to help them get to grips with reading and writing.

For many students 'literacy' is a word they are uncomfortable with, as they associate it with primary school and do not think it is for them. Walthamstow Academy therefore embarked on a re-branding exercise to eradicate the negative connotations associated with literacy at secondary school. This resulted in the creation of the L-Space which acts as a learning and activity hub for all students throughout the academy.

The re-branding of 'literacy' led to one of the academy's most high profile initiatives – the 'L' plate. These plates, which resemble those used by learner drivers, are displayed on boards in classrooms and corridors throughout the academy from science labs to dance studios to maths classrooms. By placing them in all curriculum areas, the academy sends a very clear message about the importance of literacy.

Whilst the academy seeks to involve parents in the education of their children, it places a particular emphasis on encouraging them to read with their children at home. 'L is for Literacy'



L-plates

brochures, which are distributed at parents' evenings, give parents practical ways for promoting literacy at home.

To help staff embed literacy skills into their lessons, 'Literacy Ideas of the Week' are included in the staff bulletin.

As with all ULT academies, Walthamstow Academy seeks to nurture a genuine love of reading in its students. To make reading an attractive and appealing activity, the academy runs a whole host of exciting and enthralling literacy events such as author visits, 'Share a Story Week', book clubs and competitions.

All the academy's interventions have begun to produce some fantastic and highly encouraging results, with 60% of the Year 7 students enrolled in the Literacy Intervention Programme (which caters for students with reading ages that are three or more years below their chronological ages) progressing over one year in their reading ages in less than six months.

One of the academy's success stories this year involves a student who came to the academy unable to read or write. The student was so embarrassed and ashamed of his illiteracy that these frustrations were often manifested in bad behaviour. Instead of attending modern foreign language lessons, the student was enrolled in the academy's Literacy Intervention Programme. The student attended literacy intervention classes three times a week and the results were staggering. In September, the student couldn't even understand the literacy test; by July he was able to access the secondary school curriculum fully.

The message is clear:

All students must be able to read and write if they are to have any chance of succeeding at school.



Paddington Academy

One of Paddington Academy's most successful schemes is the Adopt A Reader programme. As part of the programme, academy staff volunteer to 'adopt' a student who needs extra support and read with them for half an hour, once a week.

A phenomenal number of staff have volunteered to do this including the Principal and over 60 other members of our staff. It is a hugely enjoyable activity with many staff describing it as the highlight of their week. Through schemes like this, most students with literacy difficulties have made double the progress that would normally be expected of them.

The academy also has a thriving library and a librarian who takes the time to get to know students and recommend books to them. 4,000 books have been borrowed this year alone with some of the most popular authors being Anthony Horowitz, Jo Craig and, of course, Jacqueline Wilson.

Teachers and students at Paddington Academy talk about the books they are reading and make recommendations to each other. As you walk round the academy, you will see that many teachers display the name of the book they are reading on their classroom or office door.

Lambeth Academy

Lambeth Academy is determined to instil a love of reading in everyone at the academy. There are 32 languages spoken at home by the Lambeth Academy students, so getting them reading in English is particularly important.

The whole academy participates in DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) time on a Monday. The academy also displays photographs of students and teachers with their favourite books around the corridors which sets the right example and gives literacy the high profile it needs and deserves.





Internet Safety – a way of life

The Google Generation

As children continue to engage in online activities, not just on computers, but on gaming machines, portable devices and smart phones, UCST and ULT have put internet safety at the top of our ICT agenda.

Dr Albin Wallace, Group Director of ICT and e-Learning, explains that one of the biggest issues of internet engagement in education is the ease of access to personal information which exposes students to a number of risks such as bullying and access to inappropriate content. Dr Wallace goes on to say that cyber bullying has no demographic or social economic barriers and is an issue to be addressed in all schools up and down the country.

Children may be technically skillful at using the internet but they are less skillful when it comes to the ethical and

social decision-making that goes along with it. This is supported by the CIBER research team at University College London which claims that, although young people demonstrate an ease and familiarity with computers, they rely on the most basic search tools and do not possess the critical and analytical skills to assess the information that they find on the internet.

'Schools and parents need to work in partnership on issues such as online addiction, cyber bullying, and the use of social networking.'

Dr Albin Wallace
Group Director of ICT and e-Learning

Promoting internet safety

ULT and UCST are accredited by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency and have taken a national lead in DigitalMe and the Agency's SAFE programme of practical activities which develop primary children's awareness when using social networking sites.

The group's ICT and e-Learning Department has developed a programme to help students, parents and teachers throughout UCST schools and ULT academies take control of their online safety and make decisions that are skillful and ethical.

Speaking about the department's work, Dr Wallace said:

'When we go into schools and academies we offer the complete package. We work with individual year groups, we have an hour with staff and we speak to parents in the evening. We do this every year as the environment is constantly changing, which means that something new gets thrown into the pot every year. In my view, online safety needs to be embedded into the curriculum.'

At the heart of their programme are Internet Safety Days which focus on many issues relating to internet safety and are attended by students, staff and parents. In the past 12 months, the ICT and e-Learning team has trained over 600 staff, 3,490 students and 258 parents.

Of the Year 7, 8 and 9 students who have had internet safety lessons, 67% said they had changed their behaviour and, of those, 15% changed their behaviour a lot. More encouragingly, 80% of Key Stage 2 students said that they would change their behaviour a lot after the safety lessons.

FACT:

Children have two to three hours less sleep than ten years ago due to internet based activities such as online gaming.

James Garnett, Lead ICT Projects Executive said:

'We want to encourage more parents to participate in our events, as those parents who do turn up are shocked and surprised at the messages they receive and are keen for us to continue this work.'

Hampshire Collegiate School celebrated Internet Safety Day recently. The theme for this year's event was online gaming which now accounts for about 20% of all internet-based activity

amongst young people. The key message for the day was that the internet is an exciting place but it is very important that your online activity is age-appropriate and you use technology safely.

Lisa Bushby, Systems Administrator at Hampshire Collegiate School, said:

'We all have a duty to embrace how to use the internet and new technologies safely. As a parent, carer or member of staff, it's difficult to keep up with how the younger generation use the latest technology, which is why we need to empower them with the knowledge that they need to maintain a safe and controlled online presence. With the continued work to incorporate e-safety awareness into our curriculum, and key focus days like Internet Safety Day, they will have a digital footprint to be proud of.'

Safety Internet Day 2012

As part of the Safety Internet Day in 2012, the group are planning a major national conference for those people within our schools and academies who have responsibilities in this area.

It will be an in-depth, provocative and enlightening event drawing attention to the technologies and the new risks and benefits they bring. The group will be working with a number of outside agencies and sponsors to bring together what we believe will be both a nationally and internationally significant event.

Internet safety is not just part of the curriculum – it's a way of life!



Smoothing the way for primary children

With different teachers, new friends and a much larger school building to get to know, the move from primary school to secondary school can often be a worrying time for children. ULT academies have made it a priority to make the transition from primary to secondary school as smooth as possible for its new Year 7 students.

Across the group, our academies run transition programmes through which they hope to give the incoming students some familiarity with their new school environment so they can look forward to September with confidence.

Transition Day at Paddington Academy

At the heart of each academy's transition programme are a series of events which seek to introduce the incoming students to their new school. At the end of June Paddington Academy held its transition event in which it ran a full day's learning for its September intake. The students were welcomed by the academy's Principal, Oli Tomlinson who told them what they could expect from the academy and, likewise, what Paddington Academy expects from them. She said:

'Each one of you has the potential to achieve great things and so I hope that you will take advantage of every opportunity presented to you. There are so many fantastic activities going on at the academy that I am confident that each one of you will find something that you want to become involved in. But, above all, I hope this will be a place that you will enjoy being at and will want to come to every morning. Paddington Academy is so much more than a school – it is a thriving and happy community and we can't wait to welcome you!'

During their day at the academy, the students heard from current Year 7 students who gave them an unofficial guide to the academy. They told them which extracurricular clubs to join in the first year, how much homework to expect and, most importantly, what food to try in the dining room! They were also treated to performances by the Year 7 choir and dance group and watched a fashion show of the academy uniform.

The students met their new tutors and all of the other students in their new tutor groups so that they could make friends and feel secure before September. They also experienced three taster lessons including dance, science, media and music and came together in an assembly at the end of the day with parents where they all sang the school song. One new student said the most exciting part of his day had been meeting the new teachers and eating his fish and chips!

Becky George, Director of Transition and Induction at the academy, said: 'We know that joining a new school can be an unsettling time for children and so we try to make this transition as smooth as possible for them. By giving them

a chance to become familiar with their new environment before they begin in September, we hope to give them the confidence to throw themselves fully into the life of the academy from their very first day.'

Beginning transition early at Swindon Academy

The story at Swindon Academy is different. As one of only a few schools in the country catering for students aged 0 to 19, a large number of the Year 7 intake are already academy students. This creates countless opportunities for the academy to involve Year 6 pupils in secondary school life.

The academy strongly believes in engaging primary children early. Rather than wait until Year 6 to begin transition, Swindon Academy begins the process with pupils in Year 5 – whether or not they are academy students. The academy is currently working with Year 5 pupils at 11 local primary schools in a variety of creative learning activities designed to foster confidence in pupils and establish familiarity with the academy and its staff.

Year 5 pupils from local primary schools and the academy's Development Phase are invited to attend Challenge Days from across curriculum areas. This year the pupils attended a Sporting Day where they were taught vaulting, free running, cheerleading, rhythmic gymnastics and dance. Working in groups, they designed a performance based on what they had learnt, having been inspired by the performance of older academy students.

Alice Williams, Assistant Principal in charge of transition said: 'It's fantastic to see all the students so settled after the transition days and ready to take the next steps in their learning. They are also really excited about the challenges to come; this is exactly what we hoped for.'

Academy students who came from the feeder schools also make return visits to Year 5 pupils to share their experiences of Swindon Academy and fill them with confidence about their move the following year.

During Year 6, pupils who have chosen to join Swindon Academy enjoy a further range of activities designed to excite them about their impending move. Once SATS are over Year 6 pupils enjoy several days arranged with partners such as Honda Days, Darwin Days as well as primary school visits, a parents evening and tour and a pupil taster day.

The Darwin Days are incredibly successful. Working in collaboration with the Charles Darwin Trust, Swindon Academy organises two days of exciting learning activities that combine history, science and geography. Students are introduced to an actor playing the part of Charles Darwin who brings alive the work of Darwin and what he did for modern science.

Pupils experience Darwin-inspired learning through two days of workshops that encourage them to think independently and give them the opportunity to make new discoveries and connections and work cooperatively with each other across different age groups. They also get to meet the great-grandson of Darwin himself! Pupils also meet Year 7 students who act as mentors at the event and afterwards when they start school in Year 7.



Year 6 pupils said:

'I really enjoyed meeting new people and making new friends. I enjoyed learning new things and meeting future teachers because now I know what kinds of people they are.'

'It's great to meet the teachers before we go over to secondary side. Especially as in other schools it can be really scary!'

Northampton Academy works with the East Northampton Cluster

Northampton Academy is heavily involved in preparing pupils across East Northampton for life at secondary school. The academy works with the East Northampton Cluster, which includes about ten primary schools, to give the Year 6 pupils an idea of what they can expect in Year 7.

The transition programme which is called 'Academy 7' was set up three years ago in line with the Northampton Town Transition Project as a response to children's concerns about the move from primary to secondary school. As part of the programme, teachers from Northampton Academy make a number of visits to primary schools to give Year 6 pupils an idea of what they can expect at the academy. The visits are a good opportunity for the pupils to meet some of the teachers they will have when they join the academy and ask them any questions they may have about life in Year 7. The eastern cluster primary schools prepare their children for these valuable visits, having relevant questions ready for the children to ask.

Davina Kennedy, Head of Year 7 at Northampton Academy, said: 'When I visit each of our primary schools I talk to the Year 6 teachers and listen to the children's hopes and worries. The primary school teachers know that we work hard to make the move to Northampton Academy a positive one for the children.'

Like other academies' transition programmes, Northampton's Academy 7 includes with a Transition Day in which the incoming Year 7 students spend a day at the academy. As part of the day, the students go on a tour of the academy building, meet their new teachers and class mates, participate in lessons such as art, drama, chemistry and music and even taste the school lunches.

Peter Foster, Director of Academy 7 & 8 said: 'Planning for Transition Day needs to be meticulous. At 8:45am we had 240 Year 6 pupils arriving who had never visited Northampton Academy together before. We put together a seamless series of activities to give the children a flavour of the subjects they would study and gave them time in their new tutor groups so they could start to develop as a team.'

Simon Adams, Head Teacher of Lings Primary School said: 'Children who visited Northampton Academy thoroughly enjoyed their experience and came back full of excitement about the activities they had tried. They enjoyed using the sewing machines and experimenting in the science labs.'

'Ex-Lings pupils who move on to Northampton Academy love coming back to tell us about the number of new friends they have made and the new and varied ways in which they learn. We feel that the great start provided at Lings is truly built on at Northampton Academy.'

Angela Pratt, Head Teacher of Thorplands Primary School, said: 'The children are looking forward to going to the academy. They have enjoyed the transition visits that were planned for them and are excited about the new opportunities ahead of them.'

Following the Transition Day, children returned to their primary schools where further work will take place, often in collaboration with Northampton Academy, to ensure that all children are fully prepared for, and feeling confident about, their move from primary to secondary school.



What the pupils said:

'My favourite bit was the drama. We had to do a 'still life' and say what our best experience of primary school was. I also liked PE because we were shown a different way of playing rounders. It was a fun day.'

'I enjoyed meeting new friends, joining in the activities and having fun.'

'My favourite part of today was the chemistry lesson and I enjoyed meeting new people.'

Riding High



In May, Shoreham Academy joined Surbiton High School and Guildford High School as well as 11 other schools in the South East at the National Schools Equestrian Association Inter-schools Jumping Event.

Our schools faced tough competition from the other competitors who were from public schools with established teams – a particular challenge for the Shoreham Academy team given this was the first time they had entered an equestrian team in such a competition.

By the end of the event all of our three schools had much to celebrate at the Felbridge Showground. Shoreham Academy's team came an impressive second in the 80cm class whilst Guildford came fourth. There were also some excellent individual performances with Guildford and Surbiton students winning the 1m and 90cm individual events respectively.

Shoreham Academy Principal Heidi Brown said she was 'thrilled to be able to boast of the achievements of the academy's talented Equestrian Team.' She said:

'Their success is a perfect illustration of how the academy gives our students the chance to experience a wide range of extracurricular activities that they might not otherwise have the opportunity to do. It is this that makes Shoreham Academy such a special place.'

Paddington Academy student becomes National Taekwondo Champion

Nine Paddington Academy students represented their school at the British Taekwondo National Championships in Manchester in June. The championship is considered as one of the top Taekwondo competitions in the country and is a highly prestigious event with Olympic scouts looking out for future competitors.

The Paddington Academy students competed against 500 of the best fighters in the country. For many of the academy's students, this was the first time they had competed in such an event but



Surbiton High School gymnasts retain national title

At the beginning of May, the largest gymnastics squad ever fielded by Surbiton High School travelled to Stoke-on-Trent to compete in the British Schools' National Acrobatic Gymnastics Competition.

There were teams from all 12 regions of the UK at the Fenton Manor Sports Complex and they were all competing for the coveted title of 'National Champion'. Surbiton High School was the only school in the competition to represent their region at the National Finals across all three age ranges – something of a record!

The doors of the venue opened at 8am on Saturday morning and Anne-Marie Seabourne and Amy Mackenzie, our U13 Pair, went to the warm up room to prepare for their competition. The girls presented to their judges and the competition began. Due to a technical error, the music for their routine stopped mid way and the girls had to complete their routine with only the audience clapping a tempo.

Despite this, Anne-Marie and Amy were true professionals and their timing and artistry were immaculate. Their routine was very polished and synchronised and earned them the highest score of the whole competition, a gold medal and saw them retain their title of 'National Champions'!

they each rose to the challenge and came away with some fantastic achievements.

Paddington Academy can now boast the Taekwondo National Champion amongst its students with Year 10 student Kamal Deris winning the Junior Male Novice Over-78kg category. There was more cause for celebration with the academy team winning two silver medals and five bronze medals.

Their coach Mark Sargeant said:

'The British Taekwondo National Championships are extremely prestigious, so the pressure on all the athletes was huge. But the Paddington Academy students thrived on this, and the professionalism of each and every one of them was more than we could ever have asked for. The achievement of our Year 10 student, Kamal Deris, in becoming National Champion, is sensational.'



Sheffield Park students transform local subway

Art students at Sheffield Park Academy have helped to 'galvanize' the local community by bringing a local subway to life with an amazing mural.

Working in partnership with Sheffield City Council, the East Community Assembly and Urban Canvas (a public arts collective) and with funding from the local Crime Prevention Unit, the academy set its BTEC students the challenge of enhancing the subway between the Prince of Wales Road and Sheffield Parkway – a busy thoroughfare used by students and local families.

Mr Fallon, Curriculum Leader for Art said:

'The project was part of our commitment to providing our students with creative and diverse learning experiences – something it has certainly achieved, opening them up to new ideas and ways of working and enabling them to express themselves through the fantastic mural which they have produced.'

Vice Principal Craig Dillon and Curriculum Leader for Art Wayne Fallon, along with professional artists, provided guidance and support to the students throughout the project.

The mural itself was a cross-academy collaboration, with students from the Year 11 BTEC art group working on the designs, members of the art club creating the source material in a series of photography workshops and a 14 strong group actually producing the mural during the Easter break.

Titled 'Galvanize,' the finished piece celebrates the best the community has to offer, with the grey background representative of steel and the white floral design representing the white rose of Yorkshire.

A delighted Sheffield Park Academy Principal Maria Nightingale said she was incredibly proud of the students whom she describes as 'Sheffield's finest'. She said:

'This project has provided the ideal opportunity for them to showcase their creativity and skill and the finished product is absolutely superb.'

Youth speaks victories

The American poet and lecturer Ralph Waldo Emerson once said: 'Speech is power: speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel' and pupils from Hull Collegiate School put this to the test during the Rotary Club's Youth Speaks Public Speaking competition.

Three teams from Hull Collegiate School initially entered and all three teams battled fierce competition from local schools. The intermediate team, comprising Olivia Smales, Emily Heaton and Robbie Sunley-Saez, gained fifth place out of 12 competitors and the senior A team, comprising Karis Barlow, Amber Ojak and Tom Johnson, came a very respectable fourth in the senior competition.

But it was the B team of Mahum Naeem, John Hamer and Charlie Price who had most to celebrate. They won the competition and John Hamer was also awarded the accolade of Best Speaker.

Hull Collegiate School then went on to represent the entire Holderness area in the regional finals. Despite tough competition, Hull Collegiate School was placed second out of six teams, finally being 'pipped at the post' by a very strong team from Northampton High School. The team spoke with passion and delivered an even more impressive speech than before on the topic of academic freedom.

International Festival of Arts and Culture

17 year old Amy Pope from Ashford School has won a nationwide art competition with her piece entitled 'The Sea'. Janet Awolaja from Northampton Academy came a very close second with her piece, 'Godhead'.



The International High School Art Competition saw 45 entries from UCST and ULT students including from Arnold School, Barnsley Academy, Ciaterham School, Hampshire Collegiate School, Lambeth Academy and Midhurst Rother College.

Amy's piece will now be sent to Japan for an exhibition at the prestigious Ueno Royal Museum in Tokyo at the end of July. As part of Amy's prize, she was flown to Tokyo to attend the awards ceremony at the Ueno Royal Museum at the end of July.

Lincoln Sixth Former 'blown away' by offer from top drama school

17 year old Lincoln Minster School pupil Eliza Butterworth described herself as 'blown away' when the premier drama college Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) offered her one of their highly coveted places.

RADA selects 'the most talented individuals from the thousands of actors, designers and technicians' who audition for a place at the Academy and Eliza beat off stiff competition to secure her place by impressing with her monologues and jazz songs.

Eliza, who has been a pupil at Lincoln Minster School since the age of three, admits:

'This was not my original career plan but I was given so many opportunities and such encouragement by my teachers at Lincoln Minster School that my interest developed. I am really grateful for the many opportunities I had to explore this field and to experience first-hand different work via the Sixth Form Culture Club which really fuelled my passion!'

Eliza is not alone in securing a coveted place at the college of her choice. All of the art students in the Sixth Form have been offered places at leading art colleges and four of the school's musicians leave this summer to take up scholarship places at leading conservatoires.

Top of the Pops for academies

Students at Barnsley and Sheffield Springs Academies were treated to surprise concerts by all-girl group 'Wonderland'.

The band, formed by X Factor's Louis Walsh and Westlife band member Kian Egan, took a break from their national tour supporting Westlife to visit the academies and perform some of their music to thrilled and very excited students.

Following the concerts, the band spoke to performing arts students and answered questions about their career so far, their aspirations and their life in the performing arts industry.

Students from Sheffield Springs Academy were also treated to master classes from top bands The Hoosiers and 20/20.

Sheffield Springs' Assistant Principal Ed Joel, who has responsibility for the academy's performing arts specialism, was delighted to welcome the special guests:

'It's an excellent experience for our performing arts students, helping them to find out firsthand what a live performance actually entails.'

The Jubilee Fund: Bringing out the best in everyone

Thanks to the vision of our founders and the support and passion of our benefactors, we provide an outstanding education for more than 30,000 young people across our 11 UCST schools, 20 ULT academies and one CTC.

The Jubilee Fund was established to enable us to enrich the education of some of the most underprivileged children in the country by opening academies and widening access and opportunities to pupils who want to attend our UCST schools.

It covers five areas:

- Sponsoring academies to enable more children to receive a ULT quality of education
- Funding bursaries to UCST schools, where this is appropriate for pupils who will benefit from the style of education which these schools offer
- Enabling both pupils and teachers to travel, to widen their experience and prepare pupils for their lives in a global environment
- Supporting exchange programmes between UCST schools and ULT academies and with schools overseas. We will continue widening contacts amongst other UK independent schools so that some of the exchange programmes may be with schools beyond the group
- Spreading our support to the developing world through direct contacts with our schools and central office services.



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People development at the heart of the group



Within our family of schools and academies, the 'best in everyone' is not just for students. As a group, we have a commitment to training our staff and through a number of bespoke innovative professional development programmes, we seek to support staff as they progress through their careers and achieve everything they are capable of.

Back in January 2007, UCST began to work in partnership with the Warwick University Institute of Education (WIE) to develop a Masters programme in Educational Leadership. Since then, over 100 teaching professionals from UCST schools and ULT academies have enrolled on this course.

The group also works with Future Leaders to train and support the next generation of school leaders. The Future Leaders programme seeks to signpost future school leaders to appropriate development leaders and support them as they progress their careers.

The structure of the Warwick Master programme is as follows:

- Year One focuses on action research methodologies and how they can be used to examine and change areas of leadership practice.
- Year Two looks at educational strategy and policy as well as focusing on educational leadership and the impact it should have on teaching and learning outcomes.
- Year Three starts with a focus on what excellent business leadership looks like and what education can draw from best practice there. This is followed by an extended piece of research into the development of an area of leadership.

Here Surbiton High School's Silas Edmonds talks of his experiences of the Warwick MA and more recently his experiences of the Future Leaders programme:

'Professional development training within the group is first class. In my opinion it is the best CPD in my 16 years in the profession. It is well thought out and gives staff the opportunity to learn new skills at group, school and individual levels.

The Warwick MA is a tailored degree which seeks to develop leadership skills and practices in participants. It is delivered through taught sessions and research projects into areas of leadership. Delivery of taught content is a hybrid of input from Warwick Institute of Education staff, Warwick Business School staff as well as UCST and ULT.

I tailored the programme to suit my own interests so I could work on enhancing areas of provision for the girls at Surbiton High. I did my preliminary research in the area of leading and managing provision for 'Gifted and Talented' pupils. This led to a number of refinements in policy as well as a development of practical strategies in both the classroom and in enrichment activities at the school. My dissertation was in the area of social and emotional intelligence and how it fosters highly effective leadership and management.

All in all, I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and gained a great deal from it. A huge vote of thanks goes to Mark Eaves at UCST, whose vision and diligence made it all happen, as well as Bob Smith at Warwick, my tutor and mentor throughout the programme.

The Future Leaders programme is excellent. I am one of the first representatives from a UCST school to work alongside and gain knowledge from academies. There has been a wealth of cross-fertilization of ideas and good practice. It has given me a completely different perspective and lots of practical knowledge.

The group gives individuals so many opportunities to access training that is bespoke to the individual and invests in their careers. By far the best training I've ever had and I can highly recommend it.'

Our family of schools and academies

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- 1 Arnold School
- 2 Ashford School
- 3 Bournemouth Collegiate School
- 4 Caterham School
- 5 Guildford High School
- 6 Hampshire Collegiate School
- 7 Hull Collegiate School
- 8 Lincoln Minster School
- 9 Rowan Preparatory School
- 10 Sunderland High School
- 11 Surbiton High School

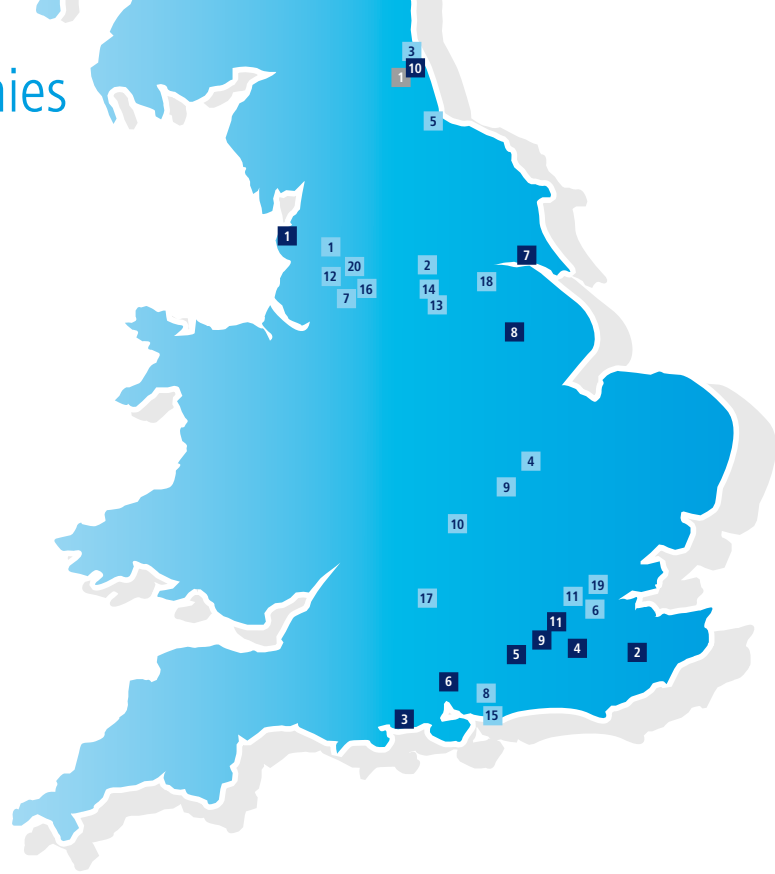
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ULT Academies

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- 2 Barnsley Academy
- 3 Bede Academy
- 4 Kettering Buccleuch Academy
- 5 The King's Academy
- 6 Lambeth Academy
- 7 Manchester Academy
- 8 Midhurst Rother College
- 9 Northampton Academy
- 10 North Oxfordshire Academy
- 11 Paddington Academy
- 12 Salford City Academy
- 13 Sheffield Park Academy
- 14 Sheffield Springs Academy
- 15 Shoreham Academy
- 16 Stockport Academy
- 17 Swindon Academy
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