Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust

Providing an excellent education from age 2 to 19

Pathfinder **News**

The latest updates from across the Trust **Summer 2024**

This August will mark eight years of Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust and it has certainly been one of our busiest years yet!

In September we were delighted to welcome Huntington Primary Academy and Poppleton Road Primary School to Pathfinder. Staff across the Trust have enjoyed getting to know colleagues from both schools throughout the year.

Earlier this term we also welcomed Malton School to the Trust. Malton is the first North Yorkshire school to join Pathfinder and has a shared history with Archbishop Holgate's with both schools having been founded by the Archbishop of York, Robert Holgate, in 1547 and 1546 respectively.

Looking ahead to the next academic year, we will be working with a further four schools who are set to join Pathfinder. Barlow CE Primary School, Burton Salmon CP School, Chapel Haddlesey CE School and Welburn Community Primary School will all be joining the Trust in October and we are looking forward to welcoming them to the Pathfinder family.

We have had a number of successful Ofsted inspections this year which started with Acomb who were judged Outstanding in all areas in September. St Lawrence's was rated Good with Outstanding features in January and, more recently, Heworth successfully retained its Good judgement following an inspection earlier this term. We have also provided support for schools in the process of joining Pathfinder during their most recent Ofsted inspections.

We are looking forward to two new Headteachers joining our schools in September. First of all is Mrs Lucie Pond who will become the new Headteacher of Archbishop Holgate's. Mrs Pond will bring a wealth of experience to the role having been Headteacher in an Ofsted Outstanding school since 2019. Second, Mrs Lorraine Atkinson will be taking over the Headship of Tang Hall from the current Head Mrs Slack. Mrs Atkinson is currently the Headteacher of Stockton-on-the-Forest Primary School and has previously worked in the Trust at Heworth. Mrs Slack is taking up a new Headship position in Harrogate and we wish her all the best in her new role.

Finally, well done to our Year 6 pupils on their excellent SATs results and best of luck starting secondary school in September. We also wish the very best to our Year 11 and 13 students who will be collecting their GCSE and A Level results in August.

From everyone at Pathfinder, I would like to wish all families a safe, restful and enjoyable summer holidays.

Andrew Daly
Chief Executive Officer

Inside this issue...

Welcome on board: Malton School joins Pathfinder Page 2

News from our schools Page 3 - 9

Construction begins on Hempland's new school Page 10

Pathfinder was formed in August 2016, initially between just four schools. Today, we are 14 schools strong, serving more than 6,000 students and their families across York and North Yorkshire.

ACOMB PRIMARY SCHOOL
Archbishop Holgate's School — A Church of England Academy Founded 1546
Badger Hill Primary School
Clifton with Rawcliffe
Hempland Primary School
Heworth Church of England Primary School
Huntington Primary Academy
Malton School — A Specialist Science School
New Earswick Primary School
Poppleton Road Primary School
Rufforth Primary School — Inspire · Care · Grow
St Barnabas Church of England Primary School
St Lawrence's Church of England Primary School
Tang Hall Primary School

Welcome on board

Malton School joins Pathfinder

Headteacher Rob Williams with students at Malton School which joined Pathfinder in May

We were delighted to officially welcome Malton School to Pathfinder at the beginning of May. After 364 years as a Church of England school and 113 years as a Local Authority maintained school, Malton has become the latest school to join our thriving multi academy trust. Joining Pathfinder has also reunited Malton with its sister school, Archbishop Holgate's School, both founded by the same charter of King Henry VIII. Malton School elected to join Pathfinder after a detailed and thorough process of review and research. The final decision was based on a number of criteria, but key to that was the close alignment of the values of Malton School and Pathfinder. This included the appreciation of the uniqueness and diversity of each of the schools that form the Trust and the valuable contributions they make to the Trust as a whole. By joining Pathfinder, Malton will maintain and develop its own identity which has been carefully built over many years and includes fostering strong relationships with its local community. The transition to become an academy has been welcomed by Governors, parents and staff, with a process of careful consultation which has been ongoing for almost a year. Prior to that, senior leaders and governors at the school considered a number of Trusts, before unanimously agreeing that Pathfinder offered real opportunity and genuine alignment of visions and values.

> *"Everyone at Pathfinder is delighted to be welcoming Malton to our family of schools. Archbishop Holgate's and Malton School have a shared history having both been founded by the Archbishop of York, Robert Holgate in 1546 and 1547 respectively."*
>
> **Andrew Daly**, CEO Pathfinder MAT

Rob Williams, Headteacher at Malton School said: "I am delighted that Malton School is joining Pathfinder MAT. Since last summer we have been following a rigorous process of consultation with all our stakeholders. This process has been highly constructive and positive. As a result, we are absolutely confident that joining Pathfinder is the next best step for us to secure the continued success of Malton School. Everyone within the school is very much looking forward to a new future as part of the Pathfinder family."

Andrew Daly, CEO of Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust and former Headteacher at Archbishop Holgate's School said: "Everyone at Pathfinder is delighted to be welcoming Malton to our family of schools. Archbishop Holgate's and Malton School have a shared history having both been founded by the Archbishop of York, Robert Holgate in 1546 and 1547 respectively. Being part of Pathfinder offers a fantastic and unique opportunity to work together for the benefit of students and staff in both schools and the wider academy trust. I would like to thank Mr Williams, the leadership team and governing body for their diligence, consideration and care throughout the academisation process. We are now looking forward to working with colleagues from Malton School to provide the best possible opportunities and outcomes for the children and young people across all our school communities."

Malton School
A Specialist Science School
1547
Pathfinder
Multi Academy Trust

News from our schools

ACOMB PRIMARY SCHOOL

What a productive year Acomb Primary School Council had! After the elections back in September, the new team surveyed all pupils to assess what they would like to see change in school. It was clear from the results that the majority of children in the school wanted to see improvements to the courtyard area in the centre of the school. At that time, it was overgrown with weeds and the space was not being used effectively.

The School Council met weekly for an hour after school for the entire school year where they planned and designed a more usable garden space. Pupils asked that we grow fruit and vegetables for the cook to use in their school meals and have more comfortable places to sit outside. The Council contacted Tesco to request garden plants from the community liaison officer and received donations of plants, shrubs, hanging baskets and pots which have been creatively planted and displayed.

The children raised an amazing £211 by growing, making and selling spider plants and lavender bags to the families of Acomb; this was topped up to £261 by a kind donation from a member of the public who heard about the project. The children used this money to buy a quality picnic bench which is now in place in the courtyard. Communication with parents has resulted in a parent purchasing a garden bench for the school and kind donations of many fruit, vegetable and flowering plants from our families.

We now have a thriving courtyard with beds of potatoes, a range of herbs, strawberries, tomatoes, peppers, beans and many pretty flowering plants. The cook has already visited the garden to see how she can use the food grown in her cooking.

They also created a calm sensory garden where wild insect-attracting plants grow. They feel extremely proud of their achievements and the positive reaction from children who use the courtyard space is rewarding. The team can still be seen outside regularly watering and weeding. The courtyard is frequently used by classes and groups of children and pupils around school who speak very highly of the refreshed garden space.

Archbishop Holgate's School

A Church of England Academy Founded 1546

YORK CENTRAL

General Election Hustings

Live Q&A with York Central candidates

Earlier this term, Archbishop Holgate's was delighted to host an election hustings event for York Central candidates in the run up to the General Election. Open to the general public, the in-person event gave our students and members of the local community the opportunity to meet the local candidates and ask burning question.

Labour's Rachael Maskell, Conservative Richard Hudson and Independent Alasdair Lord were all in attendance, along with Liberal Democrat Cllr Andrew Waller and Green Michael Kearney who stood in for their parties' candidates Alan Page and Lars Kramm respectively.

The event, moderated by BBC Radio York's Elly Fiorentini, gave each of the candidates the opportunity to make their case and outline their vision for our community followed by questions from the audience.

The lively debate and discussion covered topics including the NHS, trust in politics, education, mental health and housing. Rev. Richard Nihill, School Chaplain said: "We organised this hustings event as a school since voting gives us the chance to exercise responsibility for the good of society. We can seek the welfare, and the wholeness, of the places where we live in all sorts of different ways, but participating in the political process is a key way. It gives us a chance to exercise our school values of Justice, Compassion, Forgiveness and Trust. To do this in an informed way we need to learn about what our local representatives plan to do for us if they are elected."

News from our schools

Badger Hill PRIMARY SCHOOL

It has been a super busy summer term at Badger Hill! One of our main focuses has been our 'Make Music Week' where we celebrated our love of music at Badger Hill with our children singing and playing instruments for the whole school.

We also had some very interesting visitors into school during the week. Dr Philip Moore who was the organist and master of music at York Minster from 1983 to 2008 came into school and held an assembly all about how organs work and his time at York Minster. A member of our school team brought her baroque ensemble into school for the children to listen to.

Our week culminated with a visit to York St John University where children from years 4, 5 and 6 took part in a day filled with music. This included a rap workshop, brass band workshop, a singing workshop and an opportunity to perform on stage alongside others schools.

Our Year 6 children took part in 'A make £5 grow challenge'. This saw them working in groups to generate profit from their original £5 stake. They were all super creative and had some very original ideas. Over two evenings they made £180! Well done Year 6. Our school council also organised a wonderful summer disco. This event was very popular and the tunes were rocking! Well done DJ Mason.

Clifton with Rawcliffe

Pupils from Year 2 and Year 5 have been taking part in the Archbishop of York Young leaders programme this year and we held their award ceremony this half term. Rozy Brian from the Young Leaders programme came to school to present the certificates. As part of the scheme the young leaders organised a fundraising event for their chosen charity 'Oscar's Paediatric Brain Cancer Charity'. They raised over £600 and Phil Martinez, from the charity, came along to the ceremony to receive the donation. Well done to all our Young Leaders!

Last Year our school was privileged to be part of the York Gospels project which involved presenting The King with a handwritten copy of the Gospels to celebrate his coronation. Our pupils took part in writing some of the chapters and also submitted drawings.

This half term, two of our pupils were invited to The Mansion House to represent the school at a ceremony, where the Lord Mayor was presented with a copy of the Gospels. The girls, along with pupils from four other schools read from the Gospels during the event. We are very proud of being part of this special project and of the girls who represented the school.

Finally, our Year 5s performed their end of year show 'Aladdin Trouble'. What an amazing group of youngsters who produced a show of the highest quality, with superb acting, incredible soloists and every child involved and enthusiastic.

News from our schools

Hempland Primary School

The summer term at Hempland is as busy as ever with lots happening across school to enhance our curriculum. Some of our particular highlights have been... Early Years held their Ugly Bug Ball which included an 'Ugly Bug Parade'; to show off their great dancing and amazing outfits, biscuit making and making their own minibeast peg pal!

Space exploration has been the mission in Year 1 with the children finding out all about space and enjoying a space day in which they completed their astronaut training and even completed a parachute launch!

Year 2 had a wonderful walk to York Art Gallery, walking most of the way there along the York Bar Walls. They admired and even added to Monet's 'The Water-Lily Pond'.

Year 3 were visited by a volunteer from the York Rescue Boats to learn about keeping safe around the rivers in York.

'Songs for Summer' was a really special morning filled with sunshine and beautiful singing in which the Year 4 children performed to their families. The children's hard work to learn the lyrics and routines truly paid off, and their voices shone through every performance.

The Young Leaders Award has certainly inspired our Year 5 children who have organised a series of events to raise money for charity. They have completed a sponsored colour run, in which everyone had great fun and enjoyed getting very messy and also organised a charity dodgeball match. Great leadership skills Year 5!

Year 6 have had an action packed end to their time at Hempland. They have visited the LNER stadium for an all access tour, travelled to Bradford for STEMFEST which is an event for Yorkshire and Humberside schools to enthuse and inspire the next generation about careers in STEM. Finally, two fantastic orators were hugely impressive at the York Civic Trust Public Speaking competition. They both worked so hard, putting in lots of time and effort, and earned themselves a great third place!

Heworth Church of England Primary School

We once again ventured to London in May with our Year 6 cohort to experience the bustling life of a city far bigger than York. In what was another successful trip to the capital, we visited both the iconic Houses of Parliament and the Science Museum, using the London Underground, or the Tube as it's called, to navigate between these contrasting locations.

The Science Museum provided a fantastic opportunity for the students to immerse themselves in the world of science and discovery. They were able to explore interactive exhibits on everything from space travel to the human body, sparking their curiosity and igniting a passion for STEM subjects. Typically, from feedback that we have collected, their favourite part of this was the gift shop though.

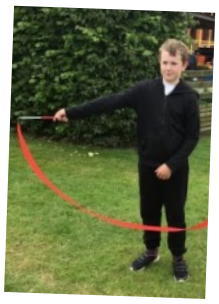
Following the Science Museum, we ventured across the city taking in Buckingham Palace, St James Park and Whitehall, before arriving at the Houses of Parliament. Given what was announced only five days later, it was certainly fitting that we got to see Parliament in action before the Commons and Lords shut down for the General Election process. The Houses of Parliament provided a first hand look at the centre of British politics. Standing beneath the magnificent Gothic architecture, the students were impressed by the grandeur of the building. We even had the opportunity to visit both the House of Commons and the House of Lords, giving them a real-life sense of how laws are made and debated in the UK. A lesson in how laws were passed was then given by the educational team before we headed back to Kings Cross for our journey home.

We once again plan to repeat this trip next year given the excellent personal development opportunities it presents, allowing our students to experience both the wonders of science and the workings of the British government.

News from our schools

Huntington PRIMARY ACADEMY

The summer term has been busy as always with our fantastic Sports Day, Year 6 Residential and a whole school Circus Day. The children have also enjoyed a visit from Graffiti Classics, the comedy String Quartet. Although poor weather meant we were not able to have the full Playground Proms we had planned, the quartet still put on an amazing performance for the children in the school hall. They played a wide range of classical pieces including the Blue Danube, Bolero and the Can Can. This was a wonderful opportunity for the children to hear live classical music in a fun and engaging way.



We are delighted to have been awarded the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award with distinction. Our Eco-Committee, led by Mrs Jackson, have been working hard to plan and carry out activities reflecting the aims of Eco-Schools and particularly reflecting an interest in sustainability. The projects submitted from their action plan were based on children's ideas and the areas they are most passionate about. The Eco-Schools Award reviewers gave the following feedback: *"We enjoyed reading about your plans for recycling and to litter-pick. Your Action Plan contains a diverse range of activities aimed at creating positive behaviours, making an immediate difference to your local environment, and expanding your Eco-Schools' initiatives into your local community. Staff members in your school have creatively included environmental issues in their teaching, your pupils are fortunate to have teachers who plan such exceptional learning opportunities for them. Thank you so much for submitting such a terrific application. We have loved reading about your journey and are incredibly impressed by all you have achieved. We have no hesitation in awarding you an Eco-Schools Green Flag with Distinction, congratulations!"*

Malton School
A Specialist Science School

The summer term has been a whirlwind. We were delighted to join the Pathfinder family on 1 May and already we're seeing positive changes in school.
Our existing Music Block is being converted into a new, extended library with a multi-purpose space that can be used, for example, as an additional exams room or as a training facility for the Pathfinder Teaching School Hub. Our existing library will be converted into a Music suite with two new classrooms and four practice rooms, situated opposite our Drama and dance facilities so that all Performing Arts subjects will be located together.

We run an extended day each Thursday to deliver a range of personal development opportunities. Our largest ever cohort for the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award – 44 Year 12 students – have just completed their final expedition in the Yorkshire Dales. 59 Year 10 students are putting the finishing touches to plans for their Bronze expedition.

Our Gardening group have just had their work judged by Yorkshire in Bloom and are awaiting feedback. The Soul Band performed two excellent sets in the centre of the Malton Show.

A number of students have qualified to represent the County in athletics, with Year 11 student Daniel winning gold in both the long jump and high jump at the Yorkshire County Championship. He has just been selected for the national team. The term started out with a hat-trick of trophies for our football teams – both the U14 and U16 girls won the Scarborough and District Knock-Out Cup and the boys U14 team were crowned District Champions.

Finally, Mr Williams and members of the Humanities Faculty took 70 students to visit the First World War Battlefields of France and Belgium. Students used their iPads to access information about the sites visited and to complete their own learning journal of the trip.

News from our schools

New Earswick Primary School

What a super summer term we have had at NEPS! All classes have been on trips this term ranging from Year 2 visiting the Theatre to bring a Julia Donaldson story alive to Year 6 visiting Whitby Abbey to enrich their writing. Trips are so important to enrich the children's learning, as well as providing them with opportunities and memories which will hopefully stay with them forever.

We continue to visit our friends - the residents - at New Lodge Care Home each week. What a special relationship that is and the children and residents alike get so much out of the trips. Recently, Reception pupils visited to share their 'memories' with the residents following reading a book in class called Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge. It was truly remarkable hearing the residents then sharing their fond memories with the children, showing how important intergenerational relationships can be.

Our super Deputy, Mrs Asquith, returned from maternity leave and we have enjoyed starting work on re-launching our school's vision and values. There is an exciting journey ahead of us and we are all excited to share our ideas in the new academic year.

School's redecoration is underway slowly but surely but the school hall is looking particularly stunning! It is lovely to see the growing pride in our pupils, and staff, as school becomes even brighter and more colourful. We are excited about the new academic year but are looking forward to enjoying a restful summer break. Before we do however, we of course wish our Year 6 pupils all our best as they move onto secondary school and thank them for all their hard work and efforts while being part of our school.

Poppleton Road Primary School

The summer term is always a very busy and exciting time at Poppleton Road and this year was no exception. Classes have been on wonderful trips to the seaside, castles and art galleries to name but a few. This year we made our first ever trip to London with the Year 5 children and an amazing day was had by everyone. We had an army of staff, parents and grandparents who made the day possible and the children were outstanding. The river boat trip up the Thames was definitely a highlight and our trip to Parliament was brilliant. As Parliament was not actually on we got to visit The House of Lords and The House of Commons. The children were complimented by members of the public for their excellent behaviour throughout the day which was very well deserved. One of our school values is Community and this year we had a fantastic Community week. Throughout the week all children took part in a range of learning activities which promoted and celebrated the many different communities we are part of. All classes carried out a 'Stay and Learn' for our families and we welcomed different members of local communities to share our learning. Year 2 cooked and shared a meal with the members of the local windmill community group and Year 1 assisted the Park Rangers at West Bank Park with their work looking after the park. There were so many exciting activities during the week and a brilliant time was had by all.

We will be saying goodbye to our fantastic Year 6 children and we wish them the very best of luck at their new schools. We are looking forward to their performance of Bugsy Malone, which I know they have had a brilliant time putting together. All of the children take part in transition week which this year has a strong Olympic theme. This week really prepares the children for September where we can't wait to begin another exciting year at Poppy Road.

News from our schools

Rufforth Primary School

· Inspire · Care · Grow ·

A highlight of the school year is our annual Sports Week! This year, we kicked off the week with a fantastic cheerleading lesson, led by Vikings Cheerleading. For the majority of children, this was a new experience and they enjoyed the combination of dancing, acrobatics and jumping. Other, more familiar activities were also enjoyed, including rugby, archery, yoga and rounders. The week ended on a high with the challenge of the inflatable 'Beast' – an assault course which entertained and challenged everyone, including teachers!

The most popular part of Rufforth's Sports Week is always our Sports Day. The children spent the afternoon before the event in their house teams, preparing for the Sports Day parade: this year, teams were split into sub groups, each named after a country participating in this year's Olympics. Flags and banners were made, key facts and figures researched and a real sense of team spirit fostered. Sports Day at Rufforth is a full day event! The morning consists of team 'field' events where children work together in mixed-age groups to earn the most amount of points. Activities include javelin, speed bounce and even a football slalom. After lunch, individual races take place before the parade and the announcement of the winning team – including a trophy presentation! At Rufforth, we are very proud of our strong community and it is days such as Sports Day that really showcase everything we are about, as parents volunteer to run events, cheer for all children, and of course participate in their very own race.

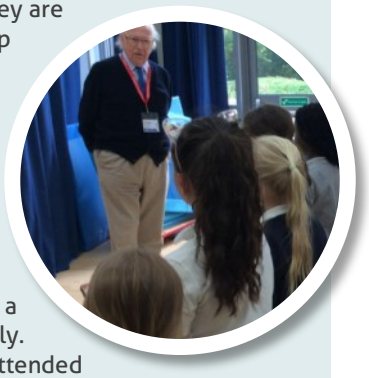
We end the year looking forward to Key Stage 2's performance of 'Matilda: The Musical' in the final week of term. Led by our Year 6s, the children have worked incredibly hard to prepare for what promises to be a fantastic show.

St Barnabas

CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

This term, the children at St Barnabas have enjoyed celebrating music through various events. Mrs Bellinger leads our school choir after school every Monday and is committed to giving the children as much musical enrichment as possible!

During the summer term, we have been extremely fortunate to have been involved in the National Schools Singing Programme run by York Minster. This involves the Minster singing teacher coming into our school each week, to lead the children in a singing session. The sessions themselves are a mixture of music education, and the singing of both secular and sacred songs. The children have learnt how to sing in their naturally high ranges and the sound that they are starting to produce as a group is beautiful. We have been extremely lucky to have been visited in school, by the local York composer Andrew Carter. He has composed a piece of music ('Grannies and Grandads') which the children performed at York Minster in a lunchtime Eucharist on 25 July.



Further to this, our choir attended the York Choir Festival at York University. It was a fantastic day with workshops in the morning and a concert in the afternoon. The children performed fantastically on a huge stage in front of all of the other schools, teachers and parents. They ended the concert by singing the song 'Amazing' together with all of the other schools.

Finally, our Year 3 and 4 children had a lovely afternoon at the Big Sing Musical Connection event at the Vale of York Academy on Friday 5 July. The choir children performed and everyone enjoyed singing a variety of summer songs. Everyone particularly enjoyed the bubbles and the musical instruments as well as meeting lots of new people.

News from our schools

St Lawrence's
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

It has been an unbelievably busy but fantastic year at St Lawrence's and there has been no let up in the summer term either. Across school children have been showing their courageousness during their tests and showing what amazing children we have here.

Roads and safety have been a priority for us this term with children across school learning how to be safe either walking or cycling. Reception children have been practising to Stop, Look and Listen in school, whilst the Year 3s were out and about outside school putting these golden rules to good use. Following this, the Year 6s took to their bikes during their Bikeability sessions on the roads. For some children, this was their first experience of riding a bike and we were amazed at how, by the end of the week, they were cycling around school full of confidence and proud of themselves for learning a new skill.

This year, we have also been involved in the REACH project. This has enabled all of our children to experience music and performance that they might not normally have been able to see. We had a wonderful performance in the York Life of the Sea Concert, which allowed our Year 5 and 6 children to showcase what they had learned on the violin this year. This culminated in a celebration event at the York Barbican with lots of different schools from across York.

And as for our Year 6s! Well, they have been busy doing everything! From learning about the Black Death, visits to York St John University, Speaking Competitions to a trip to the seaside, they have been simply amazing and we could not be prouder of them. We will miss them when they move to secondary school but know they will be fantastic wherever they go! Lamar, one of our Year 6 children had this to say about their time at school: "We have loved being at St Lawrence's and we will miss our amazing school very much. All year round we have been working our very best and, as we are coming to the end, we are getting rewarded! Trips left and right, workshops, triathlons and so much more! From the first day to the last, St Lawrence's have been so welcoming."

Tang Hall Primary School

At Tang Hall Primary School, we want our curriculum to meet the needs of all of our children. To ensure we achieve this, we have created our CREW pass.

CREW stands for Challenge, Resilience, Enrichment and the World. As the pupils progress through the school, they have set activities in each year group to ensure that we send the pupils onto secondary school ready for anything! These activities link to life skills, first aid, safety, money, the environment and awards. Each year, pupils complete one activity linked to each of the areas above and these memories are recorded in a CREW passport which is then presented to the pupils when they leave primary school. An example of some of the activities include using cutlery correctly, sewing on a button and tying shoe laces under life skills. First aid builds from applying a plaster correctly all the way through to CPR. Safety involves meeting a range of different professionals including a dentist, the fire brigade, police, water safety experts and military personnel and awards allows the pupils to complete application forms as well as reach their full potential through completing the summer reading challenge, sports day, applying for a Blue Peter Badge and gaining swimming awards in Year 5.

We are also aware that children continue their learning after the school day so we hold a weekly celebration assembly where pupils can be awarded special CREW badges from their teachers for experiences they have completed both in school and beyond. The children aim to collect all four CREW badges during their time at Tang Hall and leave with a special and final fifth badge which completes the set!

Pathfinder Teaching School Hub

Train to teach at Pathfinder

Are you interested in training to become a teacher? The Pathfinder Teaching School Hub delivers Initial Teacher Training for both primary and secondary trainees. The courses combine in-school training with the latest research-led practice provided by our partner university.

We are open for applications for our teacher training courses starting in September 2025 and are looking for people who have a degree, a passion for teaching and who want to inspire young people to fulfil their potential. If this sounds like you, contact us to find out about the training opportunities we have available. Call 01904 806900 or email info@tsh.pmat.academy. You can also find out more on our website pathfinder-tsh.co.uk.

Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust

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From left: Declan Storey, Site Manager and Mark Gibson, Project Manager from ISG Construction, John Hattam, Chair of Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust's Board and Hempland Primary School's Headteacher Abbie Innes with pupils.

Construction begins on Hempland's new school

Children and staff from Hempland Primary School were celebrating the start of construction on their brand new building with a ground breaking ceremony earlier this term.

Plans to construct the new two-storey building for the school in Whitby Avenue were unanimously approved by City of York Council's planning committee last November and works to ready the site for construction have been taking place since the new year.

Headteacher, Abbie Innes, said: "Everyone is really excited for the work on our new school to officially start. We're looking forward to seeing the new building take shape in the weeks and months ahead and the many opportunities it will provide for our pupils and staff moving forward."

Hempland successfully achieved a place on the government's School Rebuilding Programme which carries out major rebuilding and refurbishment projects in schools and colleges across England. The school's current building has reached the end of its functional life and will be completely rebuilt under the DfE led programme.

Staff from the school and the trust have been working closely with the DfE and contractor, ISG Construction, for a number of months on the plans for the new building. John Hattam, Chair of Pathfinder's Trust Board, said: "We are delighted that Hempland's new build has reached this very important milestone. On behalf of the Trust, I would like to thank everyone involved for their hard work and determination in getting the project to this point."

The new school is designed to be net carbon zero in operation and will be built to the latest construction standards. It will provide modern, state of the art facilities to help support an excellent and enriching education and will include a main hall, kitchen, library, staff room and reception area along with classrooms, cloakrooms, toilets and offices. ISG Project Manager, Mark Gibson, said: "The team are delighted to be working on delivering the new primary school. The positive start is testament to the school's pragmatic and collaborative partnership in enabling the construction sequence. With enabling and key drainage works now complete, we can move forward on program to the main building construction."

The new build is being constructed behind the current school avoiding the need for any temporary accommodation during construction. Once the new school has been opened, the old building will be demolished to make way for an Early Years play area and landscaping. Work on the project is due to be completed by Autumn 2025.