

RAEDWALD TRUST

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2025

SAYING HELLO TO PLAY

STUDENTS at First Base Ipswich are getting active outdoors in their new playground, which features a sunken trampoline and a core-strength climbing area made of logs.

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Farewell

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Theatre trip

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PLAYGROUND THRILLS PUPILS

New play area a big hit at First Base

CHILDREN at First Base Ipswich were thrilled when a new playground was built.

Due to the old playground equipment having become rotten, it was removed and a decision was made to replace it.

It was redesigned by a company called Cool Canvas who design bespoke, natural play areas.

Children now have new artificial grass, a sunken trampoline, and a core strength climbing area built with logs, nets and a pull-up bar. The core strength area is made out of all natural materials, giving children an exciting new area for them to play in.



Children were jumping for joy after the new equipment was installed

TRUST CEO ANGELA RANSBY REFLECTS ON THE YEAR:

2024-2025 has indeed been a momentous year across Raedwald Trust. We have worked with hundreds of children, partnering with our mainstream colleagues and Suffolk County Council to secure the best pathways for children requiring alternative provision. This newsletter gives you a flavour of what our incredible community has been doing.



Life's a beach if you dig into your imagination

CHILDREN enjoyed a pretend trip to the beach.

The pupils from First Base Ipswich had a beach-themed afternoon with

a picnic, a paddling pool and ice creams.

The scheduled trip to the beach had to be cancelled due to the weather forecast.

The beach topic was inspired by the book *The Storm Whale*, where a boy finds a whale washed up on the beach and looks after it.



Parkside Academy students work hard

Parkside put in big exam push

STUDENTS at Parkside Academy have been working incredibly hard during the latest exam season.

This year, students at Parkside sat GCSE citizenship for the very first time and were challenged with writing about reducing school exclusions by providing more mental health provision in mainstream schools.

As part of it, they worked on a campaign in the build-up to their exams, showing their enthusiasm and interest in the subject.



Farewell, Carey

CAREY Fish is retiring.

Carey (pictured) became a newly qualified home economics teacher in 1982 and after working in a number of schools in the UK, joined Westbridge Academy in 1991.



Her role was initially to cover maternity leave on a part-time basis teaching maths and history.

Since the Raedwald Trust was formed in 2016, Carey has worked as headteacher at Westbridge and later within the Trust's central team. She has been a huge support to the Trust's extended leadership team and has overseen the Early Careers Teaching Programme for the Trust.

Carey has always been a friendly face for staff, pupils and families, showing compassion and kindness to all. She will be hugely missed and we wish her a restful retirement!

Cafes cheer

STAFF across the Trust have benefit-ed from weekly wellbeing cafes run by the Chaplains.

Abi runs an after-school cafe at Alderwood on a Thursday and Beckie makes breakfast on a Wednesday for the staff at Westbridge which continues to be well received.

A new initiative that started in the summer term is a 'Reflective thought of the week' that staff opt in to via email and on a Monday receive an email full of encouragement for the week ahead.

DELIGHTS OF A DAY OUT

Alderwood group learn about safety during Woodbridge trip

A GROUP of children at Alderwood enjoyed a day out at Woodbridge.

The pupils visited Woodbridge on the train as part of their work learning about rail, water and road safety which they had been covering in PSHE.

They got the train from Ipswich and on

arrival they walked along the river, played in the play area and had an ice cream. Tom Baker, Head Teacher at Alderwood Academy, said: "Pupils got to practise safe-ty at the train station, beside the river and by the roads. It also provided the children with a chance to go out of their comfort

zones in a new location. The children really enjoyed the trip. Although a little nervous before the train journey, they relaxed into the day and enjoyed experiencing the different things. They especially loved having their ice cream and we had amazing weather too."

ALL IN IT TOGETHER

Community theme for focus on mental health

COMMUNITY was the theme for this year's Mental Health Awareness Week.

At St Christopher's, staff and pupils held an event to raise money for charity and to raise awareness of mental health, as well as getting to know their neighbours.

The children were fully involved in the event, deciding on stalls and inviting some of the local residents to help lift the community spirit.

Some of the pupils helped on stalls, with a variety of different games including Guess the Name of the Teddy; Guess how Many Sweets in a Jar; Guess the Weight of the Cake; Higher or Lower Card games. There was a tombola, beat the buzzer stall, button pairs game, as well as face painting and a cakes stall.

Staff also sold some of the bird boxes that students had decorated.



Together, the group raised more than £200 for the pupils' chosen charity, 4YP. Some of the pupils had used this service and wanted to give something back.



Activities at St Christopher's raised awareness of mental health

Chaplains help out with school trips

THE chaplains have supported staff and pupils on various school trips over the past term. Some of these include kayaking and archery at Vauxhall Farm, the Colour Shape Pattern art exhibition at Christchurch Man-sion, sailing on the river Orwell and trips to Felixstowe. The team are also always available over lunch and break times in each setting and quite often bring a craft activity into these spaces for students to get involved in.

In sites where the Year 11 students have been taking their GCSEs and finishing school, they have created individual leaver's packs for them to take home.

The packs are full of interactive wellbeing cards with personalised messages from their Head Teacher and the chaplains.



Getting on the water for kayaking



Chaplains providing extra support

CHAPLAINS from Christian Youth Ministries have been working with children from Alderwood Academy.

Over the past year, the chaplains have been providing extra support for children when needed. Pupils who needed help were referred to the chaplains where they worked with them on a one-to-one basis.

It gave the children the opportunity to explore their feelings and engage in a range of different activities to benefit their education and wellbeing.

Headteacher Tom Baker said: "The children have developed wonderful relationships with the chaplains.

"They look forward to their sessions and they are able to work on specific individual things which support them in their self-esteem and wellbeing.

"Feelings can be explored in greater depth and children have done some exciting activities such as planting a herb box and making fruit-based lollipops."

Zoo careers talk

FOUR Year 11 St Christopher's students visited Colchester Zoo, where they experienced a post-16 careers talk.

This focused on the variety of opportunities provided by the site, the qualifications required and how to obtain them.

They were also guided through how to make an impactful CV. The students enjoyed seeing the animals, particularly the red pandas. The trip provided wildlife wonderment and time to think about their future.

Kris finishes final year of ECT

CONGRATULATIONS to Kris Butler, teacher at Parkside Academy, who has completed the final year of his Early Career Teacher Programme (ECT).

Kris joined the Raedwald Trust in 2023, having completed his school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) at a local high school where he gained qualified teacher status (QTS).



Kris has been following the ECT programme delivered through Ambition Institute and Unity Teaching School Hub for the past two years.

This programme involved Kris completing online weekly modules, each with a different focus (behaviour, instruction, subject) alongside monitoring visits and regular meetings with his mentor.

PEEK BEHIND SCENES

Students enjoy backstage tour of The New Wolsey

A GROUP of students from St Christopher's enjoyed an exclusive backstage tour of The New Wolsey Theatre.

They visited all the areas of the theatre that members of the public would not usually see, including the lighting desk, theatre wings and dressing rooms.

Some of the students were brave enough to stand on stage and imagine the feelings from an actor's perspective.

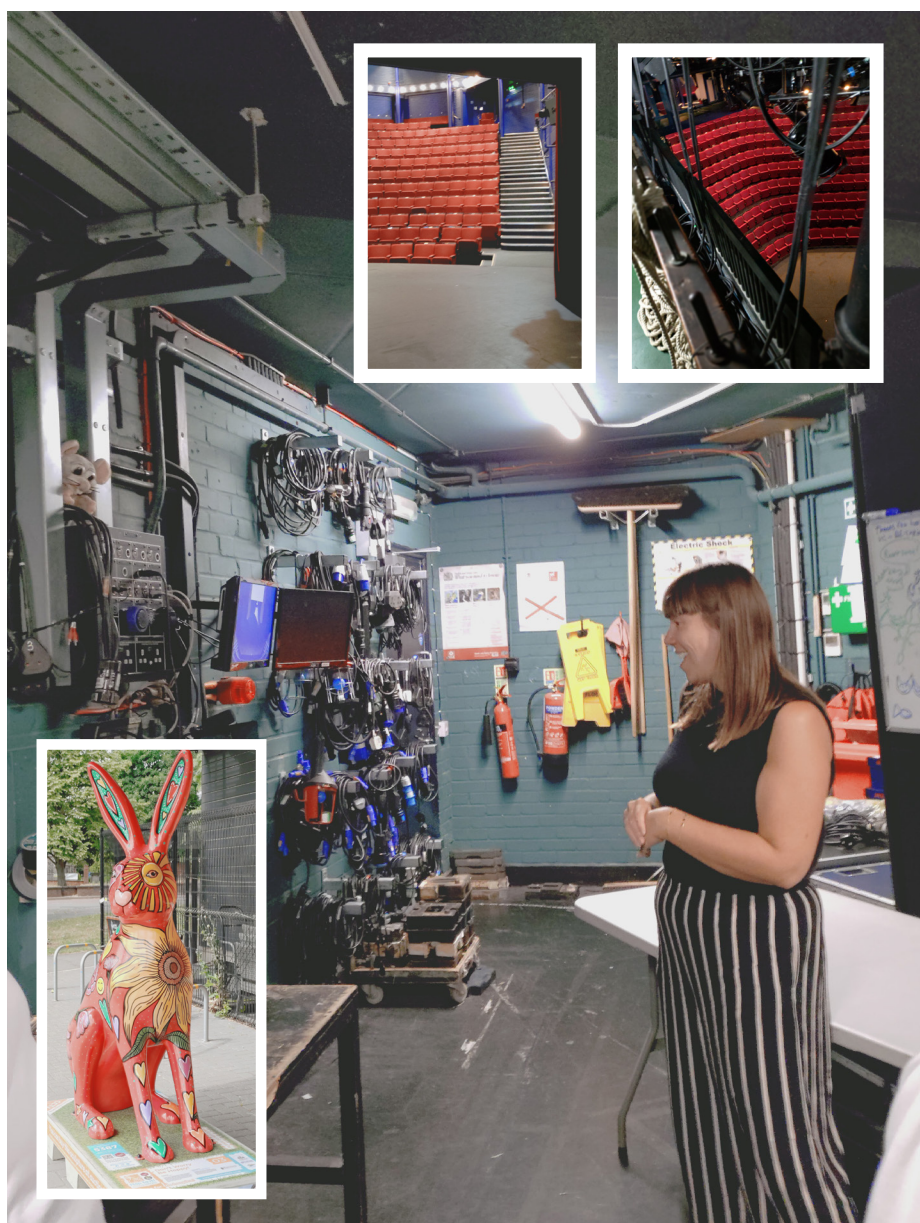
They even climbed up to the highest point of the theatre where the lighting technicians rig the lights.

TRAP DOORS

The students particularly enjoyed the trap door mechanisms in the theatre pit and learnt how the actors have to work on the principle of counter balance to spring up through the trap doors. The trip linked perfectly to their previous visit in December when they went to watch the pantomime.

The children asked numerous questions and were able to see where the pantomime characters laid out their props, completed their quick changes and collected their microphone packs from, all with the help of backstage TV monitors to support them in the pitch black.

Some of the students are hoping to go back to the theatre in the future for work experience to support their post-16 education planning.



St Christopher's students saw the inner workings of the New Wolsey Theatre

London trip is full of wonder

AS PART of the Culture Capital programme, a group of students from St Christopher's visited London for the day.

In the morning, they went to the Natural History Museum, where they endured the bustle of the busy tourist attraction.

All the students were very excited to see the fossilised skull of the *Sarcosuchus*.

In the afternoon they went to the Theatre Royal to see the Disney production of Hercules.

They had an eye-opening time full of wonder and joy.

Skills to cope in emergency

STUDENTS from St Christopher's enjoyed a Health and Wellbeing lesson to learn what CPR is and had a chance to practise it.

They used some mini 'Annie' CPR dummies and the students were guided through various scenarios in order to form the decision-making skills and neuropathways needed to act decisively and safely in a medical emergency.

Leavers' treat

THE YEAR 10 pupils at Westbridge prepared a special leaver's buffet for the Year 11 leavers. It was a wonderful send-off for the hard-working students.

Ollie at the limit

OLLIE Turner of Year 11 at The Albany pushed himself to the limits and took on the challenge of crossing various adventure ropes via a thrill-seeking event.

It was an amazing day and the student (pictured) felt he had faced a challenge he would normally have avoided.



Staff have pitched in to clean up green areas, feeding birds and planting herbs

Sprucing up the outdoor spaces

STAFF have been working collaboratively with students across multiple sites to clear up the outdoor areas.

They have been planting vegetables, herbs and flowers, weeding, feeding the birds and creating some bright artwork. It is hoped that these projects will continue into the autumn term, getting students outside and involved with nature in their current surroundings.



NO HOLDING THEM BACK

Year 11s volunteer at The Hold during work experience

A GROUP of Year 11 pupils from Westbridge enjoyed taking part in work experience. The students volunteered for The Hold, home to the Sussex Archives.

They were

asked to work from the education room to meet, greet and tick off attendees. They were also around during break times to guide people to seminar rooms and point out where

to find the toilets and refreshments. One student even took part in his own research into finding apprenticeships, taking note of useful websites and talking to relevant people.

GETTING READY IS VITAL

Early planning shapes success beyond school

AT WESTBRIDGE Academy, we believe that preparing for life beyond school is just as important as academic success.

Whether our pupils are considering sixth form, college, apprenticeships or vocational training, early planning is key to shaping a successful and fulfilling future.

Our students have explored a wide range of post-16 options through lessons embedded with the Gatsby Benchmarks, as well as PSHE and PSED sessions. These opportunities help pupils connect their current learning with future aspirations.

Understanding these pathways empowers students to make informed, confident decisions about their next steps.

To support this journey, our students have

“ We even have a student who has set up their own horse livery business

Emily Duque, Head Teacher ”

taken part in a variety of enriching experiences, including visits to Suffolk One College, Otley College, WS Training and work placements through the Wolsey 550 programme and Form the Future.

We have also welcomed guest speakers to deliver employability workshops and staff from the Job Centre have supported students in creating CVs and personal statements.

We recognise that the transition from school to further education or training can feel overwhelming. That's why these experiences are so valuable – they provide clarity, reduce anxiety and give students and their families and carers time to prepare for the practical aspects of the journey ahead.

We're incredibly proud of our Year 11 students, many of whom are leaving Westbridge with college placements or apprenticeships



Various trips have been arranged to help students choose their next steps

already secured. Some have even landed their first part-time jobs since completing their GCSEs - a fantastic achievement that reflects the skills and confidence they've developed through our post-16 support.

Our alumni continue to inspire us. One former student has completed qualifications in construction and is preparing to enter employment.

Another is thriving on an arts course at college.

One pupil is now teaching English abroad,

while another is progressing to a Level 3 qualification in Health and Social Care. We even have a student who has successfully set up their own horse livery business.

These stories are a testament to the resilience, ambition and hard work of our students and we couldn't be prouder. We wish all of them the very best as they take their next steps into the future.



Circus fun helps pupils improve literacy skills

CHILDREN from First Base Bury have been learning about the story Leon and The Place Between.

The pupils enjoyed working to re-write the story and finished off the topic by becoming circus performers

themselves. The work encouraged students to become confident writers and improve their literacy skills.

VISITING VICTOR SPARKS PASSION

Getting hands on aboard barge

AS PART of our ongoing partnership with the Wolsey 550 group, a group of Westbridge Academy pupils enjoyed an unforgettable educational visit aboard The Victor.

The beautifully restored sailing barge was moored at Ipswich quayside and the students enjoyed their day out which was full of learning and lots of hands-on experiences.

They had the unique opportunity to explore maritime history, learn about the mechanics

of sailing and work together as a crew aboard this historic vessel.

Emily Duque, Head Teacher at Westbridge Academy, said: "I have never seen so many pupils inspired so passionately by what they had experienced. I was genuinely moved hearing about their adventures.

"One pupil even showed such natural flair and enthusiasm for sailing that they were invited back that very weekend to take part in a sailing race and gain work experience with the crew.

"Several pupils have since expressed a desire to own a boat and get back out on the water – an incredible testament to the impact of the day. There's no doubt that this inspiration is thanks to the calm, engaging, and welcoming approach of the Victor crew.



Students worked with crew members of sailing barge The Victor and learnt about maritime history



"Experiences like this highlight the power of experiential learning and the importance of exposing our pupils to new environments where they can discover hidden talents and build confidence.

"We are incredibly proud of all the students who took part and thankful to the Wolsey 550 group and the crew of The Victor for making this enriching experience possible."



Students take the ferry to Old Felixstowe

Beach fun at Bawdsey

PUPILS from St Christopher's enjoyed a day trip to Bawdsey beach and Felixstowe.

They took a short walk to Bawdsey cliffs – a well-known hotspot for finding shark teeth and fossils. They spent an hour scouring the beach and found a shark tooth, crab claws and a piece of fossilised whale bone.

Students took the Felixstowe foot ferry from Bawdsey Quay to Od Felixstowe. They had an afternoon in the sun on Felixstowe pier with fish and chips on the beach.

