

# OAK

## NEWSLETTER



JULY 2025

### A WARM WELCOME

Dear all

As we reach the end of another academic year, I want to take a moment to thank each and every one of you across our trust community. Your hard work, passion and dedication to delivering exceptional education has made all the difference - not only to our pupils and families, but to each other. Whether you're in the classroom, behind the scenes, or supporting at a central level, your contribution forms the heartbeat of our vision to transform lives through a highly inclusive educational approach.

This year has been marked by extraordinary growth for the trust, with our new schools enriching our capacity and diversity. Each new addition reflects our commitment to nurturing inclusive, high-performing environments where pupils thrive and staff feel empowered as part of the Oak family.

With growth comes responsibility and I'm proud of how our central infrastructure has evolved to meet this. From business support and HR services, to curriculum development and educational expertise, our central team continues to strengthen its offer - ensuring that schools receive the consistent, high-quality assistance they need to flourish. This investment not only enhances operational efficiency, but it reinforces our shared identity as a collaborative, resilient and forward-thinking organisation.

As we prepare for the next chapter, I am filled with pride in what we've achieved together and excited about the journey ahead. Thank you once again for your unwavering commitment and for embodying the values that make our trust such a special place to work and learn.

Enjoy the summer.

Warmest wishes

**James Franklin-Smith, CEO**



## NEW APPOINTMENTS AT OAK

We've made a number of new appointments to the trust, which underscore our commitment to educational excellence and innovation. These new staff members bring a wealth of experience and vision to their roles, ensuring our schools continue to thrive in a rapidly evolving landscape.

We welcome our new Director of Safeguarding, Rebecca Carney, whose strategic oversight will enhance the wellbeing and safety of every pupil and staff member, reinforcing a culture of care and vigilance. Jamie Cross, who currently works as Associate Assistant Head at BCHS, becomes our newly appointed Director of Maths across the trust. Jamie will lead the development of a robust and engaging mathematics curriculum, supporting high standards and closing attainment gaps across the trust. Paul Kellet, Assistant Head at Philips High School, becomes our trust wide Director of English and will use his deep pedagogical expertise and passion for literacy to drive performance and inspire a love of language and literature in every classroom. Finally, Nicola Power successfully secured the position of headteacher at BCHS and will take up post in January 2026 when Shanaz Hussain retires from the role. Nicola is currently Deputy Headteacher at Unsworth Academy, Bury and has been in post for five years. She has been a pivotal part of a leadership team that has taken the school on a strong journey of improvement so we are thrilled to have her on board.

In September we will be looking to recruit a Director of AI, who will work alongside our IT team to lead digital transformation - leveraging artificial intelligence to personalise learning and streamline operations. Combined, these roles will enrich our educational offerings, foster inclusive practices and drive systemic improvement. We're confident that their leadership will accelerate progress and empower both our staff and learners to achieve their full potential.

## NEW PRESCHOOL AT UNSWORTH

Earlier this term we were thrilled to learn that a bid we submitted to the DfE for a new preschool at Unsworth Primary School was successful.

Work is currently underway to build the new preschool, which will open in January 2026. It will make a huge difference to Unsworth's school family, as well as provide much-needed preschool capacity within the local community.

Having a preschool within a school setting makes the transition from nursery to school so much easier for children as they are already familiar with their new environment and routines.



## UNSWORTH SATS RESULTS

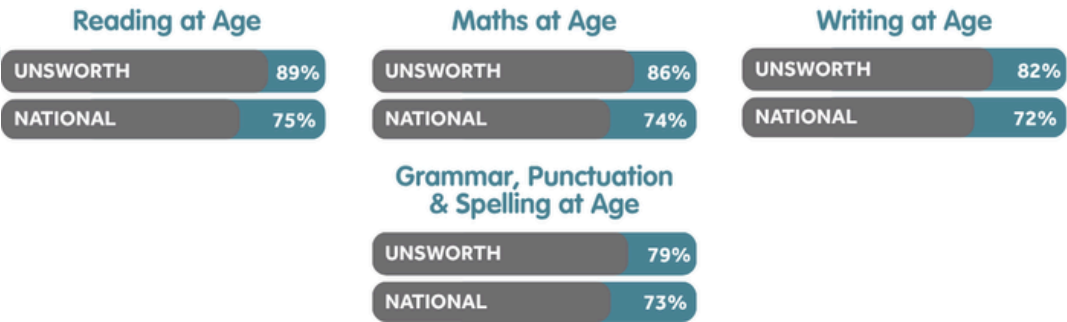
We're thrilled to be able to report that Unsworth Primary School's SATS results were 20% above the national average this year and saw an internal improvement from last year. 82% of students at Unsworth met the age related expectations, compared to the national average of 62%. Last year Unsworth scored 77%.

The school has made significant progress over the last few years in raising standards and improving outcomes for pupils. Through a steadfast commitment to inclusion, high-quality teaching and pupil well-being, they have cultivated a nurturing and aspirational environment where every child is empowered to succeed. These SATS results pay testament to that.

Well done to everyone at the school who worked hard to help the pupils achieve these amazing results.

### 2025 RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Overall Reading, Writing & Maths Age Related Expectations (ARE)



## LAUNCH OF NEW RECRUITMENT SYSTEM

We're pleased to announce the rollout of our new recruitment system, NEO.

This platform streamlines the end-to-end recruitment process, making it easier for our schools to have oversight, manage applications and ensure compliance with safer recruitment practices. It will also enhance the candidate experience, with a more user-friendly interface and clearer communication throughout the application journey.

We're confident this system will strengthen our recruitment processes trust-wide and help us attract the best talent in our schools. The system will go live at the start of the new academic year in September.



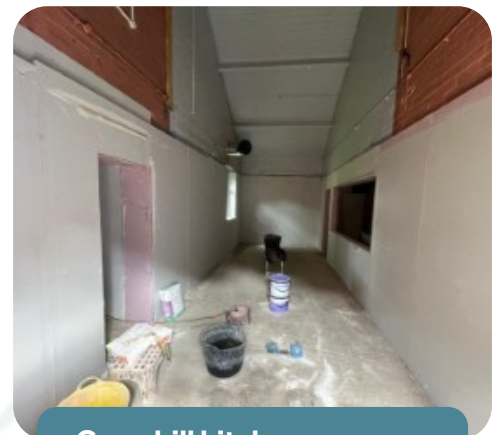
## FOCUS ON ESTATES

Our estates department plays a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth operation of the schools within our trust. Working diligently behind the scenes, this team is responsible for the safety, functionality and long-term sustainability of every building within the trust. From routine maintenance and emergency repairs to large-scale renovations and compliance with regulations, their work impacts pupils and staff every day - even if it goes unnoticed.

Whether it's managing heating systems during the winter, maintaining outdoor spaces, or overseeing construction projects, the estates team ensures that learning environments remain safe, clean and inspiring. Their planning and foresight also protect the trust's assets, helping schools avoid costly disruptions and focus on education. Without them, the day-to-day routines of school life - assemblies, science experiments, lunch breaks - simply wouldn't happen so smoothly.

At Oak we have site teams at each school, a roaming site manager and then a central estates and facilities manager, Phil McLean, who oversees estates from a trust perspective. The team is gearing up for a jam-packed summer, undertaking routine maintenance and project managing schemes of work, with several major projects set to commence whilst schools are empty. Some of the planned work includes:

- Construction of a new extension at Unsworth Primary School to build a new preschool nursery
- Creation of a new car park at Unsworth Primary School to accommodate extra staff and visitors to the nursery
- An extension to Oak's central office to accommodate the growth of the central team
- Refurbishment of the science classrooms at Philips
- Installation of a commercial kitchen at Crosshill
- Installation of a new toilet block and extra office space at Crosshill
- Creation of a covered outdoor recreation space and outdoor gym equipment at Ash Grove
- Essential structural works on the sports hall building at Hazel Wood
- Installation of a new two-classroom modular building at Elms Bank
- Installation of a new modular building to encompass Ash Grove's alternative provision programme
- LED lighting replacement at Unsworth, Elms Bank and Hazel Wood



**Crosshill kitchen progress**



**Central office progress**



**Unsworth nursery**

## UPDATES FROM OAK OUTREACH

The Oak LP Outreach team continues to offer a variety of professional development courses to schools within the trust and across the borough. This term has seen yet more people benefit from our service, with some of the events and courses we've held detailed below.

- Our summer inclusion conference was a big success and well attended from schools across Bury, Bolton and Oldham. Guest speakers were Natalie Packer, Independent Educational Consultant and Chris Reddy, from Bright Futures, presenting on the strategic role and well-being of the SENCo.
- The summer training programme wrapped up with a two-day Irlen training course with Dave Bartlett from Naoclarity. This was extremely popular and attended by six of our trust schools, plus the wider community. Due to its popularity, we have added two new dates for the autumn term.
- We held our final coffee and catch up session for SENCos on 3 July and this featured updates from the outreach team, Sam Kenworthy, Occupational Therapist, on sensory toolkits and Tracy Coatman, Public Health Practitioner, on the Essential Parent app.



**Oak LP**  
Outreach

We are now busy finalising our CPD offer for the next academic year. We are pleased to be hosting a wider range of CPD courses, including bespoke training for teaching assistants linked to the EEF research with Paul Duckworth. We also have Maddy Barnes hosting English subject leader CPD and oracy CPD for the primary schools within the trust and then we will have safeguarding DSL training, first aid, Irlen training and much more.

For more information on the latest courses please visit our website at <https://outreach.oaklp.co.uk/>.

