



Summer 2022 - Issue 12

# SIGMA NEWS

For Students, Parents and Carers of The Sigma Trust

Greater than the sum of its parts



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

- £1M INVESTMENT IN BUILDING
- TEACHING AWARDS FOR SIGMA STARS
- GREEN WALL BRINGS PEACE TO STUDENTS
- RACING CAR ROARS BACK INTO ACTION



# Welcome...

Welcome to the latest issue of Sigma News, which takes a look back over the achievements of our schools and students throughout the spring and summer terms.

Isn't it wonderful to see our young people taking the opportunities to develop every aspect of themselves – from lessons in STEM, to learning how to take the very best care of their mental health, to showing their love of literacy by launching their own book clubs. What well rounded young adults we will see leave our schools in the coming years.

I am so very proud that our young people are being given such wide-ranging and vital experiences throughout our schools. Despite the challenges of the last few years with the pandemic and all its consequences, our commitment to your children and their futures has been unwavering.

I hope you are able to spare some time to look through this issue.



Wishing everyone a settled and productive autumn term.

**Lyn Wright, CEO, The Sigma Trust**

## Industry professionals partner with school for careers guidance

Students are getting an insight into potential future careers thanks to a partnership between their school and industry professionals.

The Philip Morant School and College launched the Design, Engineer, Construct programme to give students experience of careers in the built environment and help them on their way to jobs in this field.

The school has partnered with Ingleton Wood and TJ Evers who will support students' learning in technology.

The sponsors will give teachers and students their expertise through lessons and special events.

Head of School Stephanie Neill said: "We are excited about the many opportunities this will generate and to be able to work with employers in the local area.

"Our students have the opportunity to connect directly with professionals in the industry and understand about the many different roles they could consider as future careers and the routes through education to achieve that."

## WE ARE THE SIGMA FAMILY...



# New sports hall and teaching block completed



Students at Clacton County High School are benefitting from an extension to their building.

A new teaching block housing modern foreign languages and PE classrooms was unveiled in March. After seven months of building work, building contractor Morgan Sindall handed over the keys to the new sports hall and teaching block.

The work included new entrance gates at the back of the school, as well as new bike racks and storage facilities for students who cycle to school.

The block not only provided an extra six classrooms, but also additional space for students to take their exams away from the main school building.

## £1m investment in school extension

An investment of £1 million was made in The Thomas Lord Audley School over the summer. The Sigma Trust invested the funds to add an extension and to modernise the canteen. While

the works were carried out, a temporary canteen was set up in a classroom, enabling students to still buy paninis, pasta, jacket potatoes, pizza, curry and rice, sausage rolls and bolognaise.

## Making mental health a priority

A whole term was dedicated to raising awareness of how to look after our mental health.

Students at The Colne Community School and College took part in a wellness walk as part of their tutor time activities.

The importance of understanding people's differences in the ways they look after their mental health, as well as the importance of being outside in nature for our wellbeing, was also discussed during assembly.

Two mental health ambassadors helped NHS team Enable

East, who work with the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, to create a leaflet to help students with their mental health and resilience.

As part of the mental health awareness work, Year 7 students were invited to a wellbeing workshop delivered by Tom Ryder from Return Wellbeing, which inspires young people to improve their mental wellbeing through creative outlets such as music. They hold workshops with 30 students at a time, creating a space for discussion and conversations about mental health.

## Launching STEM club creations into the sky

Members of the St Helena School STEM club spent a month building rockets ready to launch.

Using Estes Rocket Designer Special kits, they created a variety of different sized rockets which they decorated with spray paint and decals.

The rockets, which can reach heights from 30m up to 700m, were designed to deploy a parachute in the hope of getting them to land close to where they are launched. On launch day at Hilly Fields, students

watched on as the STEM Club Rocketeers took it in turns to launch their rockets.

Out of 23 launches, there were 18 successful recoveries, with one stuck in a tree, three were lost and one RUD (Rapid Unscheduled Disassembly).

Students from the school's Arduino Club designed microelectronics to be fitted in a rocket nose cone to allow them to track the rocket's altitude, acceleration and GPS co-ordinates to enable recovery in future.



# Love of literacy behind book club launch

Students with a passion for reading have inspired the launch of a school book club.

Year 9 students at Harwich and Dovercourt High School were keen to set up their own after-school club after hearing about their teacher's hobby. French teacher Vanessa Williams, who oversees the club, said the idea came about when she told students about a book club she is part of.

She said: "Harwich and Dovercourt High School is a Reading School, which means every student starts every lesson reading a book of their choice. Our students have a real passion for reading, so when I mentioned the book club to my Year 9 students, they were really keen to start their own.

"I am really proud that they have brought their shared love of reading together in this way. I was really impressed with the enthusiasm on show and how well they all articulated

their thoughts about the book. A book club is a great way of uniting a shared love of reading and learning and I look forward to seeing it go from strength to strength."

The first book club started with students discussing *Cinderella is Dead*.



## Birthday celebrations for special girl – Sunny, the school puppy!

Excited pupils celebrated the first birthday of their very own puppy.

Sunny is a familiar – furry – face at Monkwick Infant School where she works as part of the dog mentor programme, supporting children with regulation, anxiety and self-esteem. Children are able to read to Sunny and teach her new tricks.

To celebrate her own milestone, Sunny was treated to cards and cake.



## Young entrepreneurs make their money grow

A business challenge saw young entrepreneurs come up with ideas to make their money grow.

Year 5 pupils at Monkwick Junior School were challenged to design a business to make their £5 grow.

In teams, they came up with original designs, put forward a purchase order and worked together to make their final product. Parents and carers were invited into school to attend a product fair, where they could visit the stalls and see products ranging from bookmarks to floral decorations.

The event was promoted by posters designed by pupils.

## Real-life gang experience opens students' eyes



A motivational speaker who grew up surrounded by gangs and crime has given young people a harsh lesson.

Gavin McKenna had brushes with the law growing up in London, but has since turned his life around and devoted it to helping others faced with the same negative temptations.

Through his organisation, Reach Every Generation, he now inspires young people to find a positive path.

Year 7 and 8 students at The Stanway School listened to Gavin's story about his experience of life around knife crime, gang culture, drugs and crime and the consequences of choices he made.

## Students living by their school values are being celebrated

Special walls have been set up at The Philip Morant School and College to demonstrate Aspirations, Success and Kindness.

The Aspirations Wall was set up to celebrate students' work, the Success Wall for those achieving Philip Morant awards and the Kindness Wall invites nominations from teachers and the community.

For those picked by their teachers to feature on the Aspirations Wall, work is put on display for a week before the chosen students meet with the head and any visitors to the school to discuss their achievements.

They receive a certificate, a badge, refreshments and a queue jump pass for the canteen which they can share with a friend.



# Real-life experience of a scientific research project



A research project into unprecedented storms will include input from a sixth former.

Summer Tye, a Year 12 student at Harwich and Dovercourt High School, secured one of only 1,000 places nationwide on the Nuffield Research Placement scheme.

The programme gives students an opportunity to contribute to research projects in the area of science, quantitative social science, computing, technology, engineering or maths.

Having applied online and submitted a personal

statement explaining why she should win a place, Summer was given a post with UK Power Networks in Colchester. She spent two weeks over the summer working on the UKPN Response to Unprecedented Storms project.

Alexandra Gill, second in science, said: "This is an extraordinary achievement for Summer as one of only 1,000 students across the UK gaining a placement. I hope this will give her valuable experience within STEM and encourage her to keep reaching for the stars."

## Outdoor catering helping to cut dining hall queues

Paxman Academy has opened an outside catering facility to extend the range of food on offer to students.

The Paxman Pitstop pod offers on-the-go options such as bacon baps, fruit pots and baguettes at break and lunchtimes.

The addition is helping to cut down the queues at the main Food Plant restaurant.



## Going green for climate concern and environmental issues



Pupils turned their school green for a day focusing on climate concern and environmental issues.

Green Day at Holland Park Primary School saw pupils dress in the colour to raise awareness. The annual event was in support of the Multi Schools Council which provides the school with training and resources.

Sarah Edwards, Behaviour and Wellbeing Lead, said: "On the day, children took the majority of their learning outside and covered a range of activities, including hapa zome at our Forest School site, an up close experience with moths thanks to World of Moths, and a parent and child coastal school session with Essex Wildlife Trust.

"The children had a wonderful time enjoying the benefits of being outdoors while learning about the importance of raising environmental awareness."

The school raised £220 for the Multi Schools Council charity from the day.

## Taking action to turn school green

Students turned part of their school green to create a calm space for their peers.

Year 10 students Madeleine, Noya and Jecht, from The Thomas Lord Audley School, came up with the idea of a green wall to be built on the school site as part of the Action for Conservation workshop. The team – calling themselves Tree Frogs – wanted the creation to help with the school's

mission of being as green as possible.

They also felt it would be a calm spot for students, especially those with special educational needs. Perrywood Garden Centre, in Tiptree, donated £30 worth of plants for the project, with the team picking sensory plants such as mint and rosemary they felt would create a calming environment for those struggling emotionally or academically.

## Top tips on looking after your mental health

Five strategies to being mentally healthy were shared with students during an awareness raising week.

During Mental Health Awareness Week, students at The Philip Morant School and College were given assemblies and posts on social media to help them to cope with their feelings and emotions.

They included –

- When you find your mind racing and feelings out of control, STOPP – Stop, Take a breath and pause, Observe your thoughts and feelings and what you sense around you, Plan your response carefully, Proceed calmly
- Use grounding to get your thoughts and feelings back under control
- Make sure you speak to someone

- Find help on Kooth, an online service supporting mental health and offering free counselling
- To stay mentally healthy, stay physically healthy

The school provided tips on how to prevent a panic attack and provided new safeguarding yellow cards enabling students to report their worries online rather than in person.

## “How to think like a...”

Sixth formers got a taste of life at university with a series of special lectures.

The **How to think like a...** project saw students from Sigma Sixth attend university-style lectures.

In partnership with University of Essex, the Sigma Sixth Lecture Series was launched by Professor Wayne Martin, professor of philosophy, with Year 12 attending the **How to think like a...** philosopher lecture.

Sarah McKarry, Head of College, said: “All the students

displayed excellent engagement with the intellectually demanding content of this lecture, reflected in the high quality of their contributions and questions to Professor Martin.

“Professor Martin took time to speak individually to students from across the college, helping to break down perceived barriers around access to the world of academia.”

Other sessions looked into the world of an art historian, environmentalist and human rights advocate.



## Eco committee in full bloom

Members of a school eco committee brought colour to their community during a competition.

The committee at Monkwick Infant School took part in a schools in bloom competition, with every class growing their own produce and gardens.

The schools in bloom committee judged the creations, along with Councillor Dave Harris.

Pupils attended an award ceremony at the town hall where they met the Mayor and Mayoress and received a prize for the best eco entry.

## Theatrical students put together their own drama performance

Students’ knowledge of their career options has been expanded with a programme of events.

Students at The Thomas Lord Audley School were given a clearer idea of what path they want to follow in the future after taking part in visits and workshops.

- Year 9 and 10 students explored careers in medicine with the Medical Mavericks. The visitors brought in medical equipment – including an ECG machine and an ultrasound machine - and worked with Year 10 health and social care students and those in Year 9 keen to study the subject in future.

- A group of 30 Year 9 students took part in a Lego STEM day. They listened to a presentation about autonomous vehicles and how they can be used in a variety of settings – self-drive cars, warehouse robots, lawn mowers and drones used in natural disasters. They were set a challenge to programme a robot to navigate a course, to be able to detect objects and stop at a certain colour sign.
- Motivational speaker Mr Beezy worked with Year 10 on aspirations. He told them they will only achieve by putting in effort and looking beyond challenges to reach their goals.

## Drama students demonstrate they are better together

Theatrical students put together their own drama performance to showcase what they have learnt.

Year 11 students at St Helena School demonstrated their drama talents with a showcase.

As part of their final performance exam, students were set the task of creating a piece of drama around the theme

“better together”.

Each group interpreted the theme in different ways, from pieces around knife crime to pieces about the Manchester Arena attacks.

They carried out background research, before writing scripts and putting together their performances.



# Songwriter inspires young musicians

A songwriter spent a day working with budding performers as they created their own songs.

Songwriter Hannah Jane Lewis, who is signed to Polydor Records, worked with

students at Clacton County High School. Year 9, 10 and 12 students were tasked with writing a collaborative pop song in a day during the Clacton County High School and Sigma Sixth workshop.

They worked together to write lyrics, work out melodies and to construct an original song before performing to an audience of Year 8 students.

Steve Wilson, Head of Music, said: "It was fantastic to see our sixth formers, who came over from Sigma Sixth for the day, inspiring our younger music students as well as leading their song writing teams throughout this process.

"The talent on show was outstanding with a number of songs being recommend by Hannah as potential hits and worthy of being recorded for release. It was also fantastic that so many students accompanied their composition by playing their own instruments."

The day finished with Hannah performing her new song The Long Drive Home.



# Celebrating education in Harwich



A celebration of education saw students take an amusing look at their hometown.

Students from Harwich and Dovercourt High School joined other local primary and secondary schools to take part in the Let's Celebrate Tendring event.

Organised by The Tendring Education Strategic Board, the event at Princes Theatre, Clacton, gave young people the opportunity to perform on stage in

front of an audience.

Olivia Okongwu, Joe Hance, Olivia Evans and Riley Taylor, from Harwich and Dovercourt High School, developed a humorous look at Harwich's history while highlighting the school's progress with reading.



A calm oasis is giving young people a place to take time out of the busy school day.

Paxman Academy opened a Reflection Garden in September where students can go and sit and be still throughout the day. Materials and labour were provided to the school free of charge by Lila Connect, with representatives visiting to officially open the space.

# A fun day out for children of all ages, abilities and needs

A diversity day enabled children of all ages, abilities and needs to have fun together.

School councils from across Essex came together at Braxted Park for the Multi Schools Council United in Diversity event.

Year 4 and 5 school council reps from Holland Park Primary School attended the event which was designed to ensure children of all ages, abilities and needs could enjoy a fun and educational day out.

Sarah Edwards, Behaviour and Wellbeing Lead, said: "Pupils enjoyed trying new and inclusive sports, worked with therapy dogs, designed t-shirts and listened to motivational speeches from children with additional needs who had terrific and inspirational stories to share about their personal journeys.

"This day was unique. To see so many children, each from a different background with a different story to tell, all working together and trying new things was wonderful to see."



# Celebrating the outstanding people of The Sigma Trust

The ninth annual Essex Teaching Awards saw outstanding teachers and support staff from across The Sigma Trust schools celebrated.

The awards shine a light on the people from primary, secondary, special and early years who are making the difference in the county.

Those celebrated included –

- **Ellie Batten**, from St Helena School, who won the award for the New Teacher of the Year
- **Louise Brown**, from The Colne Community School and College, who was highly commended in the New Teacher of the Year category

- **Louise Wiley**, from St Helena School, who was highly commended in the Teacher of the Year in a Secondary School category
- **Fiona Pierson**, from St Helena School, who was highly commended in the Headteacher in a Secondary School category
- **Lorraine Edwards**, from St Helena School, who won the award for Non-teaching Staff Member of the Year
- **Joanne Katherine Bartholomew**, from St Helena School, who was highly commended in the Non-teaching Staff Member of the Year category

- **Clare Burton**, from The Colne Community School and College, who was highly commended in the Non-teaching Staff Member of the Year category
- **Susan Went**, from St Helena School, who was highly commended in the Teaching Assistant of the Year category
- **Site team**, from Stanway School, who were highly commended in the Team of the Year category
- **Kate Victoria Poynter**, from The Colne Community School and College, received a Lifetime Achievement Award

## National awards for education in Clacton

The Pearson Teaching Awards, which recognise and celebrate excellence in education, highlighted work going on in Clacton.

Those celebrated included Andrew Chitsakamile, from Clacton County High School, who was runner-up in the Secondary School Teacher of the year category. The V16 Partnership was awarded a Silver Award in the Impact Through Partnership category in recognition of the collaboration of five schools with the University of Essex.

Neil Gallagher, Executive Headteacher at Clacton County High School, said: "The V16 Partnership is now an integral

part of the post-16 offer of all the partnership schools.

"Not only does it allow us to viably deliver post-16 learning in some 'smaller volume' subjects, delivered by excellent teachers from across our schools, it is opening really exciting school to school; multi-academy trust to multi-academy trust dialogue about learning and teaching."



## Zoo trip brings science lesson to life

Real-life animals helped pupils to understand their latest science lesson.

Year 5 pupils from Monkwick Junior School visited Colchester Zoo as part of their learning on animal adaptations. They took part in a workshop, which included dressing up as fennec and snow foxes, feeling the thickness of

real-life furs and studying the skulls of big cats. Pupils then got the opportunity to visit the species they had discussed to see adaptation in action, with the Africa Alive zone their favourite. They were able to hold African snails, stick insects and cockroaches, as well as watch the penguins being fed.

## Studies enriched with a Jack Petchey grant

A school's work with the Jack Petchey Foundation resulted in studies being enhanced with a grant.

The Stanway School was awarded the Jack Petchey Foundation Leader Award Grant to further enhance its work with young people.

The funds were spent on goggles to simulate the effects of alcohol on vision and synthetic breasts and testicles to teach students how to examine themselves for signs of cancer.

The equipment was used during the school's enrichment day.

## Stepping into famous painting for geography studies



Year 10 geography students from St Helena School visited Flatford Mill as part of their studies.

The two-night residential trip gave students cultural capital by staying in Willy Lotts' Cottage, famous for featuring in John Constable's The Hay Wain painting.

Geography based activities included an evening walk,

humanely trapping mammals for examination, orienteering in independent groups, a river survey and some classroom based revision tasks.

In between geography tasks, there were team-building activities including team games using walkie talkies, a campfire and a Taskmaster style game.



# Hairdressing students a cut above the rest



Two hairdressing students have taken a national competition by storm.

Ruby Kirke-Bennett, a Level 3 hairdressing student at Harwich and Dovercourt High School, was named the Concept Hair Magazine learner of the year.

In the hair colouring category, she had to showcase her work to celebrity judges at the final at Solihull College and University.

The competition was open to all hairdressing trainees who are either in full-time education or apprenticeships.

Ruby said: "Just getting to the final was amazing, but when they announced my name as the winner it was just a mix of shock and euphoria running through my body. I would like to

thank everyone at Harwich and Dovercourt High School who have been amazing."

Classmate Alisha Riches wowed judges at the Concept Hair Schools Spotlight Award. The national photographic competition was open to all UK schools and colleges offering hairdressing at Key Stage 4. This year's theme was festival hair which inspired a diverse range of festival season looks from competitors all looking to impress a renowned panel of judges.

Jo Gardiner-Irving, head of salon studies at the school, said: "We pride ourselves on the high level of education we offer within salon studies at the school and this is testimony to that."



## End of year residential sees students grow

Year 7 students from Paxman Academy celebrated the end of their first year at secondary school with a residential trip.

They spent three days and two nights at Essex Outdoors Danbury taking part in outdoor activities such as rock climbing and high rope walking.

The trip helped them to build personal skills, improve their confidence and resilience and strengthen their ability to work as part of a team.

Kay Turner, Acting Head of School, said: "This is the very first residential visit for 160 Paxman students. They have all benefitted greatly from the experience, taking part in a wide range of activities and sleeping under canvas. It was wonderful to see Year 7 students enjoying taking on personal challenges and growing as individuals."



## Putting wellbeing at the top of our agenda

The wellbeing of pupils is a priority at Holland Park Primary School. The importance of wellbeing has been highlighted with a range of initiatives, including –

- mental health and wellbeing presentations delivered to Year 5 and 6 by Colchester United in the Community
- parent and child Wild Well Being forest and coastal school sessions funded and delivered by Essex Wildlife Trust
- Resilience Programme for Year 5 and 6

- positive parenting and transition workshops for parents delivered by WARMS
- transition programme for Year 6 pupils delivered by WARMS
- weekly wellbeing hub sessions in nurture suite for small groups of children
- daily nurture sessions run for small groups by qualified Nurture UK practitioners

Sarah Edwards, Behaviour and Wellbeing Lead, said: "At Holland Park, the

wellbeing of our pupils is priority. Throughout this year, we have facilitated a number of interventions to encourage this and improve understanding of the importance of wellbeing.

"We work hard to educate our pupils on the importance of wellbeing.

"Daily mindfulness sessions embed good practice within the curriculum. We hope our pupils have a good understanding of what positive and negative mental health looks like, and how to find support for this."

## Children of all ages and abilities enjoy action-packed day together

A day celebrating diversity and inclusion brought together hundreds of young ambassadors.

The Multi Schools Council Inclusion Day saw more than 250 school councillors from 37 primary, secondary and special schools gather at Braxted Hall, near Witham.

The day, to celebrate inclusion and diversity, was spread over four different activity zones which children of all ages and abilities could enjoy together. Throughout the day, Multi Schools Council ambassadors – including those from Clacton County High School - Paralympians, war veterans and other celebrities spoke about their own journeys to help inspire and build confidence.



Sandi Fattore, Pastoral Lead and Multi Schools Council Co-ordinator at Clacton County High School, said "The Essex Multi Schools Council aims to break down perceptions towards children with SEND and mental health difficulties in schools and their wider communities.

"Children from mainstream and special schools meet regularly throughout the year to learn more about each other and put their plans in place for making a difference.

"Not only does the council help to break down perceptions, it provides young people with an opportunity to improve their confidence, to develop their personal and social skills and to promote important values like democracy and tolerance."

# Class of 2022 – NETT Teacher Training Awards

North Essex Teacher Training (NETT) celebrated as the class of 2022 qualified as teachers, with many going on to work in local schools. The celebration was held at the Tendring Education Centre with awards being given.

Programme Director Sarah Alix said: "This year, it has been much more difficult than in previous years when it came to selecting award-winning trainees. This particular cohort have worked really hard, worked together and really supported each other.

"Over the past year, there have been underlying challenges of Covid-19, with staff and pupils out at various times of the year, and we have seen an inspiring cohort in that they have developed their resilience."

For the last 30 years, NETT has been training teachers to work in local schools with an average of 87 per cent of newly qualified teachers taking teaching positions within the Colchester and Tendring area.

Secondary Programme Leader Jane Adamson said: "It's been lovely to have everyone back for face-to-face sessions again. Trainees have been really positive and supportive of each other, and we have seen lots of resilience shown with Covid-19 continuing to impact schools."

## NEWSBITE

### Primary and secondary children share a love of music

Primary school pupils took part in a music workshop at their prospective secondary school.

Year 6 pupils from Brightlingsea Primary School joined the music department at The Colne Community School and College for a music workshop. The two-hour workshop saw Year 10 students from Colne teach the visiting primary school children.

Pupils chose an instrument from the piano, guitar, bass guitar, vocals and drums and sat with the Year 10 specialists for one-to-one tutoring.

The group learnt Jessy J's Price Tag before playing together as a whole class ensemble.



Award winners were -

**The Award for Academic Excellence...for highest attaining trainee, and contribution to academic evidence-based practice and research**

- Ben Elmer
- Millicent Clarke

**The Award for Outstanding Progress...for exceptional progress made over the training year**

- Kerry Knight
- Alfie Ambrose
- Owen Bickmore
- Paige Vincent

**The Award for Most Inspiring Trainee Teacher...recognises trainees demonstrating inspirational practice**

- Amber Smith
- Emma Noone
- Katie Pullen
- Fern Luff
- Jo Kirk

**Certificates in resilience...**

- Emily Thompson
- Lee Seymour
- Abigail Kettle
- Channele Keeshan
- Shannon Legonidec
- Rebecca Henry
- Elizabeth Aylott
- Angela Smith

## Celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee



A whole school community came together to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Pupils and their teachers at Monkwick Infant School made quilts and held a tea party on the playground to mark the historic occasion.

In lessons, pupils focussed on historical learning around the key event.

## Home Secretary shares views on variety of issues

Politician Priti Patel visited students to talk about their citizenship work.

GCSE citizenship students at The Stanway School were given the opportunity to ask questions of the then Home Secretary. Students had contacted Ms Patel to ask questions about young people struggling with poverty and homelessness

as part of a project they were working on.

During the Q&A, students asked Ms Patel's thoughts on poverty among young people, mental health in the justice system, County Lines, gang violence, the treatment of eating disorders and the harassment of women in the workplace.



## Racing car team return to competition

A school's Formula 24 racing car team have returned to racing after the pandemic.

Since last September, the team from Clacton County High School have been adapting and improving their car Andromeda, as well as completing and testing second car Neptune. They made a return to racing at Goodwood Motor Circuit, in West Sussex.

Each car completed two races, with the team coming 23rd out of 60 cars in their class. Science Teacher and STEM Lead Bart Binczyk said: "Fantastic sunshine and a great competition, with numerous teams taking the opportunity to relaunch their racing post-pandemic; more than 80 teams and 140-plus cars converged on the race track.

"Although they did not feature on the finishing podium, the team did collect their first F24 trophy for the best portfolio made by Martha Hillier – a graphical presentation of the progress of our team.

"The team now have an abundance of race data to analyse to help to improve both cars' performance."



## Sporty students – and nearby residents – benefit from council investment

As part of Paxman Academy's development, Essex County Council agreed to fund and install a 3G artificial grass sports pitch.

The new sports pitch boasts an 11-a-side pitch, a nine-a-side pitch and three five-a-side pitches, as well as team dugouts.

The design incorporates a high-level fence around the perimeter as well as a wooden sound-reducing barrier along the neighbouring fence line.

Essex County Council has also funded the installation

of a long jump pit with a synthetic run-up track.

The new facilities not only come as a boost to outdoor sports provision for Paxman students, but is also available to the community for hire at the weekends and during school holidays.

Kay Turner, Acting Head of School, said: "The opening of Paxman's Multi Use Games Area has offered students a brilliant facility each lunchtime to play football on a great pitch. We look forward to opening this facility to the community."

## Young athletes victorious at inter-school competition

Sporty pupils beat off competition from schools across the Tendring district.

Pupils from every year group from Alton Park Junior School took part at the district athletics event at Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium.

Competing against nine other similar-sized schools,

Alton Park pupils were crowned the winners.

Overall, against 18 other schools of all sizes, Alton Park came second.

Pupils Casey and Sophia said: "What a fantastic achievement. The Garrison was an amazing experience to participate in."

## Discovering how physical activity can improve overall health

Young people made positive changes to benefit mind and body when they took part in a wellbeing project.

Year 9 students from The Colne Community School and

College took part in Project: Me: Reset and Grow Programme. Students were given the opportunity to discover how physical activity can improve overall health and wellbeing, as well as confidence and fitness.

### Rugby champions crowned

The Year 7 rugby team from The Stanway School has been crowned under-12 champions.

They competed against other schools in Colchester during a series of tournaments hosted by Colchester Rugby Union Football Club.

The programme encourages a growth mindset, improves self-esteem and develops coping mechanisms and skills to face future challenges. The Reset and Grow programme provides a safe place for young people to learn how to make positive changes that benefit both mind and body.

As well as group sessions, students attended one-to-one life coaching sessions as part of the programme to support personal goals.

# Working for the Sigma Trust

## ABOUT US

The Sigma Trust is a local partnership of academies in North East Essex, consisting of eight secondary schools and four primary schools. The Trust consists of more than 11,000 students and about 1,600 staff. The size of the Trust allows extensive joint working to take place and provides huge opportunities for staff and students alike. We have been able to build a wide range of secondment opportunities linked to staff development and can ensure students have equal curriculum entitlement regardless of the size of school they attend. The approach taken within The Sigma Trust is unique in this area. There is no lead school, the Trust is built around the belief that best practice becomes shared practice and that every school can become a giver and receiver of support.

All schools are geographically close enough to provide the necessary support and challenge to take all academies to the next level. We have a set of shared values and a common mission and vision that aims to ensure that no school is left behind.

## WHY WORK FOR US

We believe we are stronger and more successful working together than we would be as separate institutions. The mission for each academy within The Sigma Trust is to ensure that no child is left behind. Education should foster in its learners a curiosity to discover who they are and what they are capable of, together with developing the resilience for them to test the boundaries of their abilities, and build the skills necessary to face the future with confidence.

Regardless of what role you perform within the Trust, you will have a unique opportunity to really make a difference and help to shape the lives and futures of our students. We have clear career pathways making it easy for you to map out the next step in your development, whether that be within your current school or elsewhere within the Trust. Some of our benefits include:

- CPD Opportunities
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Excellent Pension Scheme
- Wellbeing Initiatives
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- Discounted Gym Membership

## THE TYPE OF JOBS WE RECRUIT FOR

We have job opportunities for everyone across North East Essex, including Colchester, Clacton-on-Sea, Brightlingsea and Harwich. Alongside leadership and teaching vacancies within both our secondary and primary schools, we also have a number of classroom support opportunities as well as admin, catering, cleaning, pastoral and site roles. Additionally, we have a Central Operations Team at our offices in Clacton-on-Sea and Colchester, so have opportunities to work in our Finance, Payroll, HR or Admin teams.

Vacancies for all roles are available at <https://careers.sigmatrust.org.uk/>

