

Summer Term 1

May 2026

Off By Heart Poetry Celebration at Langar C of E Primary School

On Friday 24th April, Langar C of E Primary School played host to a wonderful Off By Heart Poetry Celebration, bringing together children from across Aspire Academies for an afternoon full of creativity, confidence and joy.

Winning finalists, from each school, took to the stage in front of an audience of pupils and parents from across Aspire, delivering their poems with enthusiasm and flair. We were also delighted to welcome children from Scotholme Primary School, part of the Shine MAT, who joined us, performed on stage and shared in the experience. I was also treated to a couple of excellent impromptu poetry performances at Ironville and Codnor Park this week.

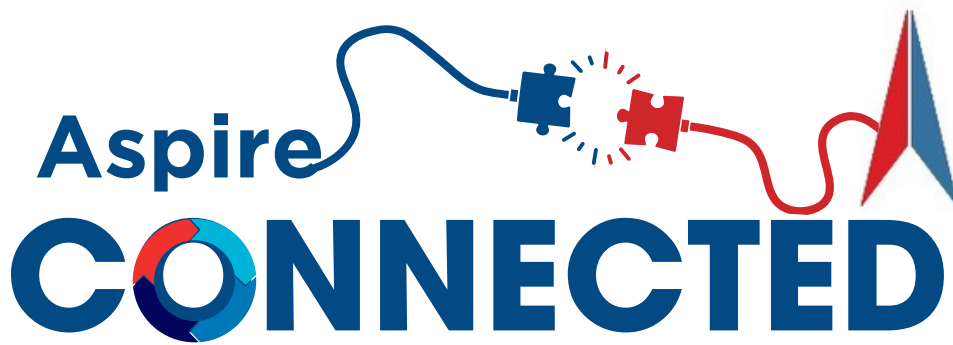
Children aged between 4 and 11 impressed everyone with their performances. The audience was treated to a fantastic variety of interpretations, including humour, expressive use of costumes and props, as well as both solo and paired performances. It was clear that each child had worked incredibly hard and took great pride in sharing their poem.

During the break, there was an opportunity for the children to socialise and get to know one another. With the sun shining, it truly was a special Friday afternoon and a reminder of the value of coming together as a Trust community.

Eight children were specially recognised with Highly Commended certificates, highlighting their outstanding performances. The overall winner's trophy was awarded to Violet from Muskham School, whose animated rendition of The Jabberwocky delighted both the judges and the audience. We are incredibly proud of every child who took part. Each participant received a medal in recognition of their effort, courage, and enthusiasm, an achievement worth celebrating. Off By Heart is part of Poetry By Heart, a national poetry-speaking competition for schools across England. Its main aim is to encourage young people to explore, perform, and connect with poems that resonate with them. Taking part in Poetry By Heart helps children to build confidence in a fun, accessible and engaging way, fostering a lifelong enjoyment of poetry.

A huge thank you goes to Langar for hosting such a successful event, and to the staff and pupil tour guides who made everyone feel so welcome. We would also like to extend our thanks to our judges, who certainly had a difficult task given the exceptionally high standard of performances.





ASPIRE
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

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- Henry Ford**

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SATs Week

As we approach SATs week, I'd like to take a moment to wish you all the very best and to thank you for everything you have done to prepare and support the children across Year 6.

This time of year brings a particular intensity, and I know how much care, thought and effort goes into ensuring that children feel ready and confident. Your work makes a difference, not just in preparing pupils academically, but in creating the calm, reassuring environments they need to succeed.

As always, our take care values are especially important. Please continue to take care of yourselves as well as each other during this busy period. The way you model this for the children helps them to feel safe, supported and able to do their best.

Thank you, too, for the compassion and encouragement you extend to families, helping them to keep things in perspective and ensuring that children approach the week with confidence.

Across both Aspire Academies and Shine Academies, we are proud of the professionalism, dedication and care you show every day. SATs are just one moment in a much bigger journey, and it is your ongoing commitment to our children that truly defines success.

Writing Moderation

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to colleagues across both Aspire and Shine, for their work in preparing and leading writing moderation across each Trust. This is no small undertaking and requires significant time, planning and the creation of high-quality resources to support the process. In Aspire, a particular mention to Lydia Miranda and Eleanor Hodgson at ABCA, and Lisa Clay at KWS. In Shine, thank you to all of you who host moderation events for colleagues.

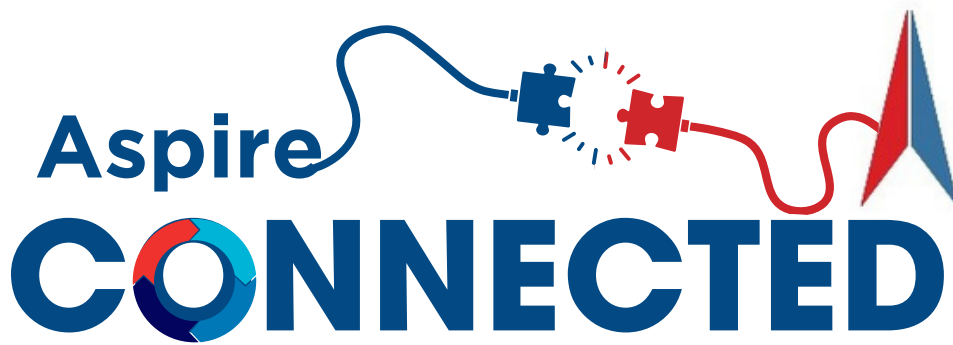
In both Aspire and Shine, there is a clear commitment to working collaboratively, and this is a strong reflection of our shared values. The care and professionalism you bring to this work not only strengthens practice but also ensures that teachers feel confident and supported and able to engage meaningfully in the moderation process. Thank you for the expertise and generosity you have shown, it is much appreciated.

Whitemoor Primary Academy

At Whitemoor, the Head Boy, Head Girl, Deputy Head Boy and Deputy Head Girl recently visited the Council House in Market Square, Nottingham, as part of the Pupil Parliament process. They joined children from other Nottingham City schools to discuss important issues affecting young people across the city.

This year's focus was on increasing opportunities for children within Nottingham City, particularly during half-term holidays. The children shared ideas, listened to different perspectives and worked together to help shape positive opportunities for young people in our community.

The visit was a fantastic opportunity for our pupil leaders to represent the school, develop their leadership skills and take part in meaningful discussions about improving experiences for children across the city.



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Gunthorpe CofE Primary School Celebrates Positive Ofsted Outcome

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A huge congratulations to everyone at Gunthorpe CofE Primary School following their recent Ofsted inspection — the first Aspire school to be inspected under the new Ofsted framework.

The report highlights the many strengths of the school and recognises the warm, caring and ambitious environment created for pupils, describing Gunthorpe as “a warm and friendly school” where pupils “flourish within classes.”

Inspectors praised the school’s strong culture, high expectations and nurturing approach, recognising particularly strong standards in attendance and behaviour, positive pastoral support and the way the school develops pupils into “caring and respectful individuals.”

The inspection also celebrated the school’s ambitious curriculum, strong leadership and governance, and the positive relationships across the whole school community. Parents described the school as “a wonderful, caring school with a strong sense of community,” something that clearly shines throughout the report.

This is a fantastic achievement and a reflection of the dedication, care and hard work of the entire Gunthorpe community. We are incredibly proud of the staff, governors, pupils and families for this well-deserved recognition and look forward to seeing the school continue to flourish.

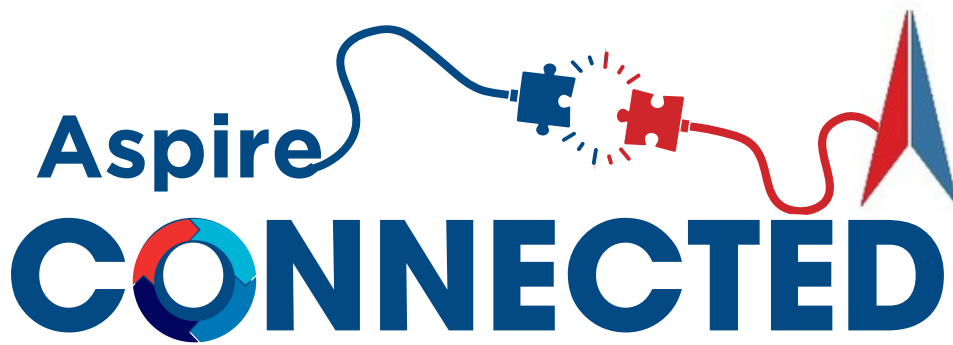
Celebrating the Summer Term Together

There is a real sense of excitement across our schools as we move through the summer term.

Classrooms and corridors are busy with rehearsals, preparations, trips, celebrations and the many special moments that make this time of year so memorable for children and families.

For many pupils, the coming weeks will bring important milestones, first residentials, leavers’ celebrations, transition visits and opportunities to try something new. These experiences help children to build confidence, independence and friendships, whilst creating memories that often stay with them long after they leave primary school.

Thank you to all colleagues who continue to give their time, care and energy to making these opportunities possible. The sense of community across Aspire and SHINE is something we are incredibly proud of.



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Merger Update

As we move into the final weeks ahead of the merger, there continues to be a significant amount of work taking place behind the scenes. This includes ongoing legal meetings, the completion and sign-off of key documentation, and continued discussions with project managers and the Department for Education.

At this stage, 1 June remains the anticipated completion date. While this is an exciting milestone for all involved, it is also an exceptionally busy period, with the central teams and trustees across both Trusts working closely together to ensure all elements are progressed carefully and thoroughly.

Thank you for your continued patience, support and commitment throughout this process. Your professionalism and dedication are greatly appreciated as we work towards this important next step.

Mental Health Awareness Week from 11th May 2026

Mental Health Awareness Week starts on Monday 11th May. This year's theme is Action, focusing on the positive steps we can all take to support mental health and wellbeing in our communities, workplaces and schools.

Across Aspire and Shine MAT, this reflects our shared commitment to supporting and valuing every individual. Through Aspire's Take Care ethos and SHINE's focus on celebrating uniqueness and allowing all to shine, we know that positive wellbeing is central to helping both pupils and staff thrive.

Creating mentally healthy schools is everyone's responsibility, and small actions such as checking in on a colleague, encouraging a pupil, showing kindness or simply taking time to listen can make a real difference.

We look forward to seeing the different ways our schools recognise the week and continue promoting positive wellbeing across our Trust communities.

And finally...

As we look ahead to the final half term of the academic year, there is so much to look forward to across our schools, sports days, performances, residential visits and the many rich opportunities that make this time of year so special. These moments are about far more than events in the calendar; they are about building a true community of opportunity for all our children. They provide the chance for pupils to create lasting memories with friends, to challenge themselves, and to continue to flourish and grow into confident young people.

At a time when the national conversation in education is rightly focused on wellbeing, inclusion and ensuring every child thrives, our shared commitment to taking care of ourselves and each other feels more important than ever; I would like to wish you all a positive and well-supported rest of term.

Kate

CEO