

Aspire and Shine CONNECTED

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."
- Henry Ford

Summer Term 2

July 2026

End of Year Newsletter | Summer Term 2026

Dear colleagues, families and friends of Aspire & Shine,

As we reach the end of another busy year, I want to take a moment to look back, because this has been no ordinary year. It has been the year we became Aspire & Shine Education Trust.

The Start of our Journey as Aspire & Shine



Over more than a year of careful planning, our Trust has come together as one community of fifteen primary schools. Behind every policy being aligned, every system being harmonised and every relationship built lies the quiet, determined work of the central team, governors, trustees, leaders and staff across every one of our schools, who believed that together we would be stronger.

Next term we will be bringing staff from across the Trust together for our first joint Conference day, themed around 'Connectivity' and 'Belonging', giving us a shared purpose where colleagues will have the chance to meet, learn from one another and start to feel part of one Trust rather than fifteen separate schools. This day will be a real milestone, and a clear signal of the importance of connections and belonging.

Thank you to everyone who has made Aspire & Shine possible. There is still a lot of work ahead of us, and many more decisions to make, but we start our first full academic year with strong foundations in place.

Keeping Our Cool: A Term of Heatwaves and Resilience

This term brought an unexpected test in the form of a spell of very hot weather across the country. I want to say a huge thank you to every school for the calm, sensible and caring way this was managed. Adjusted PE and playtimes, relaxed uniform expectations, extra water breaks, shaded spaces and clear communication with families all helped to keep our children safe, comfortable and still able to enjoy their learning.

It is a small but telling example of what our schools do so well: putting children's wellbeing first and adapting sensibly when circumstances demand it. Thank you to all our staff for their good judgement and care.

Aspire and Shine CONNECTED

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."
– Henry Ford

Summer Term 2

July 2026

A Rapidly Changing Landscape

The world of primary education continues to move quickly, and it is worth taking stock of some of the key developments our schools are navigating. RISE (Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence) continues to be a significant strand of our school improvement work. We have been promoting engagement across all fifteen schools with the priority RISE strands for our local areas, ensuring our schools are well placed to draw on regional support and share effective practice.

Attendance remains a national priority. The Department for Education has set out a renewed drive to return attendance to, and beyond, pre-pandemic levels, including individual improvement expectations for schools and new Attendance and Behaviour Hubs offering direct support and the chance to learn from high-performing schools with similar circumstances. Alongside this sits a continued focus on a strong start in our Reception classes, recognising just how much a child's earliest experience of school shapes everything that follows.

Ofsted's renewed inspection framework also continues to evolve. Updated toolkits and operating guides come into effect for inspections from September 2026. We have shared these with our school leaders. There is now more detail on how pupils' attainment and progress will be compared with similar schools, a sharper focus on inclusion and continued use of the five-point grading scale and report cards introduced under the renewed framework.

Finally, this week saw the publication of the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026) guidance, which comes into effect on 1 September 2026. Key changes include making schools 'phone-free' environments by default, updated safer recruitment and DBS requirements following changes to regulated activity, an expanded section on pupil mental health with clearer guidance for staff, and new content on online safety reflecting the growing presence of AI. We will be reviewing our policies and practice across the Trust over the summer to ensure every school is ready for September.

*Together
We Can!*

Aspire and Shine CONNECTED

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."
- Henry Ford

Summer Term 2

July 2026

Congratulations Langold Dyscarr Community School 100 Years!

This month, Langold Dyscarr Community School celebrated a very special mile-stone, in becoming 100 years old!

The school first opened as a senior school in 1926, and quickly expanded to include juniors and infants. Over the course of its history it has been a Secondary Modern school and, later, independent Infant and Junior schools, before the Junior School and the Infant and Nursery School merged in 2001 to form the school we know and love today,

Langold Dyscarr Community School. A century of educating children in the local community is a remarkable achievement, made possible by generations of staff, governors and families. Congratulations to everyone, past and present, who has been part of the Langold Dyscarr story



A Term of Opportunity

Before we close the year, it is worth pausing on just how much this term has offered our children: sports days full of effort and enthusiasm, residentials that build independence and lasting memories, and performances that showcase real talent and confidence.

We say a fond goodbye to our Year 6 pupils as they prepare for the next chapter of their journey in secondary school, we are so proud of everything they have achieved, and we wish them every success. And as one chapter closes, another begins: we look forward to welcoming our new starters, who will begin their own journey as part of Aspire & Shine in September.

Wishing You a Restful Summer

To all our staff, pupils, families, governors and trustees: thank you for everything you have given to our schools and to Aspire & Shine this year.

As the summer break approaches, I hope everyone has the chance to properly rest, recharge and spend time with the people who matter most. You have earned it.



Kate Watson
Chief Executive Officer,
Aspire & Shine Education Trust

Aspire and Shine CONNECTED

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."
- Henry Ford



Summer Term 2

July 2026

A Message from the Chair

The last twelve months have witnessed the most significant changes to our Trust, culminating on June 1st with the merger of the six academies comprising the SHINE Multi-Academy Trust into the Aspire Multi-Academy Trust, making a Trust of 15 primary school academies, and the rebranding of the Trust as the Aspire and Shine Education Trust. Kate Watson remains as CEO of the 15-school Trust. Kate, and the Central Trust team, which has come together from both Trusts, have worked tirelessly to enable the merger with outstanding vision, leadership and commitment. There is still much work to be undertaken to align the functions and processes of the two Trusts over the next two years, but the foundations are strong, with a strategic vision that will not only further enhance the reputation of the Trust but, more importantly, provide a platform on which to build an outstanding experience for all our children and an organisation which genuinely cares for all for which it is responsible – staff and children.

The Board of the Aspire and Shine Education Trust would like to thank all staff and governors across our 15 academies for the dedication and hard work that you have given over the last 12 months. Your commitment to our children is outstanding, the continuation of which will be crucial in the challenges that will face all of us in the next year and beyond. Whether you are a headteacher, a classroom teacher, work in the school office, school site or kitchens or are a school volunteer, your contributions have been invaluable to our academies and their children. A special thanks to those who are leaving our academies, either to retire or to move on to other roles, both within and beyond Trust. – we wish you all best wishes for whatever you are doing next.

I would also like to acknowledge the huge voluntary commitment of the members of the Trust Board, in enabling our vision for Aspire and Shine to become reality.

Have a relaxing and enjoyable summer holiday.
I look forward to meeting many of you during 2026/27.

Peter Golightly – Chair of Aspire and Shine Board



Aspire and Shine CONNECTED

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success."
- Henry Ford

Summer Term 2



July 2026

Launching Our New Trust Vision

You may notice we've used the name Aspire & Shine Education Trust throughout this newsletter, this is who we are, and where we're heading. Formally, our registered name is still in the process of changing: we remain, for now, Aspire Multi-academy Trust while we await ratification from the Charity Commission. We expect this to be finalised soon and are anticipating it to be before the end of the academic year.

As we bring this academic year to a close, and prepare to begin our first full year together as Aspire and Shine Education Trust, I am incredibly proud to share the vision that will guide our journey into the future:

Be Courageous. Be Caring. Become...

These three simple words capture the essence of who we are and the aspirations we hold for every child, every colleague and every school within our Trust.

They are firmly rooted in our Take Care values. We believe courage enables us to embrace opportunity, face challenges and continually strive for excellence. We believe caring creates communities where everyone feels safe, valued, heard and understood. Together, courage and care provide the foundations upon which people can truly flourish.

Perhaps the most powerful word is the final one: **Become**

It is deliberately unfinished because the possibilities are endless. It reminds us that education is not simply about what children know today, but about who they already are, and who they might yet become. It reflects our commitment to providing a Community of Participation and Opportunity through enrichment offers, spoken so proudly of at our recent heads meeting - where every child is encouraged to discover new interests, develop their talents, build character and experience profound personal development. It is about nurturing aspiration, belonging and hope, so that every individual leaves our schools equipped not only for their next step, but with the confidence to shape their own future.

A vision should be deep enough to guide complexity, clear enough to shape action and generous enough to include everyone. We believe these words do exactly that. They will help us navigate change, inform our decisions and unite us around a shared purpose, while allowing each of our schools to retain the unique character and identity that makes them special.

As we look ahead, this vision will become much more than a statement. It will shape our strategy, influence our decisions and strengthen the shared identity of Aspire and Shine Education Trust. It will remind us, every day, why we do what we do.

Together, we will continue to: **Be Courageous. Be Caring. Become...**