

**ASPIRE**  
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

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

## Spring Term 2

March 2026

As we come to the end of what has been a very busy and incredibly successful term, I would like to take a moment to thank all of our staff across both Aspire and Shine for their continued hard work and dedication. The term has truly flown by, and that is a testament to the energy, commitment, and care you bring to your roles every single day.

Our schools continue to offer such a rich and varied experience for our children. The range of clubs and enrichment opportunities has been particularly impressive this term, from darts clubs to cookery sessions, alongside the many sporting opportunities available. Together, these experiences create a genuine community of opportunity which makes a real difference, helping to broaden horizons and create lasting memories for all our pupils.

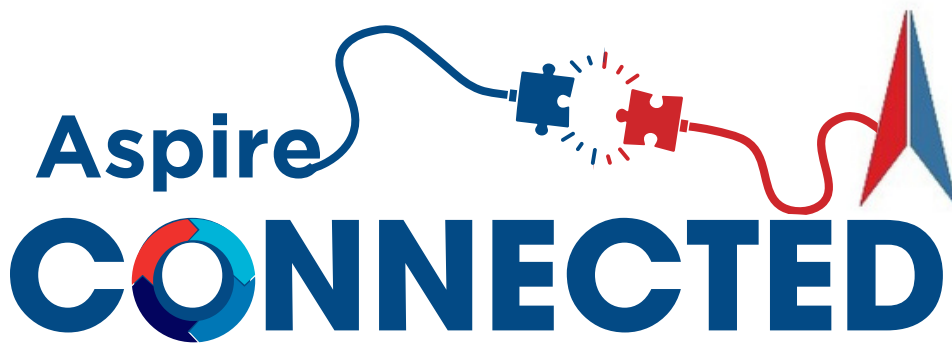
World Book Day was another highlight across our schools. It was wonderful to see books brought to life through creative projects, imaginative costumes, and special reading events. The enthusiasm from both staff and children truly captured the joy of reading and reinforced its importance at the heart of our curriculum.

I would also like to recognise the "beyond expectation" care that is consistently shown across our schools. The dedication to supporting every child, ensuring they feel safe, valued, and able to thrive, does not go unnoticed. It is this care that underpins everything we do. As always, I am incredibly impressed by the high standards that are expected and maintained across our Trusts.

Alongside this, we continue to engage closely with national developments in education, particularly the Schools White Paper. The direction of travel remains clear: a system built on strong collaboration, with schools working together to share expertise and improve outcomes for all pupils. We are also preparing for the changes to Ofsted, which bring a sharper focus on evidencing impact over time and a more detailed evaluation of key areas such as inclusion, personal development, behaviour and the quality of education. Within this context, we remain closely aligned with wider national priorities across primary education, including improving attendance, strengthening inclusive practice for pupils with SEND, and ensuring all children secure strong foundations in reading and language. It is encouraging to see how much of this work is already embedded across Aspire and Shine, reflecting the commitment of our staff to ensuring every child succeeds.

We are also delighted to be launching the Off By Heart Poetry Competition, which is already generating excitement. This initiative supports the development of pupils' confidence in performance, reading fluency and a love of language. We look forward to welcoming finalists to Langar on Friday 24th April for what promises to be a wonderful celebration of pupil voice and talent. Looking ahead, we are excited about the potential to expand this across all schools next year and build on its success together.

Looking ahead to next term, I would also encourage all schools to engage fully with the writing moderation events taking place at John Hunt, Ironville, Archbishop Cranmer and Kirkby Woodhouse. These opportunities are invaluable in strengthening consistency, professional dialogue, and shared understanding of standards across the Trusts.



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## Spring Term 2 continued

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In Aspire, we continue to work closely with the Diocese to further embed the Christian distinctiveness of our four church schools. Through our partnership with Louisa Newton, Diocesan Ethos, RE and SIAMS Lead, we are looking at utilising a range of high-quality resources to support this work. This includes the Lundy model of participation as a meaningful way to evaluate collective worship and ensure pupil voice is central to its development. Alongside this, schools may wish to consider how tools such as Ricketts' Spirituality Grids can support curiosity, reflection and philosophical thinking, enabling progression in spiritual development that can be articulated and evidenced clearly.

Finally, I wanted to share an update on the merger work currently underway. Both Boards have been working closely together over the past year, with a shared commitment to ensuring long-term sustainability and the very best outcomes for our children. The proposal to bring Aspire and Shine together is rooted in a strong alignment of values, culture and ambition. By coming together, we aim to create a stronger, more resilient Trust of around 15 schools, enhancing school improvement capacity, broadening professional development opportunities, and strengthening future financial sustainability. We continue to work towards a June deadline and will keep you updated as this progresses.

Thank you again for your professionalism, your passion, and your unwavering commitment to our children and communities. Wishing you all a restful and well-deserved Easter break. With best wishes,

*Kate* CEO

## Take Care Message to all

Take a moment, take a breath,  
Pause the pace that rarely rests.  
In all you give, in all you do,  
Remember care is needed for you too.

Not just for others, day by day,  
But in the quiet, step away.  
To rest, to reset, to simply be,  
Is part of how we sustain what we give so freely.

**Together we work, together we share, but at the heart of it all, we take care.**

Across Aspire and Shine, we know that the pace of the term can be significant. The care, energy and commitment that colleagues give every day makes a real difference, but it is equally important that we take time to look after ourselves as well as others. The break offers a natural opportunity to step back, rest and reset. Whether that is spending time with family, getting outdoors, or simply taking a quieter pace, we encourage everyone to take the time they need in a way that works for them.

# Aspire CONNECTED

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## Celebrating Our Schools

A snapshot of some of the incredible experiences, achievements and moments that have taken place across our Schools this half term.

