

At the Heart of the Trust

Sarah Ledger, columnist, prolific blogger, comedian, English Teacher and Director of Learning for Year 11 at William Howard School, met with Lorraine Hughes to find out what drives the driving force of the Trust.

It's not every day I'm asked to sit down with Lorraine Hughes, ask her what makes her tick and then publish her response – crafted into 850 words of sparkling prose – in the Trust newsletter. To be honest, I wasn't looking forward to it. Mind you, neither was she.

'I hate this kind of thing' Lorraine tells me as she ushers me into the broom cupboard in William Howard School that now serves as her office. She glances at her watch, 'I could do with a gin and tonic but it's too early.' At 9.30 in the morning, it probably is. She sticks to water.

We all know Lorraine. Whether you've met her briefly at the Race Course at Trust events or like me, have worked with her for years, she's unmissable; small, Scots, formidable and absolutely passionate about education. 'I like to keep the private and the professional separate; but you know ...' she shrugs. I do know: it's Cumbria.

Lorraine knew from the age of five that she wanted to be a teacher and took her inspiration from her mum and dad. They weren't in education but they had a straightforward ethos. 'It was very black and white,' she explains. 'You get out of life what you put in; you have to work hard if you're going to achieve. That belief has stayed with me.' There was a brief diversion when she first applied to University starting out with accountancy, but it wasn't for her. Instead she went back to her first love: education. 'I completed a four-year BEd at Edinburgh University. I loved it. It was the late 80s and it was when educational theory became the focus for Education degrees. It changed everything.'

'I'm a performer,' she explains, but that doesn't mean that what we see is fake. Her performance as CEO comes from a place of passionately held beliefs and values. 'I'm incredibly lucky. I love what I do and I've loved every stage of my career development from classroom teacher to middle leader to senior leader to Deputy Head to Headteacher to Executive Head to CEO.' there's a pause after that last job title.

For while 'CEO' was not an easy label for Lorraine to get her head round. 'I'm a people person. I love the interaction with kids, with parents, with staff – even angry parents and upset staff.

I don't want to become remote from what schools are all about. I found it hard to use the term 'CEO' for the first year of the job. But then I realised calling myself an Executive Head was confusing; I'm not a Headteacher of a school. Each school in the Trust *has* a Headteacher.

Continued >



Lorraine Hughes

Sarah Ledger

It's not been easy and there are obstacles. 'Finance is the biggest problem. That and the fact that education has been a political football for so long. I want politicians to let us get on with our jobs, to be educators, to be autonomous and to finance education properly.'

And being a CEO, I can still do the things that I love: creating the best for my staff; rebuilding teams; working as a family of schools; doing the very best for every single child. I can't be in every school every day. But it's still about the children first and foremost. Always.'

Her vision is clear. 'I believe in the concept of 3-18 education. One curriculum, one set of assessment procedures, one staff. To create hubs of academies in geographical clusters – Brampton, Carlisle, West Cumbria - with 75 minutes' drive of each other so that it's possible to collaborate across the Trust.' she draws breath 'That's the grand plan.' It's not been easy and there are obstacles. 'Finance is the biggest problem. That and the fact that education has been a political football for so long. I want politicians to let us get on with our jobs, to be educators, to be autonomous and to finance education properly.'

'Being a woman has never been an issue though.' she explains. 'When I started I was the only woman at the Heads' meetings, but that wasn't a problem. And it's changing; there are more female Headteachers out there.' I ask her whether being a mother has had an impact on her role. 'Definitely. Being a mother did change my perspective. I brought up my daughter Sarah as a single mum. That certainly gave me a different point of view.' Sarah is currently studying at the Italia Conti Theatre School in London. 'Like me with teaching,' Lorraine says, 'Sarah knew from the age of five that she wanted to be on stage.' The pride is evident in her voice and in her face.

When I ask what makes her laugh, she mentions Billy Connolly – of course – but actually her sense of humour comes out of the situations she finds herself in. 'I did an

assembly in one of the primaries recently and I was expecting them to wriggle about; I was warned they would fidget. But they didn't move a muscle.' worried, she asked them why. 'They told me "We love your shoes!"' she laughs. 'Still, some people think I'm scary.' she says, puzzled. I gently remind her that she can be forceful; none of us present will ever forget the time, a few years ago, when she accidentally popped the amps on the Astro Turf with a particularly emphatic announcement during a fire drill. She laughs again when I ask her how she relaxes. 'I don't.' she replies – and of course, I knew that: it was a trick question. 'I never switch off. I spend my time on holiday reading up on educational research on the sunlounge.' She pauses again for a second and then adds, 'I spend time with Sarah. We enjoy going to see musical theatre.'

The bell rings. Our meeting is over. It's time for me to get back to Year 11 and time for Lorraine to have her next meeting. 'That wasn't so bad, was it?' I ask. She laughs. I take that as a good sign. And no gin and tonic was required.



"I never switch off. I spend my time on holiday reading up on educational research on the sunlounge."



MOVING TIMES FOR WORKINGTON ACADEMY

We are very excited about Workington Academy moving to a brand new, state-of-the-art building and are looking forward to welcoming students to their new school on Thursday 2 March 2017.

It is a huge task packing up an entire school, moving to a new building, unpacking and then getting everything ready to welcome students. Staff have done their best to minimise disruption to students' learning, particularly those who are taking examinations this year. We would like to thank everyone for their exceptional hard work during this very hectic period.

On their first day in the new building, students will be given a tour of the building and take part in fire safety and other induction procedures.



SEEKING SPONSORSHIP

Cumbria Education Trust is actively seeking sponsorship to further improve outcomes in our family of Cumbrian schools.

If you are aware of any companies or individuals that would be willing to work with us, be associated with us and support us in helping our children become "the best they can be" we would be delighted to hear from them. Our ethos is to be at the very heart of the community our schools serve and we are keen to work in partnership with others.

Under previous Education Funding Agency schemes new schools were furnished with new tables, chairs and equipment. However, as a cost cutting measure, schools are now required to use legacy equipment. This essentially means moving old and tired-looking furniture and equipment in to the new learning environment.

In an attempt to address this situation, we are asking companies for sponsorship. There are many opportunities and a donation of any size, no matter how large or small would be most welcome.

To register interest or to explore ways to support the children in our community please contact Tracey Hill (thill@williamhoward.cumbria.sch.uk).

We would like to state our appreciation of the very generous donation from Portakabin, who have very kindly given AV equipment to the value of £10,000.



School to school support is at the core of a Multi Academy Trust

- it's all about learning from each other and

getting better together

In this issue we have reports from three of our cross-school collaborative groups.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning will always be at the very heart of what we do and that is why I am so happy to be invited to be involved in this aspect of the Trust's work. The Teaching and Learning Collaborative Group has met twice at the Trust Conference Centre at Yewdale. Our aims are to provide opportunities for the teaching and learning teams in each school to get together, share, talk about and implement good practice across the schools; to generate opportunities for teachers and students to make relevant, motivating and active contributions to the Trust CPD programme by sharing good practice found in all of the schools; to produce, consult and arrive at some common underpinning principles for teaching and learning within the schools of the Trust.

We recognise the advantages of working across Key Stages and that primary and secondary colleagues have much to learn from each other and yet often we are not aware of what is going on and how it might be shared to have fantastic impacts on our own classes. The group is highly motivated and is working hard to achieve our aims because we know that being the best we can be requires collaboration, a willingness to take on and try different ideas, taking responsibility and showing initiative for our own development and that of others.

We have been very heartened by the many offers from teaching and support staff alike to run workshops and share activities at various CPD events in the future, as this demonstrates staff commitment to giving our students the very best we can. Thank you.

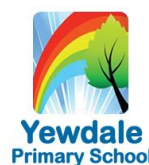


Our next meeting is on Thursday, 30 March and we are travelling to Workington to see the opportunities that a modern purpose-built school presents, what we can learn from this and apply to our own schools.

From a personal point of view as the facilitator of this group, I would like to emphasise how impressed and appreciative I have been with the commitment, creativity and determination of the group members, Ruth Miller, Joanne Lloyd, Helen Keenan, Jenna Dalgleish, Katie Lambert, Jo Daulby, Ellen Mothersdale, Kath Pigdon, Marie McMurdo, Sue Newstead and Mel Ling, to move our agenda forward and make things happen. My sincere thanks go to you all, it is a real privilege to work with you and I can't wait for our next meeting.

Sandy Todd

Chair of the Teaching and Learning Collaboration Group



ENGLISH AND LITERACY

The English and Literacy 'getting better together' meetings happen on a half termly basis, promoting collaboration between staff in the Trust's schools. So far we have covered an exploration of both reading and writing in the following areas: solutions for the quantity of reading now required at Key Stages 2, 3, and 4; how we ensure that the knowledge of grammar and punctuation in writing is retained and applied across the key stages; how we ensure consistency of approach to Reading, Writing and Communication Across the Curriculum and how we standardise writing assessments across Key Stages 2 and 3. Recently we have examined Flight Path approaches to assessment without levels, gaining ideas as to how to embed this approach into our curriculums.

We have also used the opportunity to explore enrichment projects in English and the teachers from Workington Academy have taken us through their successful enrichment days.

Future meetings will focus on the process of marking writing at Key Stage Two and how knowledge of this process can impact on marking at Key Stage Three.

Katie Birks

Co-Chair of the English and Literacy Collaboration Group

MATHS AND NUMERACY

The Maths and Numeracy Collaborative Group met for the first time in December. It was interesting that there were many similarities between the issues facing teachers in both primaries and secondaries. One area of concern was that students are struggling with the literacy content of questions. Students seem to have difficulty in breaking long worded questions down into manageable steps, even when the content is relatively easy. With increased focus on this type of question in both the new KS2 SATs and the new GCSEs more time needs to be set aside in class to do this regularly, rather than trying a 'quick fix' in Year 6 or Year 11.

Another area for discussion was problem solving, which again is given greater emphasis in the new KS2 SATs and new GCSEs. Rhys Morgan, who is in charge of maths

primary liaison at Workington Academy demonstrated some resources from the UKMT (United Kingdom Maths Trust) which he shared with primary colleagues. It was agreed that there is a need for some element of problem solving in every maths lesson and that this should be for all students, not just the most able.

Colleagues from Workington Academy shared examples of their new lesson structure with its acronym of MATHS:

M	stands for Mixed Starter where previous topics are repeated and consolidated.
A	stands for Acquire fluency where students practice a skill they may need later in the lesson.
T	is for Talk about it where pupils discuss their ideas on how to solve questions in pairs before sharing them with the whole class.
H	stands for Have a go . In this section pupils are practicing a new skill and working towards their lesson objectives.
S	is for Sum it up , during the final part of the lesson, involves an exam type question based on the lesson objectives, usually a problem solving question.

Workington Academy have been using this format since September and the feedback from students and staff has been very positive.

The next meeting of the group will take place in February when topics under discussion will include Year 6 and Year 7 work comparison and effective revision pieces of homework to prepare for tests.

Chris Kearton

Chair of the Maths and Numeracy Collaboration Group



IT'S ALL IN THE NAME

After careful consideration the Trust Board agreed to change the name of William Howard Trust. From Monday, 23 January we became **Cumbria Education Trust**.

William Howard Trust was launched in 2015 following a request from the Department for Education (DfE) for the Trust to sponsor the new Workington Academy. Since then the Trust has grown organically to include sponsorship of two primary schools in North Cumbria; Yewdale Primary School in Carlisle and Longtown Primary School in Longtown. They join William Howard School in Brampton.

The Trust has exciting plans and an ambitious strategy for their ongoing development and growth. To reflect this outward looking stance, it was felt appropriate to rename the Trust. It was agreed that a new name would provide a geographical identity nationally – something that the name William Howard Trust could not achieve.

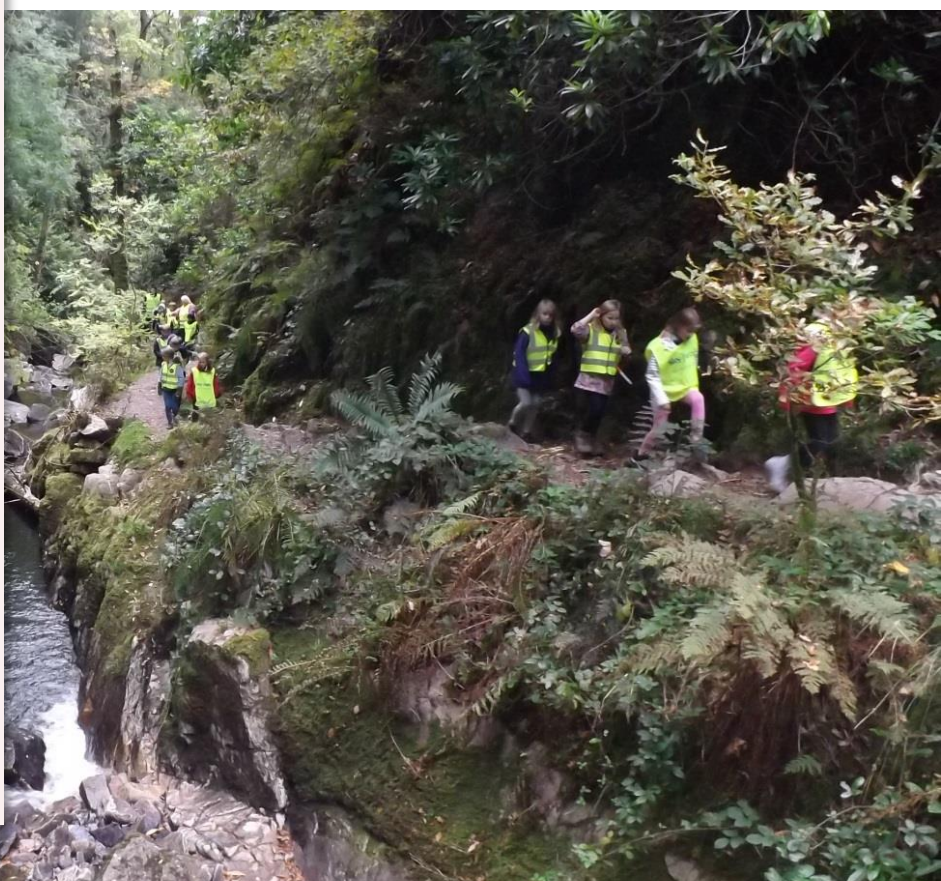
The Trust Board have confirmed that any growth will be meticulously planned and paced to ensure that the Trust's vision and ethos is adopted and embedded in each of the schools. However, it is also recognised that the growth of Cumbria Education Trust will give greater capacity to support all of our schools through collaborative working, developing best practice and the sharing of resources. This is exciting times for Cumbria Education Trust and all staff within its family of schools.



EXPLORING ESKDALE

In mid-October Year 4 pupils from Longtown Primary School had an exciting train trip to Ravenglass, where they caught the La'l Ratty steam train to Eskdale. They visited the water-powered corn mill before spending the night at the Old School House in Boot which is leased by Cumbria Education Trust. The following morning was spent visiting the beautiful Dalegarth Falls.

The Old School House can accommodate 24 people and is available to book via: <http://www.groupaccommodation.com/properties/boot-school-house-boot-eskdale-cumbria>



WHAT DOES A TRUST BOARD DO?

The Trust Board was formed when Cumbria Education Trust (formerly William Howard Trust) began. The Board (often known as Directors or Trustees) are made up of volunteers, with a variety of different skills and experience that contribute to the running of the Trust.

The role of a Trust Board Director is a very important one. The purpose of the Trust Board is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.

All Trust Boards have three core functions:

- Ensuring the clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils/students, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent

The Cumbria Education Trust Board operates with two committees: the Achievement and Climate Committee focuses, in the main, on achievement, outcomes for children and staffing; the Audit and Risk Committee focus on finance, safeguarding and risk.

The Trust Board and each Local Advisory Board (LAB) also has a designated Safeguarding Director/Member.

Cumbria Education Trust Board - Directors



Lorraine Hughes -
Executive Head/CEO



Martin Simpson -
Chair of Trust Board



Sheila Goodliffe



Margaret Payne



Chris Irving



Joyce Keetley



Ian Burke



Cliff Lewis
(Safeguarding Director)

Full details of the Trust Board and LAB members can be found on the Trust's website.

Audit & Risk Committee

Ian Burke – Director (Committee Chair)

Cliff Lewis – Director

Martin Simpson – Chair of Trust Board (Director)

Lorraine Hughes – Executive Headteacher (Director)

Achievement & Climate Committee

Margaret Payne - Director (Committee Chair)

Sheila Goodliffe - Director

Martin Simpson – Chair of Trust Board (Director)

Lorraine Hughes – Executive Headteacher (Director)

Enabling every young person to reach their potential



Inspiring
Learning



Achieving
Success



Creating
Opportunities



Empowering
Communities



A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

The Theatre by the
Lake at Keswick is
booked for Saturday,
11 November in
readiness for the CET
Schools' Production.

*Watch this space for
more information.*