



**MATRIX**  
ACADEMY  
TRUST

**Matrix Newsletter**  
August 2019



Providing **Support** | Sharing **Excellence**



[www.matrixacademytrust.co.uk](http://www.matrixacademytrust.co.uk)





# Congratulations!

*A-Level Results 2019*



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE



What makes a "great" school or what makes a school "great".

It is so easy to sit in a meeting and talk about school improvement and partnership and all those buzz words but the real challenge is making it happen.

Schools improve because the right people are doing the correct jobs at a good pace. These schools are full of people who really want to make a difference to children and do just that. These staff are not always the glamorous ones with 50,000 followers on the "Twittersphere", they do not get lots of "likes" from followers, they have not written best selling books, they do not attend the many conferences and are not sought after to give keynote speeches.

You may not know who they are but the pupils in Matrix Schools know them. They are the teachers and support staff who arrive at school every day on a mission to help pupils learn so that they can pass exams, get on with others and contribute to society.

These teachers take the time to say "Tuck your shirt in", "Top button done up please", "Well done for that piece of work." They will focus on the small matters to prevent any bigger ones occurring. They know and care for their pupils and they do not go for the easy options – they challenge pupils – in their learning, in their behaviour and in their expectations.

These colleagues do everything they can to support pupils to achieve highly. They are the sort of teachers who you would want to teach your children. They are decent, hardworking people who get on with the job and they do not sit around moaning about how hard teaching has become. Teaching is hard and teachers will never be paid enough for the work they do. Matrix Teachers know these facts and yet they still try hard every day to be that person a pupil remembers as "being a great teacher who taught me a lot". That is a great reward for a great teacher.

Buildings are important but our four schools are not new builds or fit for purpose. IT and general equipment is not the most up to date. Facilities are variable in our schools. Yet I do believe that Matrix Schools are good because our staff care about our pupils and show it on a daily basis. What more could be asked of them? Quality staff make a good school supported by dedicated governors and then supportive parents. It is, as the meerkat advert on TV says, "Simple".

The faces of our pupils collecting their A Level and GCSE examination results is a reminder of why we work in schools. We make a difference to pupil's lives and that is what makes a Matrix School great.



Dame Mo Brennan  
Chief Executive  
Matrix Academy Trust





# GCSE RESULTS 2019

**Dame Elizabeth Cadbury** are beaming with pride as Year 11 have collected their GCSE results. "Hard work beats talent" has become a reality for Year 11 who have surpassed all DEC records and achieved the best ever results in the school's history, as well as national averages in so many areas. There have been countless tears of joy, disbelief and a raft of exceptionally proud families.

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**Barr Beacon School** pupils are celebrating an impressive set of GCSE results where there has been a five fold increase in the number of pupils achieving a grade 9, the government's new gold standard.

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**Bloxwich Academy** are celebrating a fantastic set of GCSE results. The progress pupils have made is outstanding, with many pupils achieving the top grades available. Our pupils have certainly embraced the academy's ethos of being the best you can be. These results show what determination and hard work can achieve. Bloxwich was once one of the lowest-achieving schools in the country and now it is one of the most improved. Pupils, parents and staff should all be proud of what they have achieved.

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**Etone College** is celebrating yet another successful set of GCSE results as the school maintains its consistent performance above the national average for pupil progress. Pupils also continue to achieve strongly in English and Mathematics with 69% of pupils achieving a grade 4 or above in both subjects.





#RecentlyMentioned

Follow Us @MatrixAcademyT

DECS Retweeted



**Educate&Celebrate**  
@EducateCelebrate

Nothing but happy faces from our @prideyouthnetw1 activists @PrideInLondon the power of pupil voice leading the movement for #socialjustice @ArcherAcademy @BexleygsMFL #bexleygrammar @followDECTC #bigcreativeeducation @LgbtDerbyuni 💜🦋



Bloxwich Academy Retweeted



**Emma Robins**  
@emmaandhubby

@bloxwichacademy We've been tonight to watch "a night at the musicals" by our amazing dance and drama students at Bloxwich academy seniors they were OUTSTANDING, Well done all of the students and staff that have worked extremely hard  
#fireeater #manonstilts #starsofthefuture

9:32 PM · Jul 9, 2019 ·

Bloxwich Academy Retweeted



**Gill Ogilvie**  
@GillOgilvie

Here I am with Councillor Tina Jukes waiting for the show to begin and looking forward to a great evening. Taking guesses on who will be singing along first 🎤🎵.  
@bloxwichacademy



**kaydashti**  
@kaydashti

Replying to @barrbeaconsch

Thank you for inviting us - we had a fantastic evening 🥂  
#BarrBeaconAt60



You Retweeted



**Tim Evers**  
@TimEversTeachin

Excellent 2 day middle leaders conference for @MatrixAcademyT informative @Ofstednews speakers and great advice for pedagogy and reducing teacher workload from @TeacherToolkit when two influential figures meet! @bloxwichacademy @barrbeaconsch @followDECTC @EtoneCollege

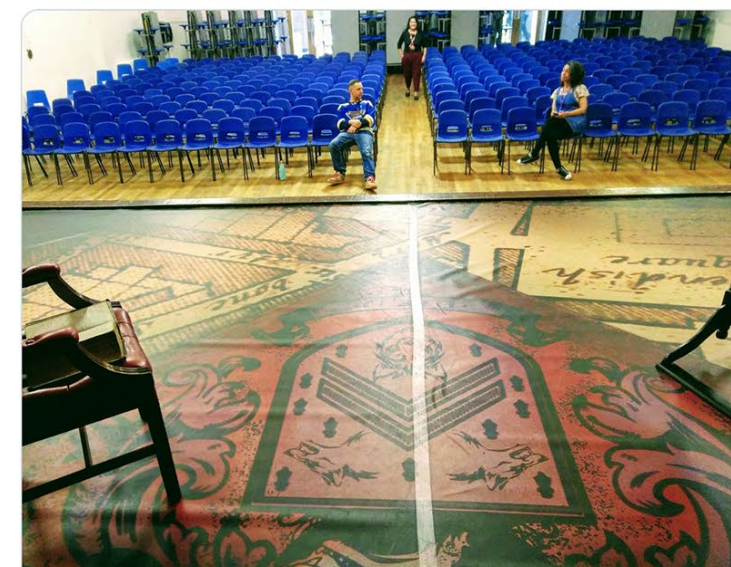


You Retweeted



**Big Brum Theatre**  
@Big\_Brum

"Jekyll had more than a father's interest, Hyde more than a son's indifference."  
We spent our final day of the 2019 'Jekyll and Hyde' at @barrbeaconsch. We performed to the whole of Year 7 who are about to begin studying Gothic Literature.



**Kristian Lavercombe**  
@lavercombe

A slightly different #fanfriday Here's a pic from the end of year performance of the Rocky 'Monster' Show by Yr 6 at Bloxwich Academy. The show had many similarities to Rocky & their proud teacher sent me these great pics to show off the their brilliant work. #bloxwichacademy



10:59 AM · Jul 26, 2019 from Great Malvern, England ·



**Dr Shannon Ludgate**  
@ShannonLudgate

Definitely the highlight of my night! Was great to be back, and so lovely to receive this (and other gifts - very generous!) Huge thanks to Etone for welcoming me back  
@EtoneCollege







**'BE THE BEST  
YOU CAN BE'**

## BLOXWICH ACADEMY SECONDARY



**Mr Andy Seager  
Headteacher**

"the hard work and effort  
they put in now will benefit  
them in the future."

Such a lot has happened at Bloxwich Academy since the last Matrix Newsletter.

I cannot believe that the summer holidays are upon us, how time flies when you are working and having fun.

We have had a term packed with all various achievements our pupils have accomplished during the summer term; international trips, school shows, completion of Duke of Edinburgh Bronze, Silver and Gold expeditions, to name but a few.

A big thanks to all the parents/carers who have shown amazing support in helping drive the standards at Bloxwich Academy, including supervision of homework.

May I wish you all a fantastic summer break and look forward to seeing your child in September.

Best wishes.

### Art & Textiles **Showcase Exhibition**

Vibrant hues, hard hitting topics and personal voice are a common theme in this years Fine Art and Textiles exhibition. The evening demonstrated an array of talent from a wide age range of pupils at Bloxwich Academy, showcasing work produced over the last year. The diversity of the work on show explored a variety of mediums executed with a high level of skill, and year 13 students demonstrated analytical thinking through their investigation of mature themes such as; slavery, domestic violence, the roles of women in society and entrapment to name but a few.

The evening was a huge success with plentiful comments from parents and staff complimenting pupils on the talent and hard work evidenced.



### Prom 2019

On Thursday 11th July at the beautiful grounds of Calderfields Golf Club, staff eagerly awaited the arrival of our Year 11 Prom guests. Students spent the evening snapping photos, watching some fire breathing in awe and even getting a self portrait drawn by our very talented caricaturist.

Once the sun had gone down our Prom King and Queen were announced, that then led into a party to end all parties with our DJ. A great night was had by all and it will certainly be one to remember, especially the live version of leadership baby shark...



### Queens Commission



Mr Hall, Bloxwich's cadet commander recently attended RAF Cranwell to conduct his Officer training course. He will shortly receive the Queens commission scroll for RAF cadet Officers and now holds the rank of Pilot Officer (this doesn't mean he can fly planes!). Here he is pictured outside College Hall Officers Mess (CHOM) with his Queens commission.

Well done Mr Hall!



# A NIGHT AT THE MUSICALS

After many hours of rehearsals, dedication and hard work, Bloxwich Academy students ranging from Year 7 through to Year 12 created a show that won't be forgotten. Bloxwich's first ever Musical showcased snippets from The Greatest Showman, Annie, Chicago, Les Miserable, Matilda and Hairspray. Many pupils performed multiple roles and the evening was a huge success and everyone involved should be immensely proud of themselves.

We hope to see some of our students in the West End one day due to the confidence and professionalism that was shown throughout the three performances.







'PROGRESS FOR ALL'

**Etone**  
College

## Praise Progress Awards

We were honoured to welcome an ex Etone pupil, Dr Shannon Ludgate, as the keynote speaker at this year's Progress Praise Awards on the 3rd of July. She was truly an inspiration, as she shared her experiences in studying for her GCSEs and PhD, to those pupils in the audience who understand the meaning of effort and resilience in achieving, and even surpassing, expectations of their selves. Dr Ludgate emphasised the importance in self-belief and we would like to thank her once again for her time and inspiring words.

This was an evening to celebrate success: pupils from Year 7-10, who have made excellent Progress and have Achieved outstanding attainment over the course of the academic year, were celebrated in front of their parents and carers as well as in front of a sparkling back drop on our beautifully decorated Main Hall stage.



## Combined Cadet Force

This term has seen the launch of an RAF section of the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) at Etone.

The aim of the CCF is to enable the development of personal responsibility, leadership and self-discipline. The CCF unit is an educational partnership between the school and the Ministry of Defence. The CCF offers an exceptional range of exciting activities for cadets to enjoy.



## New Prefect Cohort

Etone's new prefects for 2019-2020 are now fully trained and ready to go. After their fun filled team building day at Blackwell Adventure Park on Monday 1st July they spent the day on Tuesday exploring how to develop their role in school. Prefects are now fully prepared to work with younger pupils, support in extracurricular clubs and at parent events and to model the high expectations we have of all pupils here at Etone. Our team of prefects this year have already proved themselves to be committed and hardworking. We look forward to the positive impact they can have at Etone next year.



Mr Ian Smith  
**Headteacher**

The summer is here again and it has been a fun and extremely busy end to the term. The pupils have all had a great time during Curriculum Enrichment Week whether away in Germany, camping on Duke of Edinburgh expeditions or taking part in Curriculum based activities and trips!

Thank you to all of our staff for the time and effort that has gone into the planning and running of programmes this week and also to parents and carers for your support with early drop offs and late pick-ups. I am sure that the pupils have had a week to remember!

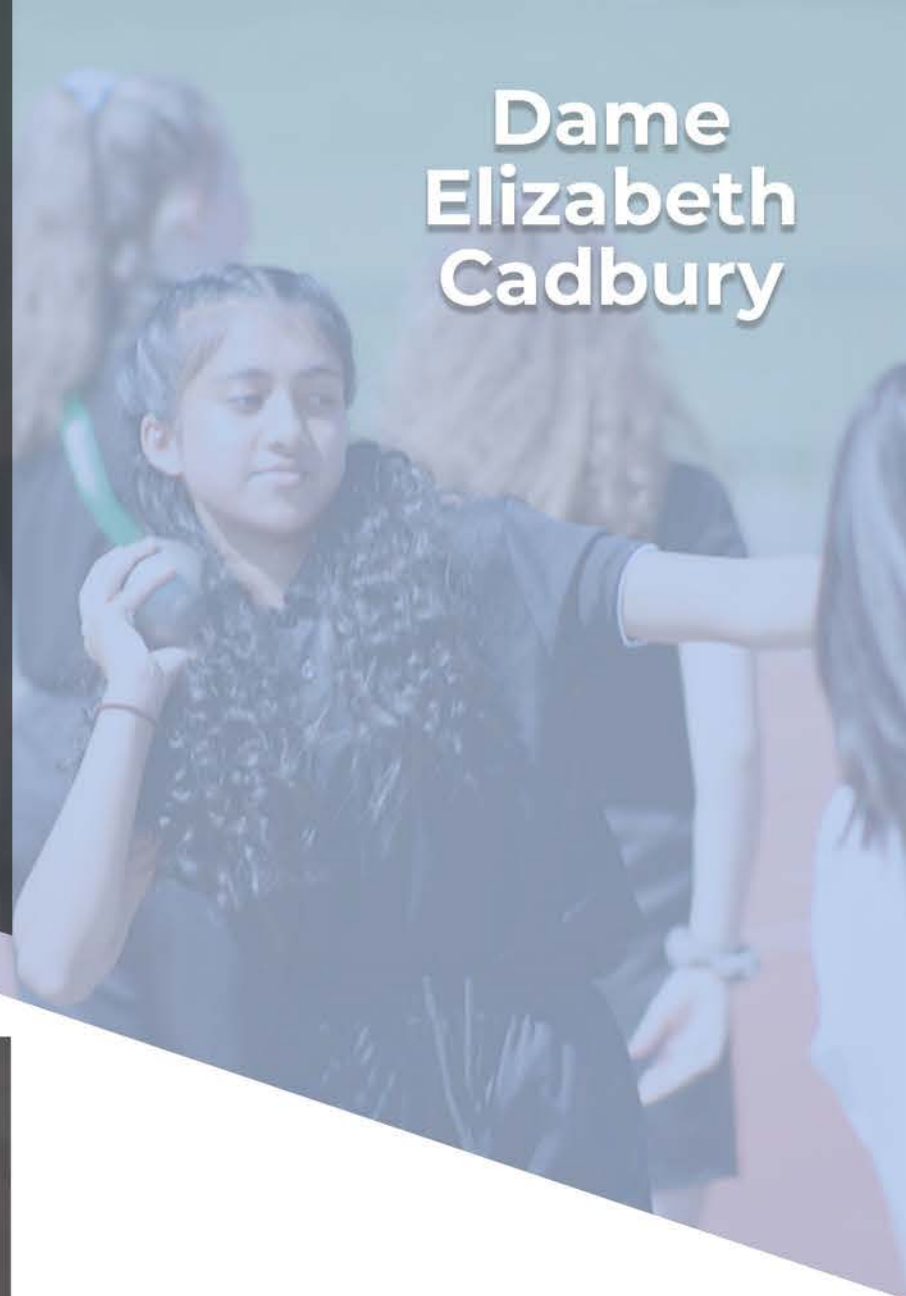
Year 10 have also had a busy week enhancing their employability skills undertaking work experience opportunities. It has been great to see so many of our young people spending the weeks placed in our local community and we are very grateful to employers for all of the placements they have provided. This has been a fantastic opportunity for Year 10 to gain invaluable insights into the world of work and start to think about possible future career choices and aspirations.





Respect, Aspire,  
Believe, Commit

## Dame Elizabeth Cadbury



### Pride Youth Network

Six students travelled to London on Friday 5th July for their first Pride Youth Network Conference to kick start their year as LGBTQ+ ambassadors for the school. During this exciting day, students had the privilege of hearing from keynote speaker, Labour MP Angela Eagle, who spoke to the crowd of 100 pupils and teachers from across London and Birmingham about LGBTQ+ youth activism, the history of LGBTQ+ oppression and the importance of speaking up to make the changes you want to see in the world.

Students spent the rest of the day divided into groups for workshop sessions on Intersexuality, the future of gender, poetry writing, how to use social media to an advantage, singing and poster-making and ended with a large group chorus and the presentation of certificates. Students left the conference feeling inspired and galvanised to return to school to create meaningful campaigns based on their new-found knowledge.



### Mother Tongue Poetry Competition



Congratulations to N.Lee in Year 10 who has won the Mother Tongue Other Tongue Poetry Competition. We are immensely proud! #MTOT2019



Pupils have left exams with a strong sense of accomplishment where they have put 100% into every paper. Hard work, diligence and well organised precision are the key ingredients to successful revision and everyone in Year 11 really has given the exams everything they've got.

The new examination system in the UK requires learners to sit almost all qualifications as 100% terminal examination - long gone are the days of coursework. So, with many pupils sitting more than 15 exam papers this summer, it really has been an intense few months for them.

Regardless of statistics and headline figures, we (as I'm sure Year 11 parents are too) are exceptionally proud of all Year 11 pupils who deserve the very best results in the Summer to take them on to their next steps. For many, we hope this is a place in our 6th form!

There are more cultural trips taking place than ever before; taking learning out of the classroom and giving DEC pupils first-hand curriculum experiences.

Thursday 4th July saw our annual sports day take place at the wonderful Abbey Stadium.

A huge well done to everyone who competed for their house.

### Sports Day



Mr Mike Dunn  
**Headteacher**

"There are more cultural trips taking place than ever before"





**'BE THE BEST  
YOU CAN BE'**

# BLOXWICH ACADEMY PRIMARY

## Rocky Monster Year 6 Leavers Show

Year 6 put on a show stopping end of year performance of 'The Rocky Monster Show' this week. After weeks of rehearsals and planning they pulled off a fantastic celebration show with loads of monstrous numbers.

On the run up to the show various activities took place at school to champion the pupils performing arts success. We had a set designer in school who has worked on Oscar and BAFTA winning design teams. Working on films such as World War Z and Snow White and the Huntsman.

On the afternoon of the show day, pupils also had a visit from a makeup artist and hair stylist helping them look their very best for the big performance.

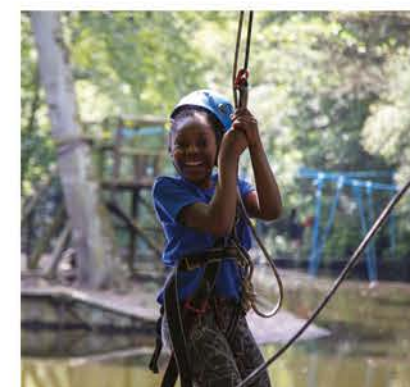


Mrs Sian Davies  
Associate Headteacher

After winning their group in tremendous fashion, the Year 3/4 team reached the Walsall League final, where they faced the winners of the other group.

Unfortunately, we lost 1-0 to an incredible free-kick that was quite simply unstoppable. Nevertheless, the future looks bright for our Year 3/4 team if they can keep up the hard work and teamwork.

On behalf of all the staff and pupils at Bloxwich Academy, we would like to say a huge congratulations to our team for making us so proud. Their behaviour, attitude and teamwork was superb. They also looked extremely smart in their lovely, new kits!



## Woodlands Adventure Trip

Year 5 have had a wonderful few days at Woodlands Adventure park taking part in an array of team building activities.

The residential trip provided the perfect opportunity for our pupils to grow and develop. Education outside the classroom is key to developing well-rounded young people and it creates a balanced curriculum. Outdoor learning and immersion into outdoor activities really did give our students the opportunity to shine.





'PROUD TO **SUCCEED**'

# BARR BEACON SCHOOL



Mrs Lynsey Draycott  
**Headteacher**

"We regularly go beyond the  
lesson-based curriculum  
at Barr Beacon"

As I write this, we are within sight of the end of term. And what a term it has been, with the end of examinations, leaving events and proms for Years 11 and 13, educational visits, Discovery Week adventures and, the piece de resistance, our celebration of Barr Beacon's 60 years.

If you are reading this within the first three weeks of the Summer holiday, spare a thought for our pupils currently trekking across Peru. By now, they will have already flown halfway around the world, met the local people and built a community centre in baking heat: it's not just the holiday of a lifetime - World Challenge is about being challenged. The clue is in the name!

We regularly go beyond the lesson-based curriculum at Barr Beacon - not just at the end of term. But the sheer volume of activities from these final few weeks shows the range of experiences and opportunities we provide for our pupils.

## Prom 2019

Friday 28th June saw the sun shine on the beautiful grounds of Nailcote Hall where staff eagerly awaited the arrival of our Year 11 Prom guests. This year brought a range of fast cars and jam-packed limos filled with excited and accomplished young people. Students spent the evening snapping photos in the photo booth, testing their balance on the bucking bronco, pleasing their sweet teeth at the chocolate fountain and even getting a self-portrait drawn by our very talented caricaturist.

Once the sun had gone down, our Prom King and Queen had the duty of starting off the firework display that then led into a party to end all parties with our DJ. A great night was had by all and it will certainly be one to remember.



## Camps International Peru

Six of our pupils and Miss Smith are on an expedition to Peru. They began by staying in the city of Cusco before building a community centre from scratch! And that was just in their first week. They still have three weeks remaining. In the meantime, here are some fantastic photos they have sent us.



## Digging Up History



We are excited to announce that we have discovered a time capsule, which was buried on school site in 1996.

The contents of the capsule reveal what the curriculum was like in 1996. Items inside the treasure trove include photographs, text books and a floppy disk, which today's students could barely recognise.

Stay tuned to our website: Barr Beacon's Senior Team will shortly be launching a competition to decide what to put in a new time capsule to represent 2019.





# CELEBRATION EVENING

Friday 12th July saw Barr Beacon School celebrating its 60th anniversary year, with more than 700 former pupils and teachers returning for a special celebration evening. This included pupils who started Beacon in its first year, 1958, right through to those who only left recently. Current pupils led tours of the school buildings, many of which brought back memories. Early in the evening, entertainment was provided by a troupe of dancers from Key Stage 3 and there was a parade from our RAF Cadet force.

Later, a 20-piece big band, managed by a former Beacon pupil, played an hour of favourites in the Main Hall. This was followed by a two hour set of music from across the decades, curated by our talented resident 'DJ Mellow', a pupil in our current Year 10. The evening was a tremendous success and we would like to thank everyone who attended for making it such a special celebration.







# Barr Beacon SCITT

## School Centred Initial Teacher Training

Your Future | Their Future



Celebration Ceremony 2019



On Thursday 27th June 2019 Barr Beacon SCITT hosted its annual celebration event to recognise the successes and achievements of this year's trainee teachers. The 2018-2019 SCITT cohort and their guests celebrated in style with canapés in our bespoke teacher training facility at Barr Beacon School. We were thrilled to welcome our trainees along with so many of their family and friends to our celebration event, which marks the first of many milestones in their teaching careers. This year, we were honoured to welcome Dr Phil Bright, an alumnus of Barr Beacon School, to speak at our event and he spoke passionately about the importance of education and the far-reaching influence that teachers have on pupils' lives.

As an Outstanding provider of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) we have a strong partnership with schools. Headteachers and members of the Senior Leadership Teams of all of our partner schools attended to present their trainees with certificates of achievement and congratulate them on their tremendous work. Our dedicated team of Subject Course Leaders was also on hand to recognise the work of their subject cohort and to congratulate them on what has been a very successful year.

Our Outstanding SCITT programme continues to go from strength to strength and we are delighted that for the third year in a row 100% of those that completed the course have been recommended to the Department for Education (DfE) for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The event also acknowledged the hard work, dedication and determination that the trainees have put into their training in order to ensure the very best outcomes for the pupils that they teach.

All of us at Barr Beacon SCITT are incredibly proud of the achievements of our trainees and would like to wish them every success in their roles as Newly Qualified Teachers in September.



EVOLVE  
Teaching School



Barr Beacon  
School



Bloxwich  
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Dame Elizabeth  
Cadbury