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Two Trust Conference

1. Trust Conference

Building a culture of excellence where everyone can thrive was the ethos behind a joint professional development conference led by The Societas Trust and The New Guild Trust.

Both organisations joined forces to launch the Two Trust Conference 2025 which was attended by 500 staff and governors from 15 schools.

Colleagues from across both Trusts took part in the professional development day, which focused on the theme of inclusion.

Organised by Inspiring Leaders, the event at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Stoke-on-Trent involved colleagues in a wide range of roles including school governors, headteachers, teachers, teaching assistants and office staff.

Jon Lovatt, Chief Executive Officer, The Societas Trust, said: "This event is all about the partnership between the two Trusts. It's a chance to reflect on what we do well and the strength of working together."

"We serve such varied communities with diverse and complex needs. The conference is an opportunity to say 'thank you' to our staff and celebrate the great job that they do in supporting those communities."

Karen Peters, Chief Executive Officer, The New Guild Trust, added: "This event is a celebration of bringing two Trusts together for an extra special day listening to inspirational speakers as well as having the time to stop, think and reflect at the end of a very busy term."

"I hope staff take away a real sense of pride. We're all in this together and it's great to be able to connect with another like-minded Trust that has its community at its heart."

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Over 15 schools came together for a transformative day of learning, reflection, and collaboration. The conference featured a series of dynamic workshops aimed at empowering educators and school leaders across both Trusts. Topics included:

- Principles of effective teaching and Learning
- Fostering wellbeing and organisational effectiveness
- Creating neurodiverse-friendly early years environments
- Communication strategies for high-performing teams
- Strengthening inclusive governance

Keynote Speakers

- Kris Akabusi MBE,** Olympic athlete, captivated attendees with his inspiring journey through education, sport, and personal growth.
- Amy Baxter,** Senior Education Adviser for SEND, emphasized that inclusion must be embedded in the curriculum—not treated as an add-on.
- Will Ord,** educational trainer, shared insights on thinking skills, citizenship, and religious education, encouraging deeper reflection in teaching practice.

Voices from the Trusts

Danielle Lindop, SENDCo at Alexandra Junior School, praised the event's relevance: "It's massive today—it's all about what I do in my day, being around like-minded professionals has been energising and reassuring."

Ralf Muller, Headteacher at Alexandra Junior School, highlighted the importance of collective participation: "We all contribute to the success of the school. This event marks the beginning of a collaborative journey."

Nadia Farooq, Senior Leader at Summerbank Primary Academy, reflected on the value of shared learning: "It's a chance to gather fresh ideas, challenges, and celebrate coming together across Trusts."

Michael Fair, Chair of Governors at Burnmounds Primary Academy, welcomed the recognition of governance: "Networking across two Trusts feels like having an extended family."

Ed Leighton, Vice Chair of Governors at Ash Green Primary Academy, added: "It's great to talk to other governors and work together in the best interests of our children."

Organiser's Reflections
James Brown, Managing Director of Inspiring Leaders, expressed pride in the event's success: "We hosted every staff member from all 15 schools, plus governors and stakeholders, for a day of inspiring learning. It's been brilliant to help facilitate something that enables everyone to thrive."

This conference was a celebration of shared purpose, inclusive practice, and the power of collaboration across schools and roles.



Sports & Physical Activities

2. Sports and Physical Activities

This year, the Societas Trust hosted its annual Sporting Collaborative Event under a new name: *The Societas Social 2025*.

Inspired by the Trust's commitment to community wellbeing, PE leaders across the nine schools envisioned a day focused on the social and emotional benefits of Physical Education, Physical Activity, and School Sport.

Children—including the RUGs—from all nine schools came together at Stoke City Academy's Dome for a vibrant carousel of sports activities. Each game, from relay races and orienteering to hula hoop houses and the ever-popular parachute, was led by staff from various schools and designed to highlight values such as teamwork, fairness, and collaboration.

Over 120 pupils participated, forming mixed-school groups to encourage new friendships, resilience, and cooperative play. It was heartening to witness their joy and mutual support throughout the day. Each child left with two certificates: one from Stoke City Community Trust for being "ambitious" and another from Societas Trust, featuring a winning design created by a pupil at Cournmounds Primary Academy.

Arthur, a Year 5 RUG, shared: "I really enjoyed creating the hula hoop huts and playing parachute games. It helped me make a lot of new friends. Everyone was split into groups with just one person they knew from their own school, so we weren't alone but had to make new friends. It made the games fun and fair."

Willow, also in Year 5 at Ellison, added: "It's really nice to have people from other schools. It's always fun doing new experiences."

The event's success wouldn't have been possible without incredible support. A massive thank you goes to Stoke City Community Trust for hosting and co-organising the day, and to all PE leaders and staff from across the Trust for making it memorable.

Jon Lovatt, CEO commented: "Working together outside the classroom supports children's social and emotional development. While they're having fun, they're also meeting peers from different backgrounds and strengthening their teamwork and resilience."

Deborah O'Neill, at Stoke City Community Trust, added: "Supporting schools in creating positive physical activities is a key focus for us. The atmosphere was incredible, with lots of engaged, happy children enjoying teamwork challenges in the Academy Dome. We thoroughly enjoyed working with The Societas Trust."

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Enrichment

3. Enrichment

Shakespeare..cont

Societas Trust Pupils Shine in Magical Performance of The Tempest at the New Vic Theatre

During the Spring Term, pupils from across the Societas Trust came together for a truly unforgettable celebration of creativity, collaboration, and Shakespearean storytelling. The Circle Theatre at the New Vic provided a stunning backdrop as children took to the stage to perform their own interpretation of *The Tempest*—and they absolutely shone.

The journey began in the autumn term, when teachers from each participating school took part in a residential programme designed to immerse them in Shakespeare's world. This unique opportunity allowed staff to explore *The Tempest* in depth and develop creative, accessible ways to bring the story to life for their pupils. The goal was to make Shakespeare meaningful, engaging, and inspiring for every child involved.

Following the residential, pupils engaged in a series of drama workshops led by experienced practitioners from North West Drama. These sessions helped them explore the characters, themes, and language of the play, whilst building confidence, teamwork, and performance skills. Over several months, the children worked with dedication and enthusiasm to prepare for their moment in the spotlight.

The final performance was a triumph. From expressive monologues to imaginative staging, the children captivated the audience with their energy, talent, and understanding of the story. It was a joy to see them bring Shakespeare's words to life in such a powerful and personal way.

One of the most special aspects of the day was the opportunity for children to watch one another's performances. It was heartwarming to see them celebrate each other's creativity, offer encouragement, and take inspiration from their peers across the Trust.

One Year 5 pupil shared: "I never thought I'd get to perform in a real theatre. It was such an amazing experience—I felt nervous at first, but then I just loved it. I'll never forget it!"

A huge thank you goes to all the staff, families, and theatre professionals who supported this project—and most of all, to the children, whose creativity and commitment made it such a success.

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Working for us

4. Working for us

Working for us - Our commitment to Wellbeing!

Wellbeing at the Heart of The Societas Trust

At The Societas Trust, we believe that wellbeing isn't a bonus—it's a foundation. Our commitment to staff wellbeing is woven into every aspect of our work, creating an environment where people feel safe, supported, and empowered to thrive.

Here's how we're making that vision a reality:

- Promoting our wellbeing as a core part of all Trust activities
- Supporting both physical and mental health across our workforce
- Offering resources and interventions to help staff manage stress effectively
- Maintaining safe, healthy workplaces for all
- Encouraging healthy lifestyle choices and habits
- Helping staff with disabilities or health conditions stay active and engaged at work
- Managing workloads with care, reflecting our ethos of wellbeing
- Fostering positive morale and a culture of motivation
- Creating opportunities for staff to take part in wellbeing initiatives
- Ensuring every voice is heard—staff feel listened to and valued
- Tackling the root causes of work-related mental health challenges
- Investing in professional development to boost job satisfaction and growth

Together, we're building a workplace where wellbeing isn't just supported—it's celebrated.

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A Year in a life!

5. Collaboration

We have created a film that offers a heartfelt glimpse into the journey of a Societas child over the course of twelve vibrant months. From seasonal celebrations to everyday learning adventures, it captures the spirit, joy, and growth that define life within our schools.

Through a rich tapestry of events and activities, you'll see how our children explore, discover, and thrive—supported every step of the way by dedicated staff and a nurturing community. The film also features candid interviews with both children and team members, offering personal insights into what makes Societas such a special place to learn and grow.

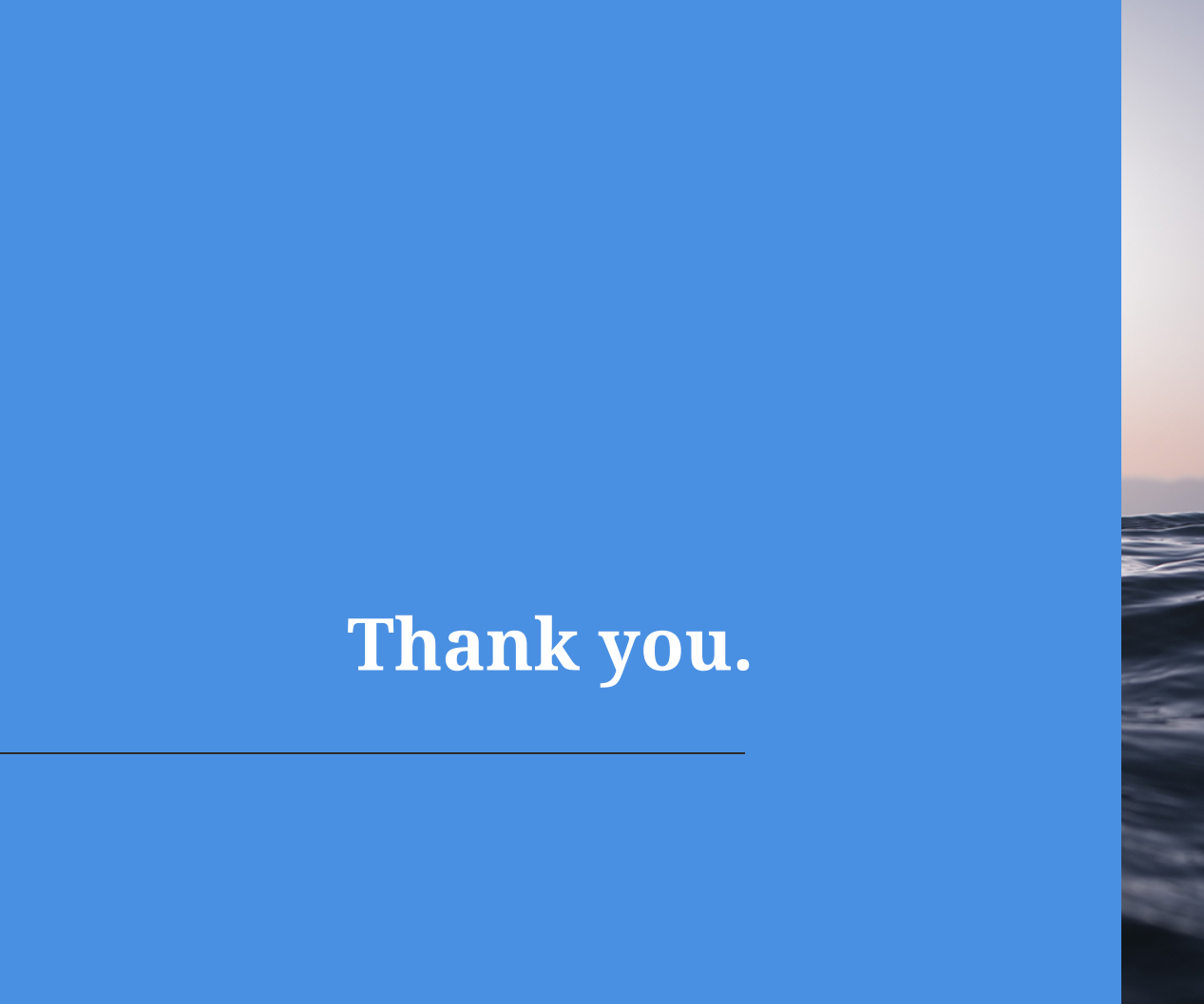
We'd like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who took part—especially the children and staff who shared their stories, and the brilliant team behind the production.

We hope you enjoy watching it as much as we enjoyed creating it.

Please click on the picture logo below to take a look



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RUGS

6. RUGS

A Year of Growth and Connection for Societas RUGS

This year has been full of growth and achievement for our Societas RUGs. We kicked things off with a team-building trip to Standon Bowers, where new and returning RUGs bonded through outdoor challenges and formed lasting friendships across schools.

Jasmine from Gladstone shared, "I've loved the RUG—especially our trips to Standon Bowers. I've met so many new people and contributed to our Trust." Holly from Alsagers Bank added, "Jumping off the high jump was tough, but the RUGs cheering me on gave me so much confidence."

In the autumn, RUGs honed their skills as learning reporters with help from Alex at ATOM Productions, raising how to interview and edit videos using iMovie. Ellie said, "I liked learning new skills like making videos and socialising with other children."

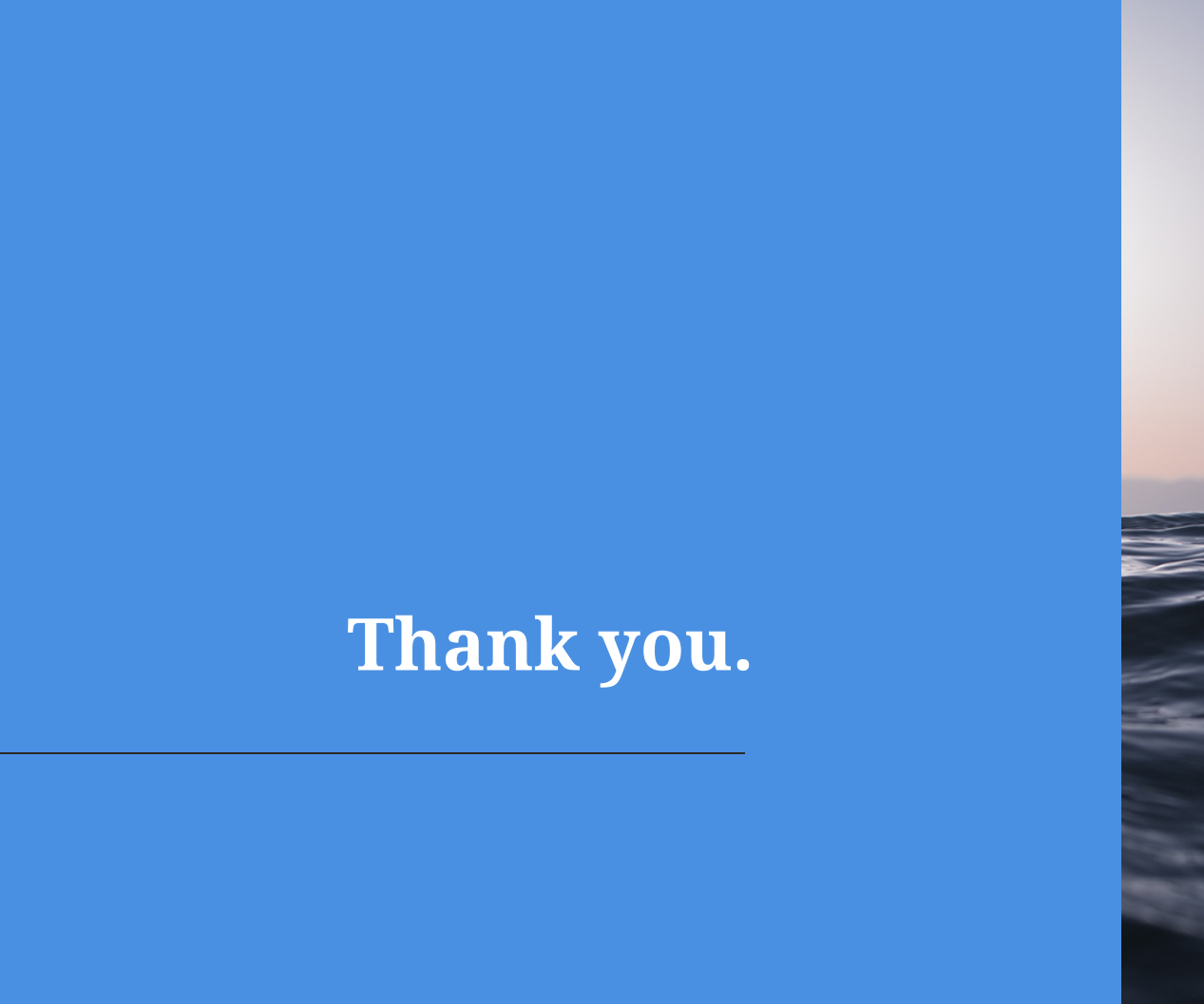
These skills were put to use at Trentham Gardens, where RUGs captured footage and interviews during Year 2 and 4 event days. Max from Gladstone said, "My favourite part was filming the younger children—it was so fun."

Back together, RUGs collaborated to produce videos that will soon be shared on the Societas Trust website, showcasing the joy and energy of these events.

As the team grows with new members joining the Trust, experienced RUGs are eager to mentor others. Keelie summed it up beautifully: "It's nice to meet people you didn't know and get to know them." Emily and Thea echoed the sentiment, celebrating the friendships and responsibility that come with being a RUG.

Here's to another inspiring year ahead!

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Thank you

7. Thank you

A Fond Farewell and Heartfelt Thanks

As the year draws to a close, we take a moment to honour a remarkable group of individuals who are stepping into a well-earned new chapter: retirement. To all those retiring from the Societas Trust this year, we extend our deepest gratitude for your years of dedication, wisdom, and unwavering commitment to our shared mission.

Your impact has been felt in classrooms, corridors, and communities alike—and your legacy will continue to inspire those who follow in your footsteps. Whether you're planning adventures, quiet moments, or new pursuits, we wish you joy, fulfilment, and plenty of time to do what makes your heart sing.

Here's to you—thank you for everything.

Burnwood Primary Academy
Christine Cope
Ann Clarke
Glenn Booth

Ash Green Primary Academy
Dian Nixon
Sue Card

Oaklands Nursery
Debbie Davies

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Thank you.



<https://www.societastrust.org.uk>

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