

05.10.26

An Open Letter to the YCAT Community

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff, Governors and Trustees,

As we move further into the new academic year and the busy start of term begins to settle, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on something that feels increasingly important for all of us: how we work together to support the wellbeing, success and happiness of our children.

Across Yorkshire Collaborative Academy Trust (YCAT), we are privileged to work with more than 1,300 children and their families in our schools. Every day, our staff and governors dedicate their time, energy and expertise to helping children learn, grow and flourish. They do so because they care deeply about young people and want the very best for them, just as parents and carers do.

We also recognise that life has become increasingly complex. Families face many pressures, and schools do too. Mental health and wellbeing are important considerations for everyone in our communities, including children, parents, carers, staff, governors and trustees. Looking after one another has never mattered more.

At YCAT, collaboration is at the heart of who we are. It is in our name, and it is reflected in our vision, values and commitment to STRIVE. In particular, we talk often about our ambition to STRIVE for Inclusion. Inclusion is about ensuring that everyone feels valued, respected, listened to and part of a supportive community.

The culture of a school is not created by one person or one group. It is shaped every day by the words, actions and interactions of children, families, staff, governors and trustees. Every one of us plays a part in creating the environment in which our children learn and develop.

We are privileged to educate your children. In return, we ask all members of our school communities to recognise the privilege of belonging to a school family. Schools thrive when relationships are built on trust, mutual respect, kindness and a shared commitment to doing what is right for children.

We recognise that, from time to time, concerns, questions or misunderstandings may arise. Schools are busy places and, despite everyone's best efforts, things will not always be perfect. When concerns do occur, we encourage direct and timely communication with school leaders. Experience tells us that most concerns can be resolved positively when people come together with openness, honesty and a genuine desire to find a solution. Early conversations almost always lead to better outcomes than assumptions or frustrations left unresolved.

Across our Trust, we are fortunate to have dedicated and hardworking staff who care deeply about the children they serve. No member of staff comes to work intending to get things wrong. They work tirelessly to provide the very best education, care and support for every child. Like all of us, they are human and may occasionally make mistakes, but they are committed to learning, improving and always striving to do their best. That culture of reflection, growth and continuous improvement is one we actively promote across YCAT.

In a world where public conversation can sometimes feel negative, divisive or critical, we want our schools to model something different. We want kindness to be visible, respect to be expected and positive relationships to be the norm. Our children learn as much from the behaviour of the adults around them as they do from the curriculum we teach. Together, we can show them what a strong, inclusive and respectful community looks like.

When we communicate respectfully and with a shared sense of purpose, we create the positive culture that our children deserve. Equally, when staff feel supported and valued, they are better able to bring their energy, care and expertise into classrooms every day. This benefits everyone, but most importantly, it benefits the children entrusted to our care.

Our children are, and always will be, the reason we are here. They are everyone's priority. If we keep that shared purpose at the centre of everything we do, we can continue to build schools where children feel safe, valued, included and inspired to achieve their potential.

Thank you for your continued support of our schools and our Trust. Together, through kindness, understanding and collaboration, we can ensure that every YCAT school remains a place where people are proud to belong and where everyone has the opportunity to flourish.

Let us all continue to:

- STRIVE for Inclusion
- STRIVE for Positivity
- STRIVE for Respect
- STRIVE for the very best outcomes for every child

Because when we work together, our children thrive.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs J. Robinson
Chief Executive Officer
Yorkshire Collaborative Academy Trust (YCAT)