



# Vanguard Learning Trust

## 10-year anniversary celebration

Wednesday 26th February 2025

Special edition newsletter



*Outstanding, inclusive education*



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# Overview of the evening

The Trust celebrated its 10-year anniversary on Wednesday 26th February 2025 at Ruislip High School. The evening event was attended by students, parents, staff and special guests associated with the Trust, as well as those involved in the three tiers of governance, both past and present.

Dr Lecky, chief executive officer (CEO), opened the evening by welcoming everyone and introducing the first student performance of the night by Vyners' swing band. They performed two songs and provided an uplifting and energetic start to the proceedings. Throughout the evening, there were further student performances from each school in the Trust. Ryefield students performed powerful speeches on social justice issues that they felt passionate about; Ruislip High students performed an extract from their recent whole-school production of *'King Lear'* by William Shakespeare; Field End's junior leadership team delivered an oracy piece themed on the significance of the number 10; Hermitage's choir performed *'Oceans'* by Hillsong United; and Oak Farm students performed a poetry piece titled *'Impossible Gifts'*.

In between student performances, school leaders delivered presentations about the history of the Trust in chronological order starting in February 2015 through to the current day in 2025. They charted the developments and opportunities from 2015 through to 2025, providing an enlightening insight into the Trust's journey of growth and development over the last ten years.

The evening also included the presentation of a number of governance awards. Governors, members and trustees, past and present, were presented with awards for their outstanding contribution to



Dr Lecky delivering a presentation

the establishment and/or development of the Trust. The awards were introduced by school leaders and presented by The Worshipful the Mayor of Hillingdon, Cllr Colleen Sullivan.

*'It was very exciting seeing all the performances and presentations by everyone. I felt very special to be a part of the celebration as not many students get this chance.'*

Advay, Year 6, Field End Junior School

The event also included a video showing aerial footage of the schools' buildings and headteachers describing how each school embraces the Trust's vision and values. In addition, a tribute was given to Mark Hague, who was one of the founding trustees in 2015 and who served as Vyners' Chair of Governors from 2019. Mark sadly died in January 2025 and Janet Beater, a member of the Trust and former company secretary, gave a tribute to him.

The evening concluded with closing remarks from Dr Lecky who thanked everyone involved in the evening including all attendees for helping us to collectively mark the first decade of Vanguard Learning Trust.

The feedback from guests on the night and afterwards was incredibly positive, describing the evening as uplifting, insightful about the Trust's journey and that students' performances were the highlight.

*'What a fantastic evening! It was fascinating to listen to the history of the Trust, punctuated by incredible performances from our students. Well done everyone!'*

Nicholas Hingley, Headteacher, Hermitage Primary School



Member of Vyners' swing band playing music while guests entered

# History of Vanguard Learning Trust

Throughout the evening, school leaders presented information about developments and achievements across the Trust during its ten years, based on ten themes, which are set out on page 11.

## History 2015-2018

The first presentation was delivered by Mr Mullings, Headteacher, Vyners, Mrs Foster, Deputy Headteacher, Vyners, and Mr Tucker, Executive Headteacher, primary, and focused on 2015 to 2018. They described the establishment of Vyners Learning Trust, when Ryefield and Vyners set up the multi-academy trust. They outlined the collaboration between the two schools such as cross-phase work in English and maths, and PE lessons delivered for Ryefield by Vyners. They also noted the successful Ofsted inspection at Ryefield and Vyners' expansion to increase capacity and improve facilities.



Mr Mullings and Mrs Foster delivering their presentations

## History 2018-2020

Dr Lecky and Mr Davies, Headteacher, Ruislip High School, gave the second presentation which covered 2018 to 2020. They noted the change of name from Vyners Learning Trust to Vanguard Learning Trust when Ruislip High joined in 2018 and also highlighted the increase in Trust-wide school improvement projects and student activities. This period also saw the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and they noted the ways in which the schools came together to support each other.



Mr Davies and Dr Lecky delivering their presentations

*'It was fantastic to see the children's performances from all the schools and to gain a great insight into the journey of the VLT. It was amazing to see how far the schools have come and it was wonderful to celebrate this success together.'*

Liam O'Connell, Teacher, Field End Junior School

*'We were truly grateful to be part of this special event. It was inspiring to witness the effort and pride that the children and staff from the Trust put into their performances. As a new member of the Trust, I gained a deeper understanding of the Trust's fascinating history, its growth, and its vision. I left feeling excited about Oak Farm's continued journey with VLT.'*

Michelle Shepherd, Teacher, Oak Farm

## History 2020-2022

Dr Lecky and Ms Coltman, Deputy Headteacher, Ruislip High School, covered 2020-2022. They noted that during this period the Trust-wide governance days were introduced as well as the establishment of several Trust-wide fora (these are the groups of staff with similar roles). There were also professional development opportunities for staff across the Trust, including leadership courses. During this period, Field End and Hermitage also joined the Trust, initially as associate members.

# History of Vanguard Learning Trust



Mrs Coltman and Mrs Phelan delivering their presentations

*'As a parent, attending Vanguard Learning Trust's anniversary celebration was a truly special experience. The evening was a wonderful celebration of the Trust's journey over the past decade; it was clear that the emphasis on cross-phase learning and shared opportunities have created an enriching environment for all students.'*

Parent of student performer at Oak Farm

## History 2024-2025

Mrs Cheema, Headteacher, Oak Farm Primary School, and Mr Hingley, Headteacher, Hermitage Primary School, covered activities during 2024 and 2025. Further Trust-wide developments included the launch of parent and student questionnaires as well as regular staff surveys and a peer review of the primary curriculum. They charted the journey of the Trust's growth from the first Christmas concert held in 2018 through to the most recent one in 2024 when the students performed to a packed audience.



Mr Hingley and Mrs Cheema delivering their presentations

*'The anniversary event was a wonderful evening. The highlight for me was having the opportunity to catch up with so many former colleagues, governors and trustees, all of whom have played a significant role in the development of the Trust.'*

Gary Mullings, Headteacher, Vyners School

## History 2022-2024

Dr Lecky and Mrs Phelan, Headteacher, Field End Junior School, highlighted some of the activities during 2022-2024. These included Oak Farm becoming an associate member of the Trust; a central team base being established at Field End; and the first Trust-wide environmental sustainability week taking place. There were also Ofsted inspections at Ruislip High, Hermitage and Field End, which all had favourable outcomes.

*'Wow - what a fantastic evening! I was amazed at the confidence and talent of each of the school's performers and was so delighted to have been invited to join in the celebrations of the VLT 10-year anniversary.'*

David Dent, former trustee of Vyners Learning Trust



Guests in the audience enjoying proceedings

# Student performances

Throughout the evening, students from each of the six schools gave a variety of musical, oracy and acting performances. The schools' performances reflected the history of the Trust with Vyners opening the event and Oak Farm closing it.

## Vyners School

The evening opened with Vyners' swing band performing two songs, 'Treasure' by Bruno Mars, and 'In the Stone' by Earth, Wind and Fire. Mr Cullum, Director of Music, organised the performance with the students.



Vyners' swing band performing their first song

*'It was a wonderful experience. We were all delighted to have the opportunity to showcase the swing band in such an amazing event'*

Alice, Year 13, Vyners School

## Ryefield Primary School

The second performance of the night was by Year 6 students at Ryefield and involved them delivering persuasive speeches on the topics of bullying, mental health, smartphones and trees in the desert. Miss Casey, Year 6 teacher, worked with the students and introduced their performance. The audience was moved by the speeches and impressed with the students' confident performances.



Ryefield's students delivering their speeches

*'It was great to watch Sienna speak at Vanguard Learning Trust's 10-year anniversary event. The positive partnership between Trust schools was wonderful to see.'*

Parent of Ryefield student performer

## Ruislip High School

Ruislip High students performed an extract from their recent whole-school production of 'King Lear' by William Shakespeare. Mr Randall, Head of Drama, directed the full version of the play in the autumn term.

*'What a fantastic celebration! The student performances were outstanding and a wonderful way to mark ten years of our Trust. We're so proud of all our students.'*

Marie Coltman, Deputy Headteacher, Ruislip High School



Ruislip High's students performing King Lear

## Field End Junior School

The junior leadership team from Field End delivered an oracy piece themed on the significance of the number 10. Ms Dickinson, Assistant Headteacher, organised the performance, which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.

*'It was our pleasure to be a part of the evening; it was very inspiring to see young confident talent. The children were all so great and I'm sure everyone in the audience was proud. We were certainly beaming with joy.'*

Parent of student performer, Field End Junior School

# Student performances and video of schools



Field End's students performing their oracy piece



Oak Farm's students performing their poems

## Hermitage Primary School

Hermitage's choir performed 'Oceans' by Hillsong United. Mrs Spencer, Year 3 teacher, organised the wonderful performance, which was lifted by being accompanied by Ms Coltman on piano.



Hermitage's choir singing *Oceans* by Hillsong

*'It was a pleasure to be invited to celebrate Vanguard Learning Trust's 10th birthday! It was lovely to hear about the Trust's journey so far, but even more special was watching all the wonderful children come together to showcase their incredible talents. Here's to the next 10 years and beyond!'*

Georgia Harling, Assistant Headteacher,  
Hermitage Primary School

*'Performing our poems in front of important people was a great experience. It made me appreciate the opportunity and realise how special our work with the Trust is.'*

Lucy, Year 5, Oak Farm Primary School

## Video of schools

In between the presentations of the Trust's history and the student performances, a video giving an insider's view of the schools was shown. The video was produced by Mr Tucker and included each of the headteachers talking about how their schools work towards delivering the vision and values of the Trust.



The video giving an insider's view of the schools

## Oak Farm Primary School

The final student performance of the evening was from Year 5 students at Oak Farm, who performed a poetry piece titled 'Impossible Gifts'. The poem was created in a workshop with renowned poet James Carter and the students were introduced by Miss Shepherd, Year 5 team leader.

*'I wanted to take a moment to sincerely thank you for the incredible 10-year celebration event. It was both refreshing and inspiring to see the effort that has been dedicated to enhancing children's skill sets and knowledge. Thank you once again for all your hard work and dedication.'*

Parent of student performer, Vyners School

# Awards

In addition, a number of awards were presented to trustees and governors who have made an outstanding contribution to the establishment and/or development of the Trust over the last ten years. The awards were introduced by school leaders and were all presented by The Worshipful the Mayor of Hillingdon, Cllr Colleen Sullivan. The award recipients are outlined below.

## **Award for outstanding contribution as Chair of Trustees, Vanguard Learning Trust, from 2015-2025**

This award was introduced by Martina Lecky and presented to Peter Davies, Chair of Trustees.



Peter Davies receiving his award

*'I was delighted to receive the award and felt proud of what has been achieved since 2015. The evening was a wonderful celebration of our Trust-wide community and the students' performances were the highlight of the evening.'*

Peter Davies, Chair of Trustees

## **Awards for significant contribution to the establishment and/or development of Vanguard Learning Trust, 2015-2025**

The first of these awards were introduced by Colin Tucker and presented to:

- Henry Gardner, Chair of Governors of Vyners School and Trustee, Vyners Learning Trust
- Pam Nash, Chair of Governors of Ryefield Primary School, Trustee and Member, Vanguard Learning Trust
- David Trood, Vice-chair of Trustees (founding trustee), Vanguard Learning Trust



Henry Gardner receiving his award

The next set of awards were introduced by Martina Lecky and presented to:

- Dave Collins, Primary-lead Trustee, Vanguard Learning Trust
- Eddie Lavery, Chair of Strategy Committee, Vanguard Learning Trust
- Pauline Nixon, Safeguarding-lead Trustee, Vanguard Learning Trust
- Kim Rowe, Chair of Education and Standards Committee, Vanguard Learning Trust
- Andy Sykes, Chair of Audit, Compliance and Risk Committee, Vanguard Learning Trust



Eddie Lavery receiving his award

*'I am delighted to have been part of the journey of the Trust over the last 10 years and I was honoured to have been selected for an award.'*

Cllr Eddie Lavery, Chair of Strategy Committee, Vanguard Learning Trust

## Awards and tribute

The third set of awards were introduced by Gary Mullings and presented to:

- Claire Clarke, Safeguarding Governor, Chair of Joint Secondary Education and Standards Committee and (Acting until February 2025) Chair of Governors of Vyners School
- Kirsty Farrell, Chair of Governors of Primary Hub
- John Garner, Chair of Governors of Field End Junior School and Chair of Governors of Ruislip High School
- Carolyn Morrissey, Chair of Governors of Field End Junior School



John Garner receiving his award

*'Ensuring pupils are given the best opportunity to reach their full potential is my main reason for being a governor. It was a privilege to watch pupils from all schools across the Trust showcase their extraordinary talents at the anniversary celebrations and to have received an award for my contributions to the schools within the Trust.'*

Kirsty Farrell, Chair of Governors, Primary Hub

The final set of awards were introduced by Gareth Davies and presented to:

- Jacqui Beaumont, Chair of Secondary Education and Standards Committee, Vanguard Learning Trust
- Andrew Lunnon, Safeguarding Governor and Chair of Secondary Pay and Personnel Committee, Vanguard Learning Trust
- Raj Pragji, Safeguarding Governor and Chair of Primary Pay and Personnel Committee, Vanguard Learning Trust
- Annmarie Taylor-Kent, Safeguarding Governor and Chair of Primary Education and Standards Committee, Primary Hub



Jacqui Beaumont receiving her award

*'Receiving an award at the 10-year anniversary event was not just a recognition of my efforts, but a reminder that safeguarding is a collective responsibility. It is an honour and privilege to work with others who are committed to ensuring that everyone can thrive in a safe environment.'*

Andy Lunnon, Community Governor, Ruislip High

### Tribute

Mark Hague was one of the founding trustees in 2015 and also a governor of Vyners School. In 2019, he stepped down from being a trustee and became Vyners' Chair of Governors. Mark became unwell in 2023 and sadly died in January 2025. His close friend and colleague, Janet Beater, gave a moving speech about Mark's contribution and unwavering commitment to our Trust.



Janet Beater giving her tribute to Mark Hague

# Closing remarks

Dr Lecky brought the proceedings to a close by congratulating the students for their wonderful performances as well as those who were recipients of awards. She reflected that the night had been about journeys, considering students' journeys (with some of the students being born around the time the Trust was established); schools' journeys with photographs of the schools around the time they were established; and the Trust's first decade as described in the history of the Trust publication as well as leaders' presentations throughout the evening. She ended with the message that whilst journeys often make us reflect on the **past** and consider the **future**, it is also important to be thankful for the **present** using the Latin expression 'carpe diem', seize the day as tomorrow isn't promised to anyone.

*'I was exceedingly proud of our 10-year anniversary celebration as we shone so brightly as a Trust-wide community. There was a strong sense of belonging expressed throughout the evening and it was wonderful to have those who established the Trust in 2015 in attendance so that they could see firsthand the legacy of their endeavour.'*

Martina Lecky, Chief Executive Officer

*'Please pass on my thanks and congratulations to everyone involved in putting together yesterday's event. It was such a lovely balance of information, thank yous and, of course, the children, which is the reason we are all there. The performances from all the schools were such a great mixture and demonstration of the enriched opportunities our students have.'*

Carolyn Morrissey, Chair of Governors, Field End



A slide from the closing remarks showing the schools' journeys



Dr Lecky delivering her closing remarks

*'Thank you very much for organising such a great event and giving parents the opportunity to be part of it. It was really great to see how much hard work goes on behind the scenes, and how much support and camaraderie there is between the schools in the Trust. My daughter is very proud to have been part of the event.'*

Parent of Ryefield student performer



The audience enjoying the evening

# Ten themes

At the end of the Trust's first decade, themes have emerged in relation to our three Trust values, all contributing to our Trust dividend:

## Aspiration



**Agility:** The ability of our community to adjust and change when required



**Ethical leadership and civic duty:** The principles that shape and inform our decisions



**High challenge, high support:** The culture of our community based on our shared values

## Community



**Collective responsibility:** The shared responsibility for our students' education and the processes that underpin it



**Opportunities:** The experiences afforded to all members of our Trust-wide community



**Relationships:** The relationships that exist between all our stakeholders across our Trust

## Equity



**Assurance:** The confidence in the effectiveness of our Trust-wide systems and processes



**Cross-phase:** The focus on students' education at the transition between primary and secondary schools



**Inclusion:** The core tenet that binds our collective endeavour of outstanding, inclusive education

## Overall



**Trust dividend:** The evidence of the benefits of being part of our Trust

# Thank yous

## With thanks to the following people:

### Organising committee

Martina Lecky, Chief Executive Officer, Vanguard Learning Trust  
Lisa Beasley, PA to the Headteacher, Ruislip High School  
Nikki Hodgson, Virtual Assistant, Vanguard Learning Trust  
Emma Jordan, Executive Assistant, Vanguard Learning Trust

### Staff leads for student performances

Sandra Dickinson, Assistant Headteacher, Field End Junior School  
Anna Spencer, Year 3 Teacher, Hermitage Primary School  
Michelle Shepherd, Year 5 Team Leader, Oak Farm Primary School  
Peter Randall, Head of Drama, Ruislip High School  
Morgan Casey, Year 6 Teacher, Ryefield Primary School  
Dan Cullum, Director of Music, Vyners School

### Video

Colin Tucker, Executive Headteacher - primary phase, Vanguard Learning Trust  
Gurjeet Kohli, Head of Careers and Digital Learning, Vyners School

### Plaques

Megan Hill, Curriculum Leader of Art, Craft and Design, Ruislip High School  
Lydia Anderson, Art Technician, Ruislip High School

### Logistical arrangements

Lee Sansom, Project Manager, HSH Productions  
Adam Walthaus, Safeguarding and Central Education Lead, Vanguard Learning Trust  
Ruislip High School arrival committee  
Ruislip High School reception committee

### Presenters

Jas Cheema, Headteacher, Oak Farm Primary School  
Marie Coltman, Deputy Headteacher, Ruislip High School  
Gareth Davies, Headteacher, Ruislip High School  
Alison Foster, Deputy Headteacher, Vyners  
Nicholas Hingley, Headteacher, Hermitage Primary School  
Gary Mullings, Headteacher, Vyners  
Jacquie Phelan, Headteacher, Field End Junior School  
Colin Tucker, Executive Headteacher - primary phase, Vanguard Learning Trust

### Cucina

Rachael Date, Regional Operations Manager  
John Barton, Group Manager  
Paulo Teixeira, Executive Chef

and all those who have supported with arrangements in terms of hosting the event.