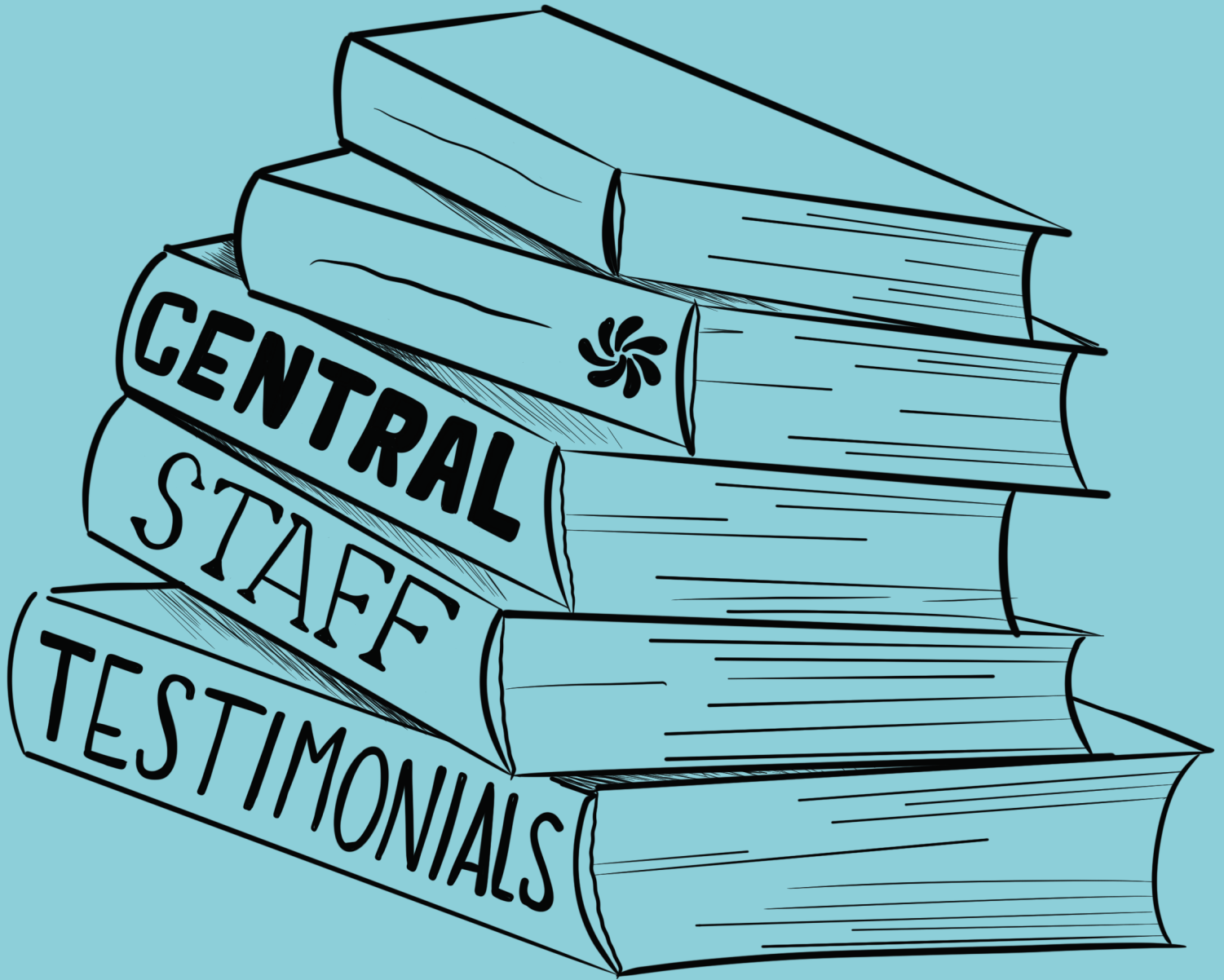




Central Region  
Schools Trust

*Founded by the RSA*



# STAFF TESTIMONIALS

# WHAT OUR

# STAFF THINK...



My journey with Central Region School Trust began in July 2022 when I was appointed as a Teacher of Humanities at Holyhead School in Handsworth.

I had done my homework, and knew the school was deeply rooted in its community, and cherished values of caring and listening. After I arrived I found this was matched with a strong commitment to the highest quality of teaching and learning to ensure that all of our students have the best chance of realising their ambitions. All of this is the Trust's social justice ethos in practice.

My Early Career Teacher development process has been supported by conferences, seminars and outstanding mentoring, which has been personalised and flexible to focus on my needs and context. I came to teaching following a career in international diplomacy and I have used contacts in academia, politics and the media to expand the horizons and networks of the students whom I serve. I am proud to be part of an organisational culture that values its people, realising that the best outcome for students comes when teachers are encouraged to be courageous and creative, and given the autonomy to deliver for our communities.

If you are looking for a family of distinctive schools to start your teaching journey, I would encourage you to consider CENTRAL, where our people and our places matter.

**Andrew Lane**

**Teacher of Humanities, Holyhead School, Handsworth**



I joined the Central Region Schools Trust as their mission of promoting opportunity and social justice aligned completely with my personal values and principles around what education should offer young people.

CENTRAL has exceptional schools and the opportunity to work with, and learn from, the

people who have created these amazing places was something I knew would help me develop as a person and in my career.

The best thing about working in the Trust is the people. Staff in all roles in school are frequently given the opportunity to work with others across the Trust to develop best practice and some great relationships have been built over the years! I really enjoy working with other Principals on developing all aspects of our schools - we get to problem solve, share good practice and work on school improvement projects together. These great relationships allow us to support each other, feel proud of each other's achievements and ensure that our school communities thrive. Strong processes and teams in areas such as safeguarding, finance, HR and estates management support me and allow me to focus on what is needed for the pupils and my school community - it is wonderful to have a good team that you can rely on.

Working as part of the Trust enables me to work with experts from other Trusts, the world of education and beyond. I have really enjoyed working with Mark Rowland, John Tomsett, Mary Myatt and many others who I would never have otherwise met.

I have worked in the Trust since it was originally founded by the RSA and developed into the CENTRAL. In this time I have moved from Head of Year through all levels of SLT to become Principal of Ipsley C of E Middle School. I have progressed this far in my career through the belief that has been shown in me and the learning opportunities I have been afforded, ensuring that I can be the best I can be!

**Angela Saul**

**Principal of Ipsley C of E Middle School.**



I am currently employed with the Trust as the Lead Estates Hub Manager, and have the responsibility for the strategic and tactical operational role overseeing all Estates matters.

When I was first employed by the first school in the Trust in 2005, Arrow Vale High School was a Local Authority school which had the support of the local authority with regards to all Estates related activities. However, as the School Business Manager, all schools at that point worked very independently of each other and there would be little direct peer to peer support on a day to day basis. In 2012 Arrow Vale became an Academy, and I supported the Principal, now our present Executive Principal (CEO), to convert to a sponsored Academy with the RSA. This was the start of our journey from one school in the Trust to 13 schools, now known as the Central Region Schools Trust.

My involvement with the Trust has been to work with all schools joining the Trust to help and support those schools through the transition, and giving ongoing support and guidance with Estates matters. Working with 13 schools we are now able to share good practice and to support each other with our with events, activities, statutory compliance and on site priorities. We are a family of schools which focus on the people we employ and the students we educate, the places we educate our students and the processes we adopt with the one aim to provide the best educational outcomes for all our students. Working within the our Trust allows all members of our Trust family of schools to actively participate and feel directly involved that our Trust values.

**Bryan Tait**

**Lead Estates Hub Manager**



I have been working at Sutton Park Primary School since September 2013. During the consultation process to become part of CENTRAL (legacy RSA), the aspect of social justice and ensuring inclusion and equality for all resonated strongly with my own beliefs and values. Being part of CENTRAL provides staff, especially those working in one form entry schools, with a wider team to collaborate with and offers levels of support which would not previously be available.

This may be in the form of subject leader meetings or year team meetings where there are opportunities to meet, liaise and seek advice from staff in other settings. The aim of making learning inspirational as well as providing key, transferable skills and ensuring all pupils are happy is something which I feel is apparent across the Trust and I am proud to be a part of this.

My role has developed significantly since joining the Trust. I started my journey as a class teacher and subject leader. Since then, my role has changed and I am now the school SENDCo. In addition to this, I have been appointed as Trust Reading Lead and work with other schools in the Trust, allowing me to use my skillset and support others. This has enabled me to develop key leadership skills and I have enjoyed working in a range of settings with numerous colleagues. I have also had opportunities to run whole Trust projects such as RSA4, which are based on social justice and providing children with opportunities to make a change to their local community.

**Danielle Duignan**

**SENDCo at Sutton Park Primary School**



I joined the Trust when it was first established in 2012 as an English trainee at Arrow Vale High School and knew very quickly that this was somewhere I wanted to stay and that these were people I wanted to learn from.

The Trust's mission of 'social justice' was one which I aligned with and is a big reason why I have been with the Trust for such a long time.

Over the course of my career, I have had access to a wealth of training, guidance and mentoring both formally and informally. At every stage of my career, there have been the CPD structures and processes in place which have allowed me to develop. From weekly training as an NQT, Middle Leadership courses to allow me to achieve my pursuits in pastoral leadership, safeguarding programmes which allowed me to become a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and in more recent years, I accessed the Trust's Senior Leadership course which allowed me to achieve perhaps the proudest moment in my professional career to date of becoming an Assistant Principal at Arrow Vale. But the Trust's investment in my professional development didn't stop there and in 2022 I began a

Trust role leading Personal Development across our schools.

Perhaps the beating heart of the Trust is our Co-Design which empowers leaders from all curriculum and strategic areas and from all of Trust schools to work together and features incredible input from national leaders and experts in a range of fields; from curriculum & pedagogy to SEND and Pupil Premium. The Trust's investment in its people and above all the Trust's investment in its core mission of 'social justice for all' is why it has been a privilege to be a part of the Trust since 2012.

### **Francesca Stanley**

#### **Assistant Principal at Arrow Vale**



I joined the Trust (formerly RSA) in September 2014 after an apprenticeship opportunity was offered in the SEND department, an area of interest for me. This was at Arrow Vale, a school I had attended as a student

and so was familiar with and knew of many good staff who had taught there. Initially, this covered a Teaching Assistant role in lessons, providing support to students and acting as a key worker for them. I have been continually trained over my time in the Trust, being provided with CPD both as part of the wider school by being part of training days and specific CPD relating to SEND, particularly from our now Trust Director of SEND, Claire Round. As a result, I am now a Level 5 qualified Psychometric assessor and am nearly finished with my Foundation Degree in Teaching and Learning, which the Trust has allowed me time to complete. Last year, I began my new role as a Higher Level Teaching Assistant, in charge of organising academic interventions and supporting with exam access arrangements.

I especially enjoy the excellent team environment I have experienced here, both within the SEND department, who immediately invited on evenings out as a team, as well as the wider school team. Staff have been both supportive and have taken on my suggestions and ideas for lessons as a professional who has an expertise on supporting students.

### **Gareth Ravenhill**

#### **Higher Level Teaching Assistant at Waseley Hills**



I originally joined Arrow Vale in September 2007 as Head of Physical Education, after starting my career in an outstanding school in Warwickshire. I moved to Arrow Vale to gain experience in a school in a different context, with a different cohort to my previous employment. I have been very proud to have been a part of the improvements that Arrow Vale has made in recent years.

Even during the inception of our Trust, it was clear to see the impact of what we now call the Central Region Schools Trust could have on the lives of our young people. Creating an environment, in the pursuit of social justice, for students and staff to work collaboratively to be the very best version of themselves became a very tangible prospect and admirer aspiration.

My career development has dovetailed with the progress of the Trust. After a period as a Head of Physical Education I progressed to take on the role of Assistant Principal and as we were a Sports College at the time, I took on the role of Director of Specialism – Sport. Following that I progressed to Vice Principal covering a wide variety of remits, as the needs arose, allowing me to progress to Senior Vice Principal and then in 2017 to Principal of Arrow Vale.

During that time, it has been a privilege to be a small part of the CRST and all it has accomplished. Our Trust ethos of social justice through exceptional schools is as strong as ever and the predominant reason staff look to joining us at Central and the reason they stay so long. Social justice through exceptional schools is certainly the reason I joined Arrow Vale back in 2007.

I am lucky to have gained fantastic experiences at Arrow Vale as our Trust has developed, giving me the ability to take on my current role as Executive Principal, working across Arrow Vale, Waseley Hills and Holyhead School.

### **Ian Mellor**

#### **Executive Principal at Arrow Vale, Waseley Hills and Holyhead School.**



I joined CENTRAL (legacy RSA) in 2016 as a School Direct Trainee in Maths. I was attracted by the offer of the School Direct and the idea of doing the teacher training "on the job" in school. I loved the atmosphere at Arrow Vale and the values that the staff hold from senior leaders right down through the staff body of "no child left behind" and social justice. This matched my ambitions as a teacher to make a difference and be a motivator to young people.

Over time, I have held many different roles, working my way up to my current role as Assistant Principal alongside running the Maths department. I enjoy the pace of the job – the Trust morals encourage us to be relentless in chasing the best possible outcomes for our students. This doesn't just mean exam results, but creating as many opportunities for our young people to develop as people as well. I have been grateful for the opportunities to learn from some outstanding colleagues over time and the structures of staff development in the Trust are excellent in allowing this training.

I hope I can have the same impact on new colleagues in my role as I have experienced in my time working for the Trust. I think a huge strength of ours is how we share resources, share ideas and develop one another, with the underlying principles of doing the best by our students.

### **John Barratt**

#### **Assistant Principal at Arrow Vale**



The reason I chose to work in the Trust is because I felt like their values aligned with my own. Their values of integrity, Excellence, Creativity, Community and respect were all attributes that resonated with me.

Those are all things that I believe that every school should encompass as it creates a place where both students and teachers can flourish. I have enjoyed my time working here as everyone is helpful and the strives for progress.

### **Khadejah Brooks-Sutherland**

#### **Teacher of humanities at Arrow Vale**



I decided to continue my ECT development with CENTRAL and am delighted with my choice. The support I have received is second to none and is such a vital component to teachers being happy and staying in the profession.

The allocated statutory mentor time I receive is invaluable and this is backed up by ECT conferences and clinics I attend. These CPD sessions support my development and allow me to network with other ECTs whilst also meeting expert practitioners from across the Trust. The opportunities offered to me are allowing me to develop both personally and professionally. I feel valued and that the Trust is invested not only in my career progression, but my wellbeing too. Working within the Trust feels like being part of a wider family. Whilst I have my 'Holyhead' family, I also feel part of the 'Trust' family too.

### **Mel Fry**

#### **Teacher of Physical Education at Holyhead School**



I joined Arrow Vale High School as a PGCE student in my second placement; I fell in love with the students, the school, and the community and as a result, 11 years later, I have never left!

I was appointed as an English NQT once successfully completing my course and a year later, the school became an academy founded by the RSA which has since become CENTRAL. I have continued to work for CENTRAL as I believe wholeheartedly in their vision for "social justice through exceptional schools". I have benefitted greatly from the trust's commitment to developing people professionally and have successfully been appointed to many leadership positions within the school: KS3 English lead, Assistant DLS of English, DLS of English and my current position as Assistant Principal responsible for Curriculum and Pedagogy. I value the opportunities we are given to work collaboratively with colleagues within other CENTRAL schools to enhance the learning experiences our students have but also to benefit from their expertise myself professionally. I value the focus that the trust place on the well-being of all members of the CENTRAL community and have felt supported greatly by leaders within the trust when returning to work after starting a family. I am exceptionally proud to work for CENTRAL and can imagine doing so for many more years to come!

### **Michaela Yeomans**

#### **Assistant Principal at Arrow Vale**



After leaving University I always knew that I had a passion for teaching and wanted to be able to enhance the lives of young people and strive to make a difference to their futures through support and guidance.

Back in 2019, I started my journey with the RSA as a School Direct Trainee and my passion continued to grow. Throughout this year I was able to build up my own confidence and resilience as a professional whilst still nurturing a community of amazing students! During this year, I was given the opportunity to complete a placement at Gospel Oak and my enthusiasm excelled even further so much so that I am still progressing at Gospel Oak now! Throughout my time here I have been lucky enough to be given numerous opportunities to develop as an educator both curriculum wise but also pastorally, meaning I am in a position that I absolutely love serving a community who deserves it wholly day in day out! Being part of the CENTRAL means that I teach English daily, a subject that I have a strong commitment to seeing students creatively expressing themselves and gaining a love of reading. I have been a part of numerous experiences within a fabulous English team which showcase English in a way that hasn't been done before, making students enthused with their learning. As well as this, being part of an incredible pastoral team makes every day so rewarding. Seeing students progress and develop academically is one thing, but seeing students embark on a journey of growth emotionally and mentally really cannot be beaten!

**Mollie Ralph**

**Year Team Leader at Gospel Oak School**



I began working in CENTRAL in September 2021 which was my Initial Teacher Training year. I was drawn to the trust due to their commitment to promote social justice for every child, regardless of cultural background.

This promise resonated with me, as I understand the community driven culture in which the Trust is based. I was fortunate enough to be offered a full-time position as a Performing Arts teacher in September 2022, which is where I embarked on my journey as an Early Careers Teacher.

Since becoming an ECT, I have been thoroughly supported by my mentor, conferences and a bespoke online training platform. Here at CENTRAL, I have been offered opportunities that have truly supported my continued professional development, for example: I am now a Subject Mentor for our current Drama Trainee, which is proving beneficial in my own professional development as an ECT. Based within the West Midlands, the students we teach come from a variety of backgrounds; delivering tailored, relevant lessons that work for our communities enable these students to flourish and achieve what they never thought was possible. Teaching practice here at CENTRAL is underpinned by: Creativity, Integrity, Excellence, Respect and Community, these are the values that allow for extraordinary outcomes.

I would highly encourage you to consider CENTRAL when beginning your ECT journey: this could be the place where you fit.

**Molly Tunnell**

**Teacher of Drama at Gospel Oak School**



I joined the CENTRAL (founded by the RSA) because as a trust it strives for something that is at the core of me as an individual and professional. Social justice through exceptional schools is a bold mission but one that I am proud

to have been part of for many years. I have had the opportunity to work alongside several incredibly talented leaders in CENTRAL who so clearly keep this mission at the forefront of what they do. There is a day-to-day, tangible feeling of trust, care, and support within all of the CENTRAL schools and for this reason it is an excellent place to work.

I joined the trust as an Assistant Principal - Head of Maths at Arrow Vale and have learnt enormous amounts since then. Having gained a full understanding of what makes and 'Outstanding' senior leadership team and developed my craft, my role has developed into Vice Principal and most recently Head of School at Waseley Hills High School. I have no doubt that without the unrivalled support of all within the trust I would not have been able to have the impact and professional development during this time. I would recommend anybody with a thirst for and commitment to addressing educational disadvantage to consider joining CENTRAL.

**Tom Preston**

**Head of School at Waseley Hills**



KASE: underpinning principles of curriculum DESIGN  
 Aim: To create an underpinning framework for 'curriculum' and a T&L policy - shared language  
 > This would influence everything we design in schools  
 > Deliberate creation of opportunities, processes and systems which enable these aims. (Within subject and wider curriculum).

## Need more advice?

Please see our website ([Central Region Schools Trust - Founded by the RSA](#)) for further details of our support and services offer for:

Strategic Leadership • School Improvement  
Finance, Payroll and Procurement  
Opportunities for Pupils/Students • Human  
Resources • Governance • IT • Estates • Data



Central Region Schools Trust  
B.06 Assay Studios  
141 – 143 Newhall Street  
Birmingham, B3 1SF  
[centralregionschoolstrust.co.uk](http://centralregionschoolstrust.co.uk)