

CLASSICS MATTERS

The Classics for All Magazine Autumn 2024



Classics for All

CHAMPIONING CLASSICS IN SCHOOLS

Classics Matters is generously supported by Geoffrey and Caroline de Jager

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A Word from our Chief Executive

Jo Hobbs reflects on her first months working for Classics for All

What a whirlwind the past few months have been! So much has happened since I joined Classics for All and I have to say that I am impressed every day by the impact that we are making together for children. Visiting schools, speaking to teachers, and reading the case studies we have been collecting on our work to bring the ancient world to all children, no matter their background, or ability, really emphasises the importance of the work that we are doing.

It was fantastic to be able to hold our first in-person Impact Awards in June to celebrate the schools and teachers who are bringing Classics into the classroom. From Thurso to Exeter, we had teachers from across the country coming together to share their achievements and innovations, we heard the challenges they have in establishing and maintaining Classics on the curriculum, and the wonderful difference that it is making to the children and young people in their schools. Every one of those teachers celebrated the support they had received from Classics for All – the advice, the cheerleading, and the networks of support.

I have also loved getting out to meet with our Network Coordinators, University partners and supporters, as well as sitting in on training

“ Our flexible and responsive approach to support schools is only possible because of the amazing support from you, our wider Classics for All community.



Jo Hobbs at the Impact Awards 2024

sessions. I am so proud of our whole team – central support, Network Coordinators and trainers – who are making a difference every day. Classics for All is small yet mighty.

What I am hearing in every conversation is the benefits of our regional approach which connects schools as a community when so often Classics teachers in state schools are the sole member of their 'department'. That our personal and bespoke approach helps schools to implement Classics in a way that works for them and their pupils, and that our supporter community is so passionate about the benefit of a classical education

and want to make a difference for the next generation of classicists. Our flexible and responsive approach to support schools is only possible because of the amazing support from you, our wider Classics for All community.

Your continued support helps non-specialist teachers build the confidence to teach classical languages, it enables schools to adapt their Classics curriculum to bring out the best in their special educational needs pupils, and it opens doors for young people to connect the past and the present and shape the future of Classics.

Jo Hobbs
Chief Executive, Classics for All

The Story of Multi-Academy Trusts

We explore the successes of our academy schools, like **Greyfriars Academy**



Classics for All was founded in 2010 and, at the same time as we were beginning our journey to bring Classics to state schools, another big change came to the education sector.

Academies and free schools were launched in England. These schools are independent of local authority control and funded directly by the Department for Education rather than local authorities. Whilst the development of academies has not been without controversy, they are extremely prevalent. Just over 42% of primary schools and 81% of secondary schools are currently established as academies, with most of these schools being part of the 1,460 Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) which manage two or more schools.

“ We have had many of our pupils with English as an Additional Language make comments like, “It’s the same in my language too.”

“ Parents initially commented that Latin was a subject “they only do in posh schools,” but staff are growing in confidence and belief that Latin need not only be the preserve of the elite; our children deserve it too!

With so many state school pupils now studying at a MAT, gaining their trust has been a key part of the charity's strategy. And nowhere have we been so successful in gaining this trust than in the East of England, where the efforts of their Network Coordinator, Angela Dix, recently gained national recognition in *The Times* – see *'Expelliarmus!' The primary schools ditching French for Latin* by Nicola Woolcock.

In the first half of this year, our East of England network trained Classics teachers in 13 schools - all bar one are part of a Multi-Academy Trust. The East of England's efforts include: the introduction of Latin to all six of the primary schools in the West Norfolk Academy Trust, development of Latin teaching at two schools within the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (where we support 21 of their 40 schools) and

further Latin training at Greyfriars Academy – who this year won our Impact Awards: Primary School of the Year, for their inspiring teaching efforts in the first year of Classics in their curriculum.

Greyfriars Academy's journey to Classics for All is far from standard of the academy sector; indeed, as the only school in the Unity Education Trust currently supported by Classics for All, it is somewhat unusual in taking the leap into Classics alone. But in many ways, that is what makes their story so inspiring.

In 2022, Greyfriars Academy were rocked by an Ofsted grading of 'Inadequate'. It was clear that bold new action was needed; after research and deliberations they decided a part of their road to improvement might lie with Latin. The school leadership saw

“ Introducing Latin has been instrumental in increasing the rigour of teaching quality at Greyfriars and positively changing the learning culture for everyone. Children look forward to their Latin lessons. I have seen first-hand an improvement in children’s language skills and their acquisition of new spellings because of a better understanding of word origins and etymology gifted to them in their Latin lessons. Latin is taking Greyfriars on a very exciting journey and, whilst it is still only in its early days of development, already the impact on the learning culture is creating more confident, curious and happy learners.

Priscilla Crane, Head of School Effectiveness, Unity Education Trust, Norfolk

the benefits of developing their children's comprehension of the roots of English and, after seeking advice from Classics for All, became more and more positive about the possibilities of Latin.

As a small school with mixed age classes, where Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 share lessons, Angela Dix's expertise, guidance and training on a combination of two Latin courses, which allow all pupils to keep progressing year on year within the same class, sealed the deal for Greyfriars. Where before at Greyfriars languages had on occasion been a neglected subject in a busy curriculum, now the confidence of teachers and the passion of pupils make it the lesson to look forward to.

One student, who had previously struggled with a lack of self confidence in reading and writing and had little enthusiasm for languages, began regularly asking

his teacher when the next Latin lesson would be. His interest in history sparked a passion in Latin and finding himself with a subject that felt like it belonged to him produced a confidence which affected all his subjects. He is so excited during his Latin lessons and keen to write as much as possible that his class teacher prints out additional activities for him. He has even asked to read the Minimus Latin textbooks during quiet reading time.

Seeing such passion from their students gave teachers at Greyfriars a new lease of life which they believe contributed to the upgrade of Ofsted results to 'Requires Improvement' after just two terms of Latin.

Now, after almost a full year of teaching Latin, they are looking into setting up an after-school club as many of their pupils want the fun and challenge to



Greyfriars' students enjoying some quiet reading time with their Latin textbooks

“ Recently, he was comparing our home language, Lithuanian, to Latin and was intrigued by the similarities and differences between the two languages. He also mentioned how he tried to draw connections between English and Latin, showcasing his curiosity and linguistic awareness. During a family trip to Cambridge, he surprised us by recognising Latin writings and inscriptions in certain places. It was truly a proud moment for us as parents to see his interest in the language extending beyond the classroom.

Mum of Nojus, a student at Greyfriars

continue beyond the school day. Their children describe studying Latin as like breaking a secret code using newfound special rules and relish in the pride that solving the language brings. They have made great progress since September and there is a real sense of achievement in the school from teachers and pupils alike.

Greyfriars are now a school confident in their language teaching. They are even beginning to reach out to other local primary schools to share their growing expertise so that it can benefit children beyond their school. All this led to Greyfriars being worthy winners of our Primary School of the Year at the Impact Awards.

The Trials of the Centuries

Cristina Chui on this annual Lawyers Group celebration on the UKSC's 15th anniversary

From Socrates to Antigone, Alexander the Great to Cicero, Classics for All has put many well-known ancient figures on trial since the event first launched in 2015. This year, as the Supreme Court celebrates its 15th anniversary, we look back at some of the highlights over the years and reflect on why the moot trials matter.

Every year, a different figure from the ancient world is put on trial and counsel members attempt to convince jurors (the audience) to prosecute or acquit the defendant. Since the trials started, there have been a wide range of defendants: those already mentioned, Lysistrata, Verres, Boudicca and the assassins of Julius Caesar; and equally, we have been honoured that a variety of counsel and Supreme Court justices have participated in the trials.

It has been a firm favourite of the Lawyers Group, bringing together members in an evening of drama, deliberation and decision-making. Then, with the introduction of

livestreaming the trials in 2021, audiences around the world (including viewers from as far afield as Australia and Canada) have had the opportunity to watch the proceedings as well.

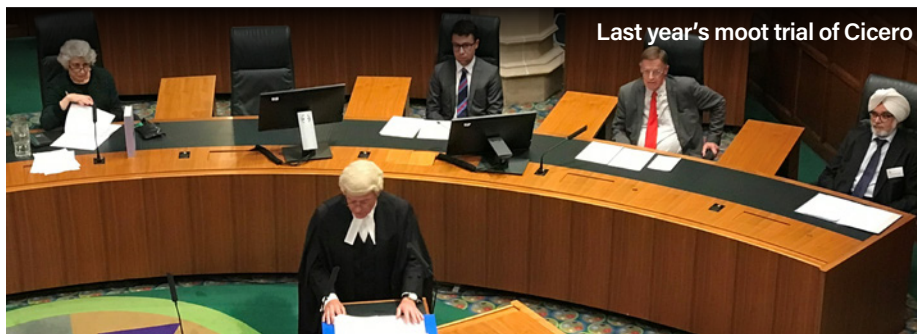
But it has also been especially heartening to see how the trials have supported Classics for All's work, whether through increased awareness of what we do, the generous donations we receive from members of the Lawyers' Group, or as a free educational resource for schools.

Indeed, students from across our Regional Networks have been joining the livestream trials to supplement their learning; most recently for the Moot Trial of Cicero in 2023, teachers and students alike watched the trial as an additional resource to their studies on the Catilinarian Conspiracy.

The trials have also held wider importance for showing how 'Classics Matters.' As William Arnold, member of the Lawyers

“Because the 'jurors' include younger students from schools who are beneficiaries of the charity's work, the moot trials are an opportunity for Classics for All to rejuvenate interest in classical topics in the next generation of scholars.

Mohan Rao, Lawyers Group Steering Committee



Classics for All's Lawyers Group

Established in 2015, Classics for All's Lawyers Group supports the charity's work in state schools and now has over 190 active members, ranging from judges to academics.

For a subscription of £12.50 per month, Lawyers Group members benefit from several exclusive, classically themed events per year, including the annual moot trial.

To find out more, visit the Lawyers Group at classicsforall.org.uk/get-involved/join-lawyers-group or scan this QR code.



Group Steering Committee and former Deputy Chief Executive of the Supreme Court noted, "The moot trials have demonstrated how issues from the Ancient World remain relevant today. When is it just to disobey the law (Antigone); when is a terrorist a freedom fighter (Boudicca); when is a conqueror guilty of war crimes (Alexander the Great)?"

The moot trials then provide an opportunity to engage with and examine modern issues through an ancient lens. So, as we hold our ninth moot trial, this year also in celebration of the Supreme Court's 15th anniversary, we look forward to another chance to facilitate these discussions in a setting where some of the most significant decisions have been made. Medea will be on trial; will she be found guilty or not?

For more information about the Moot Trial of Medea on 24th October, visit our website.

Christmas is Coming: Big Give is Back

Want your donation doubled? Join us in December for our fundraising bonanza



“Classics stories are the foundations of our own narratives and are both compulsive and compelling; they are stories and ideas that we were determined to share with our students at Holmfirth High. Our school code promotes and champions the acquisition of knowledge so developing Classics has been the perfect fit.

Caroline Davenport-Jones, Head of English at Holmfirth High School, supported by last year's campaign

Big Give has been a special part of the Classics for All calendar for the past seven years, and this December will be no exception. We are counting on your continued Christmas spirit to help us reach our goal of raising £50,000 through online donations.

Each and every pound you give during the Big Give week will unlock up to £50,000 in match funding from our generous pledgers: Roger Barnes, Julian Hardwick, Philip Miles and our Big Give Champion.

“I first donated to Classics for All via The Big Give in 2017... Classics for All is such a worthwhile cause and knowing that each pound I donate will encourage others to give is so heartening.

Phillip Miles, One of our Pledgers for Big Give 2024

"One donation, double the impact"

Last year our campaign focused on the 'geographical lottery' of Classics, we targeted our support towards the Midlands and the North, in particular Liverpool, Lancashire and Manchester.

For this year's campaign, we have decided to focus our efforts across the whole nation, targeting inequality across the UK.

With your help, we will raise £100,000. Achieving this will allow us to:

1. Support 66 schools in deprived areas across England, Scotland, and Wales to introduce or develop Classics, identifying three high-need areas in each region and recruit two schools per area, ensuring a robust and equitable Classics education for all students.
2. Enable 2,000 pupils to engage with Classics for the first time this year. This initiative will create a sustainable model, allowing thousands more

students to benefit from Classics education in the future, broadening their horizons and improving educational equity.

3. Train 200 teachers, mainly non-specialists, in classical subjects. This training will equip them with the skills and confidence to ignite a passion for the ancient world in their students, fostering a love for Classics and enhancing educational outcomes across diverse schools.

During the Big Give Campaign (from 12^{PM}, 3rd December–10th December) use our donation page on our website at classicsforall.org.uk/donate to have your donations matched.

Or you can visit our Big Give fundraising page by scanning the QR code here.



Aspiring to Oxford

Alice Case on building partnerships across the regions to encourage Classics at university



Students from Liverpool meeting with Andrew Sillett at the University of Oxford

For many state school students, studying Classics as an undergraduate degree is an unheard-of option. As Alice Case reports, new partnerships between our Regional Networks, local charities and universities can be the key to inspiring young people to take the plunge.

Our Regional Networks are increasingly collaborating with neighbouring networks and developing new partnerships to increase the impact of Classics for All's work. In Liverpool, we have been working since 2020 with local charity, Aspire Liverpool. Aspire works with young people across all Liverpool secondary schools to help them make successful applications to top universities, particularly Oxford and Cambridge.

Initially, the Liverpool Network worked with the Faculty of Classics at The University of Oxford to arrange accessible and engaging online talks for Aspire students. The aim was to expose students to unfamiliar and challenging topics to inspire them but also to show the range of subjects available to them at university that they were unaware they could apply for.

It soon became apparent from feedback that several students were keen to find out more but didn't know how. Now, every year,

“ I enjoyed the talk since it was straightforward and comprehensible; although I have never taken Classics as a course, the talk has invigorated me into wanting to pursue Classics as a field of personal research.

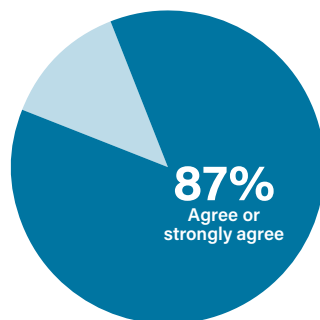
Year 12 student

the Liverpool Network works closely with Aspire to mentor and support small numbers of individual students with their Oxbridge applications, providing reading lists, access to talks, language tasters, workshops and interview practice.

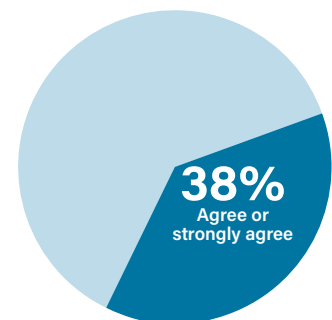
A core part of the Aspire programme is residential trips to Cambridge and Oxford. Unfortunately, the North West link college at Oxford, St Peter's, does not offer any Classics, so during these trips, we arrange bespoke opportunities for these students to visit the Faculty of Classics, enjoy workshops, and talk to academics and students.

In September 2023, Classics for All started a new partnership with the University of Oxford. Dr Andrew Sillett, a Senior Researcher in Classics Education, is now working as our Network Coordinator in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. Earlier this year it was wonderful for Andrew to host a small group of Aspire students and their Director, Harry Doyle, at the Faculty of Classics.

What started as simply facilitating subject specific talks for a local charity, has grown into an inspiring partnership across two Regional Networks and a university.



The talks made me want to learn more about the topics discussed.



The talks encouraged me to think about studying Classics further.

It's not all Greek to me

Alice Case tells us all about the wonderful progress of the Greek Academies

Classics is, as we all know, a special subject, but for many it is Greek which holds their hearts in our discipline. Yet it has always been a particular struggle to make headway in introducing Greek to our schools, especially at examination level. In 2022/23, just 915 students took Ancient Greek GCSE across the whole of the UK, with only 108 of these students attending a state school and an even lower 181 progressed to AS and A Level, of which only 22 were from the state sector.

In this climate it has been important for us to find other creative ways to support Ancient Greek and give students the study opportunities they deserve. Our Greek Academies have been the driving force behind this.

In 2016, we launched our first Greek Academy in Liverpool, run in partnership with Liverpool

“ I love learning Ancient Greek because it's given me an interest in the whole topic, culture, background and stories and it's just been so fun to learn.

College and the University of Liverpool. It offers free in-person classes for students from across Merseyside in Years 9–13 to learn Ancient Greek from beginners all the way to a full A Level over four years, with opportunities to take the new Intermediate Certificate in Classical Greek (ICCG) after one year, GCSE after two years and the AS level after three years. In the context of the low numbers on a national level, our small but steady progress in Liverpool has made an impact. State student participation has increased by 9% at GCSE and 29% at A Level, with 15 students taking the GCSE and five taking the AS Level this year, alongside 10 taking the ICCG examination.

In 2021, our East of England Network started an online Greek Academy aimed at students from the Cambridge and East Anglia areas. Students are taught online but have a half termly opportunity to meet up in Cambridge on a Saturday, for talks and events run with the University of Cambridge and the Cambridge Schools Classics Project. Now in its third year, a total of 57 students participated in the Academy, with seven students sitting the ICCG and eight the GCSE.

Next year, will see the next big step in our Greek Academies. After

“ The lessons are always fun and engaging and even though it isn't always easy, you're left with a real sense of achievement when you can do something difficult. I always feel very supported by my teacher and look forward to coming to class every Saturday.

several enquiries about progression to A Level for small numbers of students in state schools in London and the South East where we have developed GCSE Ancient Greek provision, we are looking to pilot another online Greek Academy. This will be a one-year scheme starting this September building towards the AS Level.

We are hopeful this Academy will be one that we can continue to scale up in much the same way as its Cambridge and Liverpool predecessors, especially considering our recent successes with the ICCG – a pre-GCSE course developed with support from Classics for All – which saw over half of its 437 candidates in 2023 coming from the state sector.

We are able to run these Greek Academies thanks to the generous support of one of our donors and the A. G. Leventis Foundation. If you would be interested in finding out how you can support one of the Greek Academies please get in touch.



Celebrating the Impact Awards 2024

Enjoy some of the best quotes and pictures from our 4th Annual Awards

At the end of June, we held our annual teaching awards, this year fittingly renamed the 'Impact Awards', to celebrate and recognise the transformative work of teachers from all our Regional Networks.

The Impact Awards are always a highlight in Classics for All's calendar, but this year's event, hosted at Leicester Museum and Art Gallery, was bigger and better than ever.

This was our 4th Awards Ceremony but the first time we have

gathered in person, which made it that much more special. It was a great privilege to be able to recognise the work of our fantastic winning schools face to face.

We had two sets of awards: the Regional Awards, chosen by our Network Coordinators from across the UK (including the most northern school on the mainland), and our Special Awards, where schools were given the opportunity to nominate themselves for Primary School of the Year, Secondary

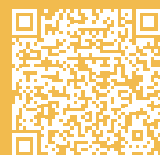
School of the Year, and Sixth Form College of the Year. Our final award of the evening was the Chris Pilcher Award, given in memoriam of a fantastic teacher, Chris Pilcher. It went deservedly to The Hemel Hempstead School.

Many congratulations again to all the brilliant winners, and thank you to everyone who attended, we hope you enjoy some of the photos and quotes that came from this lovely event and our many school nominees.



Teachers from Thomas Rotherham College with Chief Executive, Jo Hobbs and Chair, Jimmy Mulville

For a full list of our winning schools, or to find out more about the event, please see the Impact Awards 2024 page on our website by scanning the QR code above or by visiting: classicsforall.org.uk/news-and-events/events/impact-awards-teaching-awards-2024



Jimmy Mulville presenting Lawrence Sheriff School with their award

Angela Dix, Network Coordinator for East of England with representatives of Greyfriars Academy, Peckover Primary School and Jane Austen College



“ Classics has become the highlight of my week. The teachers clearly love the subject, and it shows - they constantly go above and beyond to help us.
Keely, Year 11 student at Jane Austen College, Norwich

“ Classics can be viewed as an elitist subject; we wanted to give the chance for our students to study subjects that they otherwise would not. Classics for All's support has been instrumental in making that happen.
Tim Lovell, Teacher at Thomas Rotherham College, Rotherham

Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr giving their acceptance speech



“ It has been really exciting to watch the children become so invested and inspired by the Latin Curriculum. It's even more exciting to watch that 'lightbulb moment' when they're reading something in another subject and spot the Latin root word - watching them be able to independently access the English language through their Latin is exactly why we made the choice to study the language.
Gareth Baterip, Headteacher at Newby Primary, Bradford

Who's Who at Classics for All

Meet the team who make it all possible.

Staff

Jo Hobbs MBE, Chief Executive
Anna Bell, Grants, Networks
and Training Coordinator
Alice Case, Programme Director
Cristina Chui, Operations Officer
Nikita Salt, Fundraising and
Communications Officer
Kelsi Russell, Administrator

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Davina Given
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Sir David Wootton

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Classics for All's work is funded by donations from generous individuals, trusts and foundations and companies.






Demand from state schools for Classics is rising and we can only meet this with your support. To donate, please visit classicsforall.org.uk/donate

To find out more about our work and how you can help us, please contact Jo Hobbs at jo@classicsforall.org.uk

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