

Hospitality Connect & Manchester Hoteliers Association Wave 5 Bulletin – Spring 2026

Welcome to the 2026 Spring issue, celebrating the wave 5 partnerships between MHA member venues and schools across Greater Manchester.

With huge thanks to all of the MHA members who volunteer to partner with a school and introduce the hospitality sector so positively to the students, whether you have joined us in the last year or have been with us from the start – we are so grateful for the time and dedication you give to your school partner!



Save the date: Thursday 25th June

The wonderful team at Trafford College in Altrincham will host the end of year celebration event, for students to experience the excellent facilities in the Aspire restaurant & training kitchen, have workshops, receive certificates for their participation & network with other 'Hospitality Rising Stars'. It is more important than ever that young people understand the technical & vocational pathways open to them in Greater Manchester – **with huge thanks to Lola Doherty & her team for hosting!**

More information will be shared soon!



**TRAFFORD &
STOCKPORT**
COLLEGE GROUP

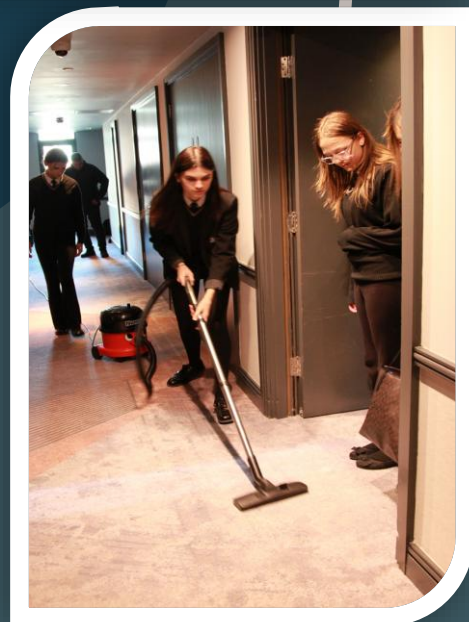


Aspire Restaurant & Bar

Latest news:

There is much to be proud of here in Manchester, as Hospitality Connect started with the MHA members in 2021 and is now being delivered in 20 other regions, reaching over 200 schools across the UK and approx. 4000 students! This is a project model which associations and Local Visitor Economy Partnership teams can adopt to nurture their regional talent pipelines, create partnerships and work meaningfully with careers hub teams, colleges and schools.

We now have a project website: www.hospitality-connect.org and a LinkedIn project page showcasing national updates: [Hospitality Connect Ltd partnering industry with schools](#). Please do follow along!



Latest news continued...

Since the start of this new academic year (September 2025) we have launched initiatives with Bournemouth, Bristol, Inverness and Heathrow – alongside a wave 2 initiatives in Birmingham, Chester and West London.

At the helm is Adrian Ellis, project founder and retired Chair of MHA. With Laura Johnson, Partnerships Manager for the North supporting regional projects. We welcomed Andi Fletcher into the role of Partnerships Manager for the South at the start of October – thanks to continued funding from Savoy Educational Trust, helping us to expand further.

Latest press: latest news articles from [Hospitality & Catering News](#) and also [Hotel Magazine](#).

The Hospitality Connect programme:

We recommend that hotel and school partners follow the below themes with your engagements at a rate of 2 activities per term to inspire the next generation:

- ❑ **Hotel based group experiences** – visits, tours and practical activities that highlight the true breadth of opportunity both front & back of house
- ❑ **School based opportunities** – careers events like mock interviews, speed networking etc – your school contact will let you know what is coming up
- ❑ **Curriculum enhancement** – class talks and demos. Ask your linked teacher what is coming up in the curriculum that your team could help bring to life!
- ❑ **Influencer encounters** – meet the parent, carer and teacher community at your partnered school as we strive to improve the perceptions of the hospitality sector. Perhaps you could host a 'careers & canapes' session!
- ❑ **Educators facilitate a pathway encounter with an FE college** that provides technical and vocational pathways supporting the hospitality sector - if you have not already arranged a college taster, or classroom talk on post 16 pathways – please do join us at the end of year event described on page 1





The MHA hotelier and school partners have been busy arranging events both venue and school based to bring curriculum to life and 'open doors to change perceptions.' Here are a few of the highlights from this academic year so far...

VOCO GM, Kostadin Dimitrov attended Co Op Academy Belle Vue's Careers Fayre with his Sales Manager and spoke with a whole host of students about careers and opportunities within the hotelier industry - & looks forward to work placement students starting soon at the hotel!

Mercure Picadilly Hotel also supported their partner school, Lowton High School's Careers Fair in March – meeting year groups 7, 8 and 9 to inform on the breadth of opportunity

The Treehouse team facilitated a filleting masterclass at their partnered school Ashton on Mersey in Sale. Megan Fisher, food teacher said "the filleting masterclass was brilliant and the students absolutely loved it! A great big thank you to Tom who was fantastic with the students. It was lovely to meet him. The students got so much out of it and were really engaged throughout.



Holiday Inn Manchester City Centre welcomed 14 students from Oakwood Sixth Form in November for a visit to highlight the front and back of house operations and roles. Back in September they also visited the school in Media City where students put them under the 'hospitality spotlight' with lots of interesting questions!

Dakota also welcomed visits from both of their school partners: Melland High School and Kingsway.

Melland students enjoyed their look at Front of House, including an activity where students designed their own bespoke celebration package! Students had a show round of the venue and learned about the full breadth of careers and pathways available. The Kingsway students enjoyed a **menu masterclass on seasonality** – and a kitchen overview. They are looking forward to their next visit in June!



In partnership with **Lostock High School** in **Stretford**, **Hotel Indigo** have hosted 3 separate visits in January – with 36 students gaining valuable insights into roles and responsibilities at the venue. Students learned about guest experience standards and had a Chef demo on de-boning and filleting a chicken.



Suzy White, Careers Leader said “Our students fully immersed themselves in the experience by asking thoughtful questions and confidently sharing their knowledge of the hotel and hospitality industry. A huge thank you to Dinah, Hotel Operations Manager, who praised our students for being exceptionally well-behaved and a pleasure to host, and to Chef Aadish, whose culinary expertise truly wowed us and delivered one of the most delicious, melt-in-the-mouth chicken dishes we have ever tasted.”

The **Albion Academy** in Salford with **V&A Marriot** have kickstarted their new partnership with a successful group visit in January where 24 year 11 students enjoyed a carousel of workshops including bedmaking, a tasting challenge, hotel show round and Q&A session. After lunch, the students then worked in small groups on a restaurant concept challenge where they designed a new brand and menu to present to hotel managers. General Manager Kelly Andreasson said:

“The students were so engaged & their presentations in the afternoon session simply blew us all away! Zoe Maclean, Food teacher added “Our students came back from the trip absolutely buzzing and couldn’t stop talking about how much they enjoyed the day. The experience is incredibly useful for their GCSE units, plus quite a few students would now like to work in the hotel!”

Kimpton Clocktower welcomed students from **Crompton Church of England School**, now in their 3rd year of partnership. Nicola Gee, HR Advisor said:

“We loved welcoming 70 Year 10 students, they threw themselves into the mocktail lesson with real enthusiasm and brought fantastic energy to the session. Their curiosity shone through especially their questions about the best pathways into a career in hospitality and it was inspiring to see how engaged they were. We are already looking forward to working with them again soon.”



Manchester Hotelier Association partners:

With many thanks to all of the MHA Members who take part in the Hospitality Connect initiative, to formally partner with a school – your dedication to inspire the next generation of hospitality talent is greatly appreciated! We look forward to a Summer edition of this bulletin, celebrating your latest engagements – **please get in touch with Laura Johnson with your summaries and permitted images.**

Huge thanks also to the Greater Manchester Colleges that support our initiative: Trafford College Group, The Manchester College, Tameside College & Salford City College.

Schools

Abraham Moss
All Saints Catholic College, Tameside
Arbour Academy, Eccles
Ashton on Mersey, Sale
Broadoak School, Trafford
Co-Op Belle Vue Academy
Crompton House CofE, Oldham
Denton Community College
Dixon Brooklands School, Wythenshawe
Droylsden High School
Great Academy Ashton
Kingsway School, Cheadle
Lostock High School, Stretford
Lowry Academy, Little Hulton
Lowton High School, Wigan
Manchester Communications Academy
Melland High School, Manchester
Oakwood Sixth Form, UTC Media City
Sale High School
St James' RC HS, Cheadle
St John Vianney, Stretford
Stretford High School
The Albion Academy, Salford
Walkden High School
Wellacre School, Trafford

MHA partners 2025-2026

Crown Plaza with Holiday Inn Shudehill
Novotel City Centre, St Peters Square
Holiday Inn Trafford City
Treehouse Hotel
Lancashire Cricket - Hilton Garden Inn Hotel
Voco Manchester
Kimpton Clock Tower Hotel
Double Tree by Hilton, Piccadilly
Clayton Hotel Manchester Airport
Leonardo, Ancoats & Manchester Central
Manchester Marriott Hotel Picadilly
Dakota
Hotel Indigo
Lowry Hotel
Mercure Manchester Picadilly Hotel
Clayton Hotel, Manchester
Dakota
Holiday Inn, City Centre
Maldron Hotel, Cathedral Quarter
Double Tree by Hilton Manchester Airport
Holiday Inn Media City
Midland Hotel
V&A Marriott Hotel
Delta by Marriott - Worsley Park Hotel
The Reach Hotel