

Head Teachers' Bulletin – 16th June

Events this week (beginning 19th June)

School Improvement Planning meeting (Heads' Forum) – Tue 27th June, 9.30-11am St Mary's High Green

Senior Leaders' meeting – Tue 27th June, 1.30-3.30pm venue TBC

Actions from this Bulletin

1. **Complete the form showing your availability for Fiona and John to visit in the autumn term** by following the link [here](#)
2. **Trust Mass meeting (virtual) Monday 26th June** – Let Anita know if someone can represent your school
3. **Respond to Anita's questions regarding Trust HR policies**

New Updates (since last bulletin)

Heads' Meeting – School Improvement Capacity Categorisation

I have attached the PowerPoint presentation from Tuesday's meeting. Please also see the message below from John regarding plans to visit schools in the autumn term as discussed in the meeting.

Also as promised in the meeting, I have attached the updated Trust calendar. You will get a printed copy at the meeting on 27th June, so please do let me know before next Friday if you see any issues with any of the dates.

Message from John Coats – Director of School Improvement visits

As shared in the Heads Forum, Fiona and I will be carrying out school visits in the autumn term. The purpose is to get to know the CMAT schools better.

In particular we want to better understand the capacity and expertise that Trust schools may have to support school improvement elsewhere in the Trust, and those aspects of school improvement where support from elsewhere may be helpful.

We will carry out a couple of trial visits right at the start of the autumn term, in order to ensure that the format both enables the visit to achieve what we want it to achieve and that the visit is as useful as possible for the school being visited (thank you to our guinea pigs!). We then aim to carry out the bulk of the visits from the 4th week onwards. More details will be shared about the exact format and structure of the visits once we've nailed it down after the first couple of trial visits. In the meantime please can you respond to the survey [here](#) indicating your availability to host a visit. When providing your availability, please work on the basis that the visit will be at most half a day.

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We will be visiting all schools in the Trust. However, schools in the family who plan to join the trust can also complete the form and we will include you in our visit schedule.

Trust Mass – Planning

As a way of celebrating our community in prayer, we are proposing to do something each year close to the feast of All Saints. Through a focus on the Saints associated with each of our schools, we want to celebrate our different communities as a way of connecting our children and staff together in prayer.

To launch that, we are planning a Trust mass, where we will invite representative pupils, staff and governors from each of the schools in the St Clare family. Around that mass, we would love to promote some activity in each of our schools.

The mass is pencilled in for Thursday 19th October, which I know is some way from All Saints Day, but there are complications with half term dates for different local authorities this year and I wanted to be sure everyone could make it.

To help move forward with planning, I am looking for volunteers from schools to come in the first instance to a virtual meeting on Monday 26th June at 3.30pm. I will share some more detail on plans for the mass and I will then welcome input and ideas on how we can make this work well for our children and staff. I am looking for people who will be well placed to lead preparations in your school and I will also be looking for some who will be able to support the central planning of the mass.

HR policy checking

Anita recently emailed SBMs of schools in the Trust to confirm whether or not you used CES templates for statutory HR policies before you joined the Trust. This is something we asked some time ago, but did not get a full response. Thank you to everyone who has responded. If you have not done so, please do get back to Anita as soon as possible. We need to collate the responses by Fri 23rd June.

We need this information in order to inform a meeting with Trade Union regional reps in July. This is part of our routine work with unions.

We are also looking to carry out a more significant review of the sickness absence policy. To inform this, Anita has also asked schools who are not yet in the Trust to share your current policy, if you are not following a CES template. This is to make sure that the outcome of the review makes things work smoothly when you join the Trust. Again, thanks to everyone who has responded already.

Sharing vacancies or staff who may be available

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This is a reminder to share with me any vacancies you have for September (or that you are expecting).

Please also share with me any staff who are good, but who you know may be available in the coming year. For example, you might have staff who have been with you on a fixed term contract that are strong, but who you don't have a permanent role for. You may also have contacts through your communities of people who are looking for work and who may be worth approaching where schools have vacancies.

As an example of the latter, I have recently been contacted by a former pupil of St Marie's and Notre Dame who has just completed a Psychology degree and is looking for opportunities in pastoral work in any of our schools text term. She hopes to work with young people with additional needs in the future. If anyone would like to explore this, please let me know.

It is hopefully a simple thing we can do to help each other to share where we have gaps and where we know of potentially good colleagues who may be able to fill them.

Trust recruitment update

We will shortly be recruiting for the next round of central trust roles, so please do highlight these with any colleagues or members of the wider community who you think may be interested. The roles that will be coming up are:

- Finance Officer
- Procurement and contracts officer
- HR Manager

These roles, as with all Trust roles will be advertised on the Trust website, on our vacancies section, so please do encourage anyone who is interested to look there. We will also send alerts about advertised roles via our Twitter account, so again, if you know of people who are interested, they can follow us on Twitter @stclarecmt

Notices

Secondary School KS4 checking exercise

This is just a note to flag up the information that should have been received by secondary schools, to log in to the KS4 checking exercise website to check that the DfE have attributed the correct pupils to your school or college for the purposes of calculating 2023 school and college performance measures.

I have copied below the notice that you should have received:

Action required by 5:00pm 23 June 2023:

The June checking exercise will be the only opportunity for all state funded schools, registered

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independent schools and FE colleges with 14 to 16 provision to check that we have attributed the correct pupils to your school or college to calculate performance measures.

You can also submit the following amendment requests, if necessary: Add or include pupils Remove pupils who are no longer on roll Remove pupils that meet certain criteria (even if they remain on roll) Limited characteristics amendments Key stage 2 results amendments.

We will reflect all accepted June pupil amendments in the provisional performance publication in October 2023. You can access the secure checking exercise website between 9:30am on Monday 12 June and 5:00pm on Friday 23 June 2023. You will be able to download guidance on how to check that we have attributed the correct pupils to your school or college and how to submit amendment requests, if necessary.

To help schools and colleges submit appropriate amendment requests during the KS4 June checking exercise we have produced a document which summarises the requests submitted during the 2022 KS4 June checking exercise, alongside common reasons why we were unable to accept some amendment requests.

To increase the likelihood of amendment requests being accepted we strongly suggest you read both the '2023 KS4 June Checking Exercise Guidance' document and the '2022 KS4 June Checking Exercise Requests Summary' document before you make any amendment requests. Both documents can be found on the Guidance/Documents page of the KS4 June checking exercise website. You must submit all amendment requests and upload any supporting information/evidence by 5:00pm on Friday 23 June 2023.

Items from previous bulletins for reference

Safeguarding Audit (Wiley Bissett)

Sticking with the theme of safeguarding, our internal auditors (Wiley Bissett) will be carrying out an audit of our safeguarding processes and controls across the Trust. This will lead to a report for our Audit, Risk and Assurance committee and is a recommended piece of work for a newly established Trust. Their audit work will happen during the week beginning 11th July.

This audit will involve fieldwork at three schools, which will be chosen at random by the auditor. In practice this is likely to involve a discussion between the auditor and the DSL and other key staff (e.g. the person responsible for maintaining the Single Central Record). They will also want to review policies and procedure documents.

The purpose of this is to look at the current overall picture for the management and governance of safeguarding across the Trust and it will lead to recommendations to ensure compliance.

The work in school should be minimal and it is not the school which is being audited, rather the systems across the Trust as a whole. It will give us another useful perspective on what we are doing well and where we should focus our energy in developing.

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I have attached a copy of the plan from Wiley Bissett so that you can see what will be involved and I will be in touch with schools randomly selected once that has been done by the auditors.

Staff interested in serving on another school's governing body/LAC

I would be grateful if you would ask staff in your school if any of them are interested in being a governor at another school in our family or more widely in the Diocese.

We do have colleagues in our schools who are already part of governing bodies on other schools and their knowledge and service makes a massive difference. I know directly from some of those colleagues how it is also strengthening their understanding of governance and giving them a wider picture which really helps them professionally, particularly when considering leadership roles. For many of those colleagues, it was someone in their school asking them that was the prompt to put themselves forward to be a governor.

To be clear for schools in the Trust, while you cannot be a governor of a school in which you work under the scheme of delegation (and NGA guidance), you can serve as a governor in a different school even if it is in the trust.

I would therefore be grateful if you can promote this with staff in your school and let me know if anyone is interested in exploring this further.