

Head Teachers' Bulletin – 15th March

Dates for the diary

- 19th Mar – Heads' Forum 8-12 @ Pastoral Centre
- 20th Mar – Dyscalculia work group, session 2 – 1.30-4pm @ Pastoral Centre
- 22nd Mar – EY/Y1/Y2 writing moderation 2.30 - 4pm @ All Saints
- 27th Mar - Writing Fundamentals intro session 9-10am @ St Catherines (repeat of session from 8th March)
- 23rd April – Leadership Development Session 8.30-12.30 @ Pastoral Centre
- 25th April – DSLs network 4.00-5.00pm on Teams
- 1st May – Senior Leaders' Meeting 1.30 – 3.00pm @ Pastoral Centre
- 7th May – Heads' Forum 8.30-12.30 @ Pastoral Centre

Actions from Bulletin

- Please see the proposed 2025-26 term dates from local authorities and send to Anita your thoughts about timing of the Easter break.
- Schools in the Trust, please also confirm with Anita your planned INSET dates for 2024-25
- Confirm attendance of staff at the Dyscalculia work group on Wednesday 20th March – confirm with Anita.

New Updates (since last bulletin)

Heads' Forum – Tue 19th March 8-12

We have Heads' Forum next week. We will be following the timings agreed after the conference, so we will gather from 8am for time to check in and have time to talk 'off agenda'. We will begin the agenda at 9am.

During the meeting we will cover:

- Follow up on Heads' Reports from John and Fiona
- Update on governance work from Steve
- Update on School Improvement Strategy

Part of this discussion will be an initial look ahead to the calendar for next year. To help with that, please could schools in the Trust confirm dates of INSET days for next year with Anita before the meeting. Associate schools can also share dates if you are happy to. It would be helpful.

Term Dates 2025-26

3 of the 4 local authorities covered by our family of schools have set proposed term dates. I have included a summary with this bulletin to inform setting of dates with your governors.

You will see that the local authority Easter dates for 2025-26 cover Holy Week, which raises for us the common question of whether we have our Easter break a week out of sync (in line with the Bishop's direction) or go completely with the local authority dates.

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I would welcome your thoughts on this, particularly noting any specific issues for your school. I will also field views at the Forum on Tuesday. I will then prepare an updated version of this paper, once Barnsley have given their 2025-26 dates and I will include a suggested approach informed by your feedback.

Teaching Personnel Partnership

The Trust is negotiating a partnership agreement with Teaching Personnel, a national company that supports with both recruitment and supply for schools.

The partnership is at no cost to the Trust and there is no obligation on Trust schools to use Teaching Personnel, but it does involve discounted rates for Trust schools. We are taking this approach to explore if such a relationship can help us to reduce agency costs, with at least the same quality of provision as schools currently access.

As part of this partnership, Teaching Personnel are able to offer some free trial supply so that our schools can have some experience of colleagues available through them. A contact from Teaching Personnel will be in touch with each school individually to discuss how you can take advantage of this offer. Anita is liaising with Teaching Personnel to arrange this contact.

The link below is to more information about the agreement, and in the 'Our Partnership' section you will see a list of key contacts for each school in the trust, so that you know who to expect contact from. Please share the name of the contact for your school with any colleague who is likely to answer the call from Teaching Personnel, so they don't filter it out as a sales call.

https://proposal.teachingpersonnel.com/cover.php?ProposalID=1EGgsxtrqwi2Gog5EDC-QIIMEMrUf3maMtuZftbMvW0&ContactID=M_PB2KFbagUOmpl63M4jvQ9kAX6UGdL7PexUB5ZuWzc

Dyscalculia Work Group Session 2 – Wed 20th March 2.30-4pm @ Pastoral Centre

Please note that it is the second session of the Dyscalculia work group on Wednesday. We had wonderful engagement and representation from schools across the family for the first session and we look forward to the same next week. If you have any problems with releasing staff from your school next week, please do let Anita know ASAP. For planning purposes we will work on the assumption that the staff who attended last time will be there on Wednesday unless notified otherwise.

Items from previous bulletin for reference

Leadership development session – 23rd April

This is an additional diary entry from what was planned at the start of the year, which I understand is always a challenge. However, we have the opportunity to work with a speaker who is in the country for a limited amount of time and we wanted to make the most of that.

Some of you will remember Jes who led a Sheffield Catholic Heads' Conference some years ago, when we were developing our partnership. He is available to come and work with us again for a morning and the focus will be on taking some of the things we have been looking at with Michael West and David Wells and taking them into the next practical steps back in our schools.

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We expect that this will be top class leadership development and so we want to invite a Head and Deputy (or other senior leader) from every school in the Trust and from each associate school to join us for the morning at the Pastoral Centre. We will be in touch soon with details and will ask for confirmation of attendance, but for now, please do put this date in your diary.

Writing Moderation – rearranged date for Early Years/Y1/Y2

We have rearranged the Early Years/Y1/Y2 moderation date for **Friday 22nd March. It will run from 2.30-4pm** and will be held at All Saints.

We understand that this clashes with the RE coordinators meeting and we understand that this means that not every school will be able to release the staff they originally planned to send on this event. We went with this date as, of the dates when leaders were available, this was the best fit overall with schools. Please do make the judgement that works best overall for your school and please do let Anita know which members of staff you are able to send if you haven't already done so.

Heads' Forum – 19th March

Looking ahead to the Heads' Forum on 19th March, our agenda will cover updates on Headteachers reports and some feedback on points of interest from the ones submitted earlier this term. I will also update you on some related work that has been going on to support LAC meetings, updating agendas and deadlines to reflect the way we're now working and also clarifying who needs to do what and when. Finally, we will also share updates on the School Improvement Strategy and any general updates.

Maths Hub Y5-8 Workgroups

The final follow-up in relation to Maths Hub support was a reminder about the potential of applying to the NCETM to run one or more funded Y5-8 work groups between groups of schools (facilitated by colleagues from within the Trust). Because we have Vicki, we would also be able to enhance the resource that goes into these workgroups. In order to move forward on this could I ask in the first instance that **secondary heads** ask their Maths Leads to identify aspects of the KS3 Maths curriculum where they feel that curriculum continuity is weak moving from the primary to the secondary phase. We will then share these with the respective feeder primaries (this seems to be the most sensible school grouping to explore) and if we can agree consensus on useful areas of development, we can make this the focus of one or more Y5-8 workgroups for schools that want to be involved.