

Head Teachers' Bulletin – 22nd March

Dates for the diary

- 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 – EYFS workshop – Home Visits (see attached action plan)
- 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
- Let Steve know if your school would be interested in the proposed singing showcase at the end of the summer term

New Updates (since last bulletin)

For colleagues in schools in Barnsley, who break up today, I wish you all a peaceful Holy week, a joyful Easter and a really good break.

I will send a brief bulletin next Thursday as term goes down for other schools in the Trust.

Heads Forum

Please find attached with this bulletin the slides from this week's Heads' Forum.

I have also attached a draft copy of the Trust calendar for next year and I welcome any feedback on planned dates. There are two tabs on the spreadsheet. The first shows everything, including Directors' meetings. The second filters to things that are relevant to all (or most).

Please note that we need to add in dates for some activities such as the Subject Leaders' Immersion Days, Writing Fundamentals work and Early Years' meetings. However, this gives the overall structure for the year that we can build around.

Term Dates 2025-26

Thank you for responses to the outline of term dates sent last week. Schools who responded plan to set dates in line with their local authority, with the exception of the Easter dates, where they will be in for Holy week and have the two weeks after that (so a week out of sync with Local Authority Dates).

Please find attached an updated briefing note for governors when setting term dates. Please note that for Trust schools, setting term dates is delegated to the Local Academy Committee but we would ask that your starting point is to set in line with the suggested Trust approach and that you would only move away from

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this where there are specific local factors that cause difficulty. Please do let Anita know once you have set term dates, so that we can reflect this in our Trust calendar.

EYFS Action Plan

You will recall at the last Heads' Forum, Emma Porter shared draft plans for an EYFS network and some actions that came out of the EYFS mini-conference. Everyone supported Emma to develop her proposals into an action plan to work on with EYFS colleagues across the Trust and associate schools.

Emma has shared the attached action plan for you all, including some dates for workshops and other activity, the first of which is a workshop on home visits, which I have included in the dates for the diary above.

Please do share this action plan with Early Years colleagues in your school and please think about how you can enable colleagues to participate. If you are facing challenges with this, please to let me know.

Further details will follow.

Invitation to session with David Wells at All Saints on 26th June

Thanks to Sean who has highlighted that David Wells is booked to lead some professional development at All Saints on Wed 26th June. Sean is extending an invitation to other schools in the Trust and associate schools who wish to attend and/or to send other colleagues.

Please do get in touch with Sean directly if you and/or another colleague would like to attend, so that Sean has an idea of numbers.

MATPad

From Monday, Trust Heads will have access to the new dashboards that MATPad are developing.

Proposed singing showcase – summer term

Thanks to Rebecca Carr, a colleague from St Mary's, who is keen to establish a singing showcase or competition for choirs from all schools in the Trust and associate schools. She is keen to provide an opportunity for children to come together to sing and to showcase singing across our trust. We hope to link this into liturgical singing too, as a way to celebrate our distinctive Catholic nature.

We have not confirmed this event yet, or set a date, but we are planning something towards the end of the summer term. At this stage, I want to put this idea on your radar, and I would welcome an indication of whether this is something that you would support. I would also welcome any offers of colleagues who may be willing to support us in getting the event up and running.

Mathematical Reasoning Training at St Mary's

Change of date - St Mary's have booked Gareth Metcalf for training on Maths Reasoning for Friday 25th October (not 25th February. This will be open to other schools in the Trust, so please do let us know if you would like to send anyone.

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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.

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.

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

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

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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.