

Head Teachers' Bulletin – 20th September

Upcoming Events

24 th Sept	Heads' Forum – 8-12 @ Pastoral Centre
25 th Sept	Senior Leaders' Group – 1.30 @ Pastoral Centre
27 th Sept	Deadline for Head Teacher Reports
1st Oct	Writing Fundamentals @ St Catherine's
3 rd Oct	DSLs Network - 12.30-3.30 @ Pastoral Centre
16 th Oct	Maths Subject Immersion @ Holy Rood

Actions

Curriculum Immersion Days Form – Please complete the form indicating which Subject Immersion Days you expect to send staff to this year. Please respond by Fri 27th September

Declaration of Business, Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests – Please note the information about update guidance on these declarations which need to be updated by Heads and Local Academy Committee members on Governor Hub.

Attendance MS Form – This form is to help check and inform our response to changes to legislation and guidance around attendance. Thanks to colleagues who have already responded.

Summary of items in today's Bulletin

It is a longer bulletin than normal today, so I have noted below the items with links so that you can easily find individual things if you need to go back to them:

[Heads' Forum](#) – prep for our meeting next Tuesday

[Subject Immersion Days](#) – an update on what is needed from schools you and how we'll support

[Senior Leaders' Meeting](#) – Summary of next week's meeting and plan for the year

[Admissions](#) – A reminder about the consultation on admissions policies

[Declarations of Interest](#) – A note about changes to requirements and what you need to do

[Teachers' Pay Award & Incremental progression](#) – A summary of how & when this is being applied

[Funded CPD opportunities](#) – Information about funded CPD related to SEND and adaptive teaching

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New Updates (since last bulletin)

To begin today's bulletin I invite you to pray for the children and staff at St Catherine's school who are celebrating the school's 50th Anniversary in mass with Bishop Ralph.

Heads' Forum

A reminder that you are invited to gather from 8am for breakfast and time to check in 'off-agenda'. Our Forum will begin at 9am and the main focus is the next of our leadership development sessions with Jes.

You received a message from Jes earlier this week in preparation for our time together. I have copied it below for convenience. Please do share this with any other colleague who is coming with you to the Forum.

Hi Team,

I'm really looking forward to connecting again on the 24th September for another leadership focus morning. In our last session earlier in the year, we...

- *Revisited our learning on compassionate leadership*
- *Practiced the art of connection and Humble Inquiry*
- *Explored a powerful and positive structure for effective 1:1's*

Our session next week builds on the above conversations. The workshop is called 'Create' and we'll be talking about Goals and Growth, and the role we play as leaders in developing our people.

As a bit of preparation, [here is a link to a great article / blog by Zach Mercurio](#) who talks about the importance of 'mattering' at work - a topic which aligns really well to the work we've done around compassionate leadership, and the concept of next week's session on goals and growth.

Subject Immersion Days

We are really looking forward to the first subject Immersion Days later this half term, with the Maths day at Holy Rood and the History Day at St Catherine's.

Thanks to those schools and all who have offered to host this year. If you are one of the schools hosting an Immersion Day later in the year, there will be some guidance and support with planning coming soon. John, Fiona and other colleagues are working with colleagues at Holy Rood and St Catherine's on a framework for planning these days, which we will share with all other schools who are hosting once we have piloted it in practice.

For now, if you are hosting, you don't need to be doing anything.

However, we do need all Heads to let us know which of the Immersion Days through the year you plan to send staff to. There will be room for some change later in the year, but we do need a picture of numbers expected at each day to help with logistical planning. There is an MS form to complete, with the link in the actions from this bulletin and, once we have everyone's responses, we will share numbers with host schools. Please do get your response back ASAP so that we can share the picture with everyone.

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Senior Leaders' Meeting

It is our senior leaders' meeting next week. Just to remind you, this is a network for Deputies and other senior leaders and it is a cross phase group. We realise that this meeting is the day after our Leadership Event on Tuesday 24th but we felt that it was better to keep this date rather than cancel another of these meetings and to try to get the meetings in place and on track for the year.

In the meeting Fiona and John will be reviewing the proposed plan for the year ahead. In particular they will focus on two areas of cross phase work that we would like the senior leaders' group to lead on across the Trust. They will also look at the proposal for three future senior leader sessions that they are planning over the course of the year:

- A session on data (this will have a KS2 focus so secondary colleagues do not need to attend)
- A session on curriculum development linked to our Immersion Days. Do we as Senior Leaders ask the right questions in order to build the ambitious curriculum we desire?
- A session on SEND and child development – how can we collaborate to ensure we have the skills, knowledge and confidence to meet emerging needs.

John and Fiona look forward to working with the group next Wednesday. Please ask senior leaders to let Anita know if they are attending.

Admissions

Earlier this week Heads of schools in the Trust received an email from Anita, on my behalf, with a reminder of the steps needed to launch the consultation on our admissions policies. This consultation relates to the 2026-27 policies (that is the policies relating to children who will start our schools in Sept 2026).

Please note that we agreed to start the consultation together on 1st October. I do need to know urgently if you have hit any problems with being ready for that date.

My thanks to Lindsay Graham who is going to act as a liaison point between schools during this work.

Declarations of Business, Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest

At the start of each year, there are a group of staff, governors and directors who need to review and update their declarations of business, pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. This is in compliance with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2024 and will be checked during our statutory audit which begins soon.

The ESFA have made changes this year to the information required and who it is needed from. It is much more extensive than in previous years, covering a larger number of people and a broader disclosure requirement. At school, the people who need to make declarations are Headteachers, School Business Managers and all members of local academy committees.

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In order to assist colleagues we have produced a policy document which is available on Governor Hub and attached with this Bulletin for convenience. The policy document explains the disclosures that are needed.

What we are asking you to do:

- **Heads – please update your Declaration via the facility on your profile page on Governor Hub,** using the policy document to guide you as to what you should be covering when considering if there is anything you need to disclose. If you have already updated your declaration this term, please take a moment to check the updated policy to make sure you have covered everything you need to. **Please update your declaration on Governor Hub by Fri 27th Sept.**
- **Please also alert members of your Local Academy Committee that this updated policy is on Governor Hub and that they should use it to guide them in updating their declarations.** Where Local Academy Committee members have already updated their declaration, again we are asking that they check the update policy to ensure that they have declared everything that is needed. **We ask Local Academy Committee Members to complete their declarations by Friday 4th October.**

We will also ask Learn Sheffield Clerks to highlight the revised policy and to remind Local Academy Committee members to use it to update their declarations.

We will brief Business Managers on what they need to do at their briefing next week.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Adnan Bashir via email.

Teachers' Pay Award and Incremental Pay Progression

St Clare will be implementing the following STRB's recommendations for the 2024 teachers pay award as follows:

- A 5.5% uplift to all pay points and allowances for both teachers and leadership colleagues applicable from 1 September 2024.
- Removal of the performance related pay requirement from 1 September 2024, expect those subject to additional support measures.

St Clare's decision to proceed with implementing these recommendations is in advance of the formal process to finalise the 2024 STPCD recommendations, however, we feel this is the correct decision and do not anticipate any further amendments to the draft 2024 STPCD recommendations.

Our approach for implementation is as follows:

1. Schools with a mid-month pay date will have their pay award and incremental progression points allocated and processed during October. Unfortunately, there was insufficient time to apply all the necessary changes prior to the mid-month pay date.
2. Schools with a month end pay date will have their pay award and incremental progression points allocated and processed in time for September's pay date subject to review, confirmation and return of staffing schedules to be provided by the shared service payroll team.

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If you should have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the payroll team in the first instance.

Funded Staff Development Opportunities – SEND and Adaptive Teaching

1. The Ambition Institute are running a fully funded pilot of Adaptive Teaching: Train the Trainer. Because we deliver the Ambition Institute Early Career Programme we are eligible to apply for one of the limited funded places. The deadline is 27th September. Please let Anita know if you are interested. More information about the programme is here [New programmes launched \(ambition.org.uk\)](https://ambition.org.uk)
2. For colleagues who are already Maths Hub LLMEs, the Maths Hub is running a workgroup for 2024/25 entitled 'SEND in Mainstream'. Please contact vjohnlewis@symathshub.org.uk if this is of interest.
3. Changes to NPQ funding means that there is now limited funding for these. However, the NPQ for SENCOs is still funded. SENDCOs who haven't already obtained (or are working towards) the NASENCO qualification must complete the NPQ for SENCO qualification within 3 years of appointment. It makes sense to coordinate this as a Trust so that where colleagues want/need to undertake the NPQ SENCO we can arrange for them to undertake this with the same provider. This means that they can benefit from the opportunity to work together during the programme. If you have colleagues who are interested/need to undertake the NPQ for SENCO please let Anita know.

Wellbeing Benchmark Interviews and Focus Groups

Many thanks to Anita and to colleagues in school for enabling staff to meet with representatives from Health Sheild who we commissioned to carry out a 'Wellbeing Benchmark' exercises. As noted before, the purpose of this is to help identify good practice to be shared across the Trust in the ways we look after one another. It will also help us to identify the most sensible trust wide strategic work to put our time and energy into that can add the most value.

Once we receive the report we will share it with Heads and Governors.

Items from previous bulletin for reference

Attendance

Please see in the actions above a link to a short MS form for schools in the Trust asking about Attendance procedures. The purpose is to check in with you on the changes to attendance legislation and guidance that came into effect in August and how it affects practice in school. Your responses will inform plans for support and activity across the Trust.

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SEND & Inclusion Theory of Change – Overview paper

A reminder that we are asking you to find some time with your SENDCO to look at the SEND and Inclusion paper shared last week. We would welcome your priorities and any other thoughts [here](#) by Fri 27th September, to enable us to get moving with work. This is relevant to all schools in the Trust and those associate schools who want to work with us in this development.

Reference Requests

Now that we have our HR team in place, please arrange that all reference requests (for our staff seeking employment elsewhere) are sent to the HR email address (see the contact sheet shared last week). Your HR Advisor will then contact the school if/where they need information to complete the reference.

In time, as the team become established and we have our HR system in place more of this will be able to be handled with minimal work needed in school. It will help to reduce work in school and will help to ensure consistency of approach across the Trust.

National Tutoring Programme Submission

Just a reminder that your National Tutoring Programme Submission is due to the ESFA by 26th September at 5pm. Please ensure that you have done this before the deadline. I've popped a link to the guidance below:

National Tutoring Programme (NTP) allocations for 2023 to 2024 academic year - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Secondaries with a 6th form

The digital form to report your 16 to 19 tuition fund 2023 to 2024 spend will be available for completion between mid-September and mid-October. To complete the form you will need:

- a DfE Sign-in account
- your UK Provider Reference Number (UKPRN), which can be found by searching the UK Register of Learning Providers (UKRLP)
- your full year spend for the 2023 to 2024 academic year

Check your DfE Sign-in access now, as this will be required to complete the form. If you do not have a DfE Sign-in account, select 'create a DfE Sign-in account' on the DfE Sign-in page.

Failure to submit a return will result in the 100% recovery of your tuition fund allocation, as they will assume that you did not spend it.