

Head Teachers' Bulletin – 22nd November

Upcoming Events

- 26th Nov Senior Leaders' Group 1.30 @ Pastoral Centre
- 9th Dec SEND Network meeting 2pm @ Pastoral Centre
- 31st Jan Science Subject Immersion @ St John Fisher

New Updates (since last bulletin)

Admissions Consultation Meeting – Thus 28th Nov 10-11am @Pastoral Centre

This meeting was arranged to allow us to look together at feedback received during the consultation, in order to consider actions and response. I know that a number of schools have not had any responses at all to consultation. If that is you, while you are of course more than welcome to join the meeting, there is no need for your school to be represented.

If you have had comments or questions which require consideration of a change to your proposed policy, please do come to the meeting so that we can agree the best response and ensure that any response and/or change made by one school does not undermine anything being done or said at another.

The next step for all schools will be to put the proposed policy on the agenda for your LAC in the spring term, along with any feedback received through consultation, so that governors can consider and approve admissions arrangements. To remind you, the policy must have been approved by governors by 28th February and local authorities notified by 15th March.

Business Managers Briefing – Summary

Here is a brief summary of the topics that were covered at the School Business Manager Fortnightly Briefing on Wednesday 20th November.

- New Payroll and HR System – SBMs were asked to keep an eye out this week for an email containing a spreadsheet of information requirements so support the preliminary development work for the new system.
- Finance
 - New Finance Apprentice – Kaleem Sabir was introduced to the SBMs and will be providing transactional support for schools and the shared services finance team.
 - Prepaid Purchase Orders/Invoicing – SBMs were provided with a refresh on the process to be followed to manage prepaid purchase orders/invoices. An upturn in the number of non-compliant incidents was evidenced during October.
 - Management Accounts Meetings – The outline of a meeting schedule was discussed to SBMs. The shared services finance team will be in touch with schools to arrange meetings for the academic year 2024/25.
- Risk Management Survey 2024/25 – SBM were advised to expect an email by Friday 22nd November with a fully completed example of the responses we expect each school to provide via the online link. SBMs were asked to submit their survey no later than Tuesday 26th November and to also

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forward a copy of the completed survey to Anita Bray as a cross check should we receive any non-compliance challenge from the RPA.

Integrated HR and Payroll System – Update

Following on from the start of the project we have now completed the following activities:

- Initial project management meeting
- HR requirements support session
- Payroll requirement support session

We are now pulling together all the information requested by our project consultants via data tables and as such have asked SBMs to provide the following information by 5pm Wednesday 27th November 2024:

- Absences
 - Sickness Absence Reasons
 - General Absence Reasons
 - Lateness Reasons

This information will need to match exactly what is entered into SIMS/Bromcom to ensure successful integration of different system.

- Heads of Department
This information has been requested to identify line management responsibilities in relation to absences, annual leave requests etc. Please note this information has only been requested for secondary schools and a simplified model will be developed for primary schools.

A significant proportion of our time will now be spent on developing the data tables and validating the entries and as such there are unlikely to be any specific project updates until early January when the vast majority of build and testing work will be undertaken. We hope to have completed all the build work for the payroll system by late January providing the opportunity to undertake parallel payroll runs in January, February and March prior to the April go live.

Subject Immersion Days

It is really clear from the subject immersion days held so far that there is a real appetite for further collaboration. We do recognise the current demands on schools in terms of further release for staff, so we need to be sensible about how we facilitate this in at least the short term.

To that end, we have set up email distribution lists and a SharePoint area for both History and Maths subject leads following the immersion days earlier this term. We will be communicating this to subject leads next week. This will facilitate further informal networking and material sharing. We are fortunate that the Maths Hub is already working with the majority of schools – we are therefore also sharing some of the

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feedback following the Maths immersion day with Maths Hub Work Group leads who are working with Trust schools in order to inform the work they are already doing with Trust schools.

Items from previous bulletin for reference

Senior Leaders' Group 26th November

The next meeting of the Senior Leaders' Group will be in the working groups agreed at the last meeting. Senior Leaders' will be having their initial meeting to plan the work that they will be doing across the Trust, looking to build on the way we currently collect pupil and family voice and what we provide to colleagues by way of induction and training around Catholic Life. Colleagues who are part of the Senior Leaders' group will be emailed directly with further information.

Head Teachers Conference

Thank you to everyone at the conference for making it such a powerful time together. I want to thank again, on your behalf, Anita, John, Fiona, Sr Judith and Nick Whittaker for their preparation and leadership of our time together.

We will come back to you to gather your thoughts about cohorts for our Catholic Leadership programme. Please remember too Nick's ask that you take some time to talk to your SENCO (if that isn't you!) about what the graduated approach would look like in your school if everything were as you would want it.

It would be really helpful if you can take 5 to 10 minutes to complete the evaluation form by following the link below. This will help us to understand the impact of the conference to help us to plan our next steps in the things we worked on and to plan for next year's conference.

<https://forms.office.com/e/fgHzJpi9RB>

Subject Immersion days

We are sorry to have to postpone the Computing Subject Immersion day which was scheduled for 4th December. This is due to staffing changes at St Wilfrids. If any school would be interested in hosting this later in the year, please can you let Anita know.

The confirmed dates for the remainder of the year, including the rescheduled Music immersion day are:

| Date | Subject | School |
|----------------------|---------|----------------|
| Friday 31st January | Science | St John Fisher |
| Tuesday 4th February | MFL | Emmaus |
| Wednesday 12th March | DT | St Catherine's |
| Wednesday 19th March | PE | St Marie's |
| Thursday 22nd May | Music | St Mary's |

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| Tuesday 10th June | PSHE | St Theresa's |
| Wednesday 18th June | Geography | St Alban's |
| Wednesday 9th July | Art | St Michael's |

Integrated HR and Payroll System

As you may be aware we recently tendered and awarded a contract for an integrated HR and Payroll solution, the contract was awarded to Every by IRIS. We have now commenced the design and build process for the system and our initial focus will be centred on the design, build and implementation of the payroll function which we hope to have fully operational by the 1st April.

In order to support the design and build process we (*Shared Services Teams - HR, Payroll and Finance*) will be contacting schools as from next week to either provide additional information and/or validate data/information we already hold. We expect the demand on schools to be relatively light touch as we already hold a significant volume of data/information.

We will of course be providing further information and progress updates over the coming few weeks as and we progress with the project.

Compliance Pod

We are continuing to develop our use of the Compliance Pod software and are currently trialling two additional features we have developed:

- Reactive Maintenance/Task Requests
- Accident Report

Primary Picture news

Sarah Eady has kindly shared the latest edition of Primary Picture News. St Ann's has had a fortnightly subscription to this for many years, and recently were approached by the company for feedback while they were developing the prayer aspect of the publication.

They are offering a group discount for our schools - £200 for a 1-year subscription, which is a 33% discount. Please let us know [here](#) if you would be interested in this.

Hallam Bethlehem Ball

The Hallam Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust are running their annual Ball on 23rd November. This is a black-tie dinner and dance with live band '[The Grand Plan](#)'. Please see the website for more information about the charity and for a link with information about the Bethlehem Ball. [Hospice Charity - Bethlehem Care & Hospice Trust](#)

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A number of you have been long time supporters of this great charity both personally and through our schools. Please do promote the event with staff and parents. I hope to see some of you there.