

Head Teachers' Bulletin – 20th December

Upcoming Events

- 8th Jan HR Service briefing and feedback 10am @ Pastoral Centre
- 14th Jan Writing Fundamentals Y5/6 9.15am @ St Catherine's
- 21st Jan Senior Leaders' Development day @Pastoral Centre
- 28th Jan Heads' Forum 8am-12pm @ Pastoral Centre
- 28th Jan Governors Monitoring Catholic Life and Religious Education 6.30pm
- 31st Jan Science Subject Immersion @ St John Fisher
- ~~4th Feb~~ MFL immersion day → rescheduled to 14th March

For this final bulletin of 2024 I want to thank you and all your colleagues for your work over the term. I feel really privileged to be associated with the service and love that goes into the education of children and care between members of staff in the schools you lead. I am excited too by the way things are gathering momentum in our work together as a Trust and I am thankful for your support and commitment in that.

I pray that you and those close to you will have a really joyful and blessed Christmas.

God Bless

Steve

Message from Kev Smith - Chair of St Clare Trust Board

As we approach the fourth Sunday of Advent, it's been great to see social media filled with images of events, services and productions to celebrate Christmas in our schools.

This has been such a long term and the dark winter nights have seemed to stretch into dark days more often than not. It is always a pleasure to see staff, pupils and families giving one last push to make the last week of school special.

On behalf of all the Board and Members of the St Clare Trust, I wish all of our staff, our governors and our families a Happy Christmas and wish you all a restful break before returning for the Jubilee year of 2025.

The Trust is the schools, and the schools are the families, past and present, that make up our communities. May this Jubilee year bring us all a renewed sense of being one family across the world in service of one another.

Thank you for all your work and may God Bless our schools.

Head Teachers' Bulletin – 20th December

Bulletin notes for the start of term

I have set out below the main information related to events and activity at the start of term for you to refer to when we come back after the break.

HR Service Update and Discussion – Wed 8th Jan 10am @ Pastoral Centre

With our HR Advisors approaching the end of their first term in post and with configuration and development of our HR system underway, Alison and I would like to meet with Heads and Business Managers to provide an overview on how the HR service is expected to develop once the system is fully implemented. This meeting will also provide an opportunity for Alison and I to understand your hopes and concerns around the development of the HR service and how it connects to your day-to-day work in school.

The meeting is on Wed 8th January at 10am and will be at the Pastoral Centre. This will be most immediately relevant to schools in the Trust, but all members of the St Clare family are welcome.

Writing Fundamentals: Building a shared understanding of the fundamental aspects of writing

Tuesday 14th January 2025: 9.15am – 12pm @ St Catherine's Catholic Primary School
Year 5 & 6 Development Session: Y5 and Y6 teachers, literacy leads, Key stage leads

Following the sessions with KS1 colleagues last academic year, and Y3/4 colleagues in October, we have created a new Trust assessment framework for writing. The Y1 and Y2 assessment framework has been in place since September 2024 and will be used for moderation across the Trust in this academic year. The Y3/4 framework is now with schools and will be used from September 2025 (with some schools choosing to adopt sooner). The next stage of the writing project is to work with Y5 and Y6 colleagues to share the work done so far and to refine the assessment framework for Y5.

Please note – if you are a literacy lead and attended the KS1 or Y3/Y4 sessions, it is not vital that you attend as it will follow the same format. (If you do want to be involved however, you'll be more than welcome!)
[Please book places here.](#)

Senior Leaders' Development Day

The January Senior Leader Session on Tuesday 21st (not Wednesday 22nd as previously noted) will be a full day. Jonathan Lear will lead a session on Curriculum and Immersion days in the morning, then Nick Whittaker is leading the afternoon session 'Exploring a Balanced System and a robust Graduated Response.' The SEND network group have been invited to join Nicks session at 1.30pm.

Head Teachers' Bulletin – 20th December

Headteacher Report and School Improvement Priority Documentation deadline

Friday 31st January

A reminder that the updated School Improvement Priority documents and Headteacher Reports (reporting on the autumn term) need to be completed by Friday 31st January. The guidance notes shared by John are attached to this bulletin. Please remember to ask Anita if you want any other colleagues to have logins to MATPad.

Any questions at all please let John know.

Subject Immersion Days

We have our Science subject immersion days coming up next half term, Science on Fri 31st Jan. **Please note that the MFL immersion day has been rescheduled to Friday 14th March.**

We will be making contact shortly with all schools who are hosting immersion days for the rest of the academic year to book in planning meetings to prepare for those days. Please look out for contact and thank you in advance for working with colleagues to make these days a real success.

Items from previous bulletin for reference

Monitoring the Catholic Life, RE and Collective Worship as a Governor

You will have seen in the Diocesan RE Newsletter (attached with this bulletin for convenience) that there will be a training session for governors on a new toolkit to help monitoring of Catholic Life, RE and Collective Worship. The session will be at the Pastoral Centre, 6.30-7.30pm on Tue 28th January.

This toolkit has been developed by a group of chairs from our local academy committees, working with Alan Dewhurst. The toolkit materials have been shared with chairs via governor hub, but this training session is designed to help governors make good use of them. Please encourage governors to attend the session, especially if you have a governor (or more than one) with a particular link to RE and Catholic Life.

We will promote the session via our Chairs' network as well, but we want to make sure that we don't miss anyone who would be helped by the session, so your support is much appreciated. We can facilitate remote joining for at least part of the session if there are governors who would like to attend, but can't get there in person, though in person is ideal as it gives better opportunity for networking and discussion.

I also highlight the other Diocesan events featured in the newsletter, to make sure that opportunities are not missed:

- Monday 27 January: Catholic formation day for Early Career Teachers. 9.30am-3.30pm
- Tuesday 4 February: RE Coordinators' Day. 9.30am-3.30pm
- Wednesday 26 March: Prayer and Liturgy Conference. 9.30am-3.30pm: New York Stadium, Rotherham.

Head Teachers' Bulletin – 20th December

I particularly urge you to book onto and promote the Prayer and Liturgy Conference on 26 March.

South Yorkshire Bus Consultation (shared on behalf of Notre Dame)

As you may be aware there is a public consultation open until the 15th January about a bus franchising proposal. The proposal would give the Mayor authority to set bus routes and timetables, control fares etc. in order to improve bus services.

Many families rely on public transport to enable their children to access a Catholic education. The Trust and Notre Dame are therefore responding in support of the proposal, and are encouraging our parents and students to do the same. The more people who make a case for improved school bus services, the better. With this in mind, we would be grateful if Headteachers of Notre Dame feeder schools could send out the attached letter to parents, encouraging them to respond to the consultation.

Writing Moderation

Coming up next term, we will have our writing moderation days. These are scheduled as follows:

F2/Y1/Y2 - Thus 13th February

Y3/Y4 – Thus 27th February

Y5/Y6 – Thus 13th March

This year we will host all the moderation days at the Pastoral Centre. All events will run from 2.30 – 4.00pm. Jonathan Lear will be running the first two days and this will be part of the writing fundamentals development. Claire Round will run the Y5/Y6 event.

Please make sure that these dates are in your school diary. Please also complete the quick form at the link below to indicate who you expect to send to moderation this year. This will help us to plan logistics.

<https://forms.office.com/e/JxJ6sEVdia>

Heads' Forum – Tue 28th January

This Heads' Forum is currently noted in the Trust Calendar as being focused on School Improvement Capacity Self-Evaluation. John, Fiona and I have decided that it would be helpful to change the focus of this meeting to give us more time to update you more broadly on work across the Trust and to get your feedback in order to inform future priorities and development. The date and time will be as already planned in your calendar, this is just advance notice that there will be a change of focus for the meeting.

Aspiring Leaders Programme

The St Clare CMAT Aspiring Leaders programme is designed to help senior leaders prepare for Catholic headship by focusing on both leadership skills and mission-driven values. Over six sessions led by experts, participants will engage in reflective learning, address real-world challenges, and complete a school improvement project aligned with Trust priorities. Mentoring and support for headship applications are also provided.

A flyer with more details was sent with the bulletin—please share it with Catholic teachers who may be interested.



Head Teachers' Bulletin – 20th December