

Head Teachers' Bulletin – 6th December

Upcoming Events

- 9th Dec SEND Network meeting 2pm @ Pastoral Centre
- 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
- 31st Jan Science Subject Immersion @ St John Fisher

Actions from this bulletin

Writing Moderation - Please complete the quick form at [this link](#) to indicate who will be attending writing moderation from your school

Subject Immersion Days – Schools who are hosting days in the remainder of the year – look out for contact from John and Jonathan to arrange planning meetings.

New Updates (since last bulletin)

Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus, send your Spirit upon us afresh that we may truly be Advent people. Give us the grace to be watchful and vigilant, our heads held high as we give glory to your name. You are Wonderful Counsellor, Prince of Peace! May we be ready to welcome your bright presence. May we be signs in our own lives and neighbourhoods of the triumph of love. Touch our hearts that in union with you we may be able to offer a kindly word and a welcoming smile to everyone we meet. Teach us that Advent is a season for listening, an opportunity for change, a graced time for growing in love. Help us return to you with all our hearts. Now and forever.

And at this time, when the season reminds us to look to the Hope of Christ in the darkness, we pray together for eternal rest for Sue Smith and for consolation for her family and the St Pius school community in their time of darkness.

Amen.

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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>

Subject Immersion Days

We also have our Science and MFL subject immersion days coming up next half term, Science on Fri 31st Jan and MFL on Tuesday 4th February.

We will also 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.

MATPad

A reminder that the date for the submission of your **Spring Term Headteacher Report to the LAC Reporting on Autumn Term 2024** is **Friday 31st January**.

I am pleased to report that MATPad have made a number of improvements to the process for the completion of these – not least of which is that there is no longer a data spreadsheet that needs to be completed in advance. This will hopefully make the process quicker and more straightforward.

Alongside the Headteachers report, we will also be asking you to update your School Improvement Priority Documents on MATPad. There have been further developments on the MATPad platform to make this as straightforward as possible for you. To support with this, Anita will be transferring the contents of your School Improvement Priority Documents from your last Headteacher report onto MATPad so that we are minimising work for you.

In order to go through the improvements to the process of completing the Headteachers report, and also the process of completing the School Improvement Priority Documents on MATPad I am running 3 drop in sessions on Teams. If for any reason you are **not** able to attend any of these please let Anita know so that I can arrange an alternative time to go through this with you.

Weds 11th Dec 9.30am

[Join the meeting now](#)

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Meeting ID: 323 158 015 607

Passcode: s6U5RJ7y

Fri 13th Dec 2.00pm

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 316 164 242 407

Passcode: iN7XB3RL

Tues 17th Dec 9.30am

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 399 289 995 396

Passcode: ze6rA7x9

Business Managers Briefing – Summary

Here is a brief summary of the topics that were covered at the School Business Manager Fortnightly Briefing on Wednesday 4th December.

A refresh of the process for Prepayments on IRIS was given, with a supporting guidance document. There is a considerable amount on the Aged Debtors report and the Shared Services finance team will work with Business Managers to reduce this. Business Managers were reminded of the process for Invoice Matcher and that it is checked regularly. A reminder that MultiPay Card reconciliations are due, and a reminder to send the data requested by Kim Bond for the new Payroll System

Cyber Security Training

We identified the need for cyber security training as part of our progression towards a secure IT infrastructure/network. Subsequently, we sourced relevant training and released this to key individuals within schools (SBMs) for onward distribute to all staff.

A recent report shows that there are a considerable number of staff who have not completed this training. School Business Managers have been asked follow this up in their schools.

Items from previous bulletin for reference

HR Service Update and Discussion – Wed 8th Jan 10am (TBC)

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 her team 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, Steven and Tom to understand hopes and concerns around the development of the HR service and how it connects to your day-to-day work in school.

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The date and time is to be confirmed, but for now, please put a save the date in your diary for Wednesday 8th Jan. The meeting will start 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.

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.

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.

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.

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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.](#)

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.

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

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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 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.

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.