

Head Teachers' Bulletin 12th September– 2025

Upcoming Events

15th Sept – SEND network

15th – 26th Sept – School Improvement Visits

23rd Sept – Heads' Forum

24th Sept – Senior Leader network 1.30 @ Pastoral Centre

26th Sept – Trust Choir Workshop 10-2 @St Marie's Cathedral

29th Sept – Aspiring Leaders

1st Oct – Curriculum Working Group 9.15-12 @ Pastoral Centre

2nd Oct – Heads and Deputies session with Jes 8-12 @St Catherine's

8th Oct – Geography Subject Immersion

15th Oct - Curriculum Working Group 9.15-12 @ St Catherine's

17th Oct – Trust Mass 10am @ St Marie's Cathedral

24th Oct – PHSE Subject Immersion

Actions from this bulletin

Actions from previous bulletin

- Book on to the Curriculum Characteristics of Excellence sessions [here](#)
- Book places on the SEND training (links on attached form)
- Complete the Trust Mass Microsoft Form

New Updates (since last bulletin)

Trust Mass and Choir Rehearsal – Please complete the form

Thank you to everyone who has completed the microsoft form to let us know who is coming to the Trust Mass. The form also asks for details of children who want to be part of the choir and whether or not they will be able to attend the Choir Rehearsal on 26th September.

A few Trust schools have not responded yet. It will be really helpful to get an understanding of numbers as soon as possible. We will also be able to get details of the choir rehearsal day out direct to schools who plan to send children, but we can only finalise and send the arrangements once we know final numbers.

If you can't find the link to the MS Form, or if there is someone else in school that you would like it to go to, please let Anita know. For information, it has taken people an average of 4 mins to complete the forms.

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Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust Appeal

The Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust is a Diocese of Hallam charity supporting palliative care in Bethlehem. Many schools in the Trust have supported this charity over the years.

Joe McNally spoke to us at the Heads & Chairs meeting this week, explaining the desperate situation in Bethlehem at the moment and the challenge of raising the funds that are needed. In order to try to boost the fundraising, they hope to make the 1st December a day focused on Bethlehem across as many schools as possible, with the aim of boosting fund raising and awareness. It would be great if we could support this across the family of schools.

The charity can provide fund raising materials, support for assemblies, etc. We would also want to coordinate the gathering and payment of any funds raised.

As a first practical step, if you can support this appeal, please could you identify a member of staff to be a point of contact for this appeal that we can liaise with directly to plan. Please send the name and email of the contact person to Anita.

Appraisal Support Materials

A reminder that there has been significant change to the Pay, Appraisal and Capability policies. These changes have only formalised what we did last year, with incremental progression now being automatic (not linked to appraisal), freeing up the appraisal process to be based on the work we have done with Jes.

We have put together some guidance materials setting out what has changed in practice. The guidance includes a template Appraisal Record form and a template UPS application form that you can use if your current forms/systems don't work with the changed policy. It also includes some materials you can use with any other colleagues who are appraisers in your school; A PowerPoint/video that explains the key changes along with the handouts that Jes gave us which explain the High Performance Triangle and Worthy Goals. These materials are in a SharePoint folder. Anita has sent all Trust Heads a link to this folder and will re-send the link following this bulletin in case you can't find it.

Autumn Term School Improvement Visits

John and Fiona have dates arranged with all schools to complete School Improvement visit one in the Autumn Term, the focus of this visit is outcomes, school self-evaluation (SEF and CSED) and 25/26 School Improvement Priorities. Please find the format for SIP visit 1 attached to this week's Bulletin. Any question, please just email either John or Fiona.

Early Career Programme – Visiting Fellows Opportunity

As you are aware, St Clare Trust acts as a delivery partner for the Ambition Institute Early Career Programme.

The Ambition Institute ECF programme is delivered through a combination of face-face conferences and online clinics, along with in school support from mentors and Induction Tutors.

The Ambition Institute have approached us to ask us to work with a larger group of schools. We are in discussion with them about this as the Trust would benefit from the economies of scale and additional income this would bring.

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We have a small number of colleagues within the Trust who have been developed as 'Visiting Fellows' and who deliver aspects of the Ambition Institute Early Career programme such as the face-face conferences, clinics, and coaching of the ECT mentors. We are likely to need to expand this team as a result of working with a larger number of schools. Training is provided, as are high quality training materials developed by the Ambition Institute. Payment is made to schools for releasing staff to undertake this work. If there is anyone in your school who may be interested in this opportunity please contact Jen Benzies jbENZIES@notredame-high.co.uk in the first instance.

Work experience

As part of our statutory requirement to provide meaningful encounters with employers and employees, our secondary schools coordinate work experience opportunities for pupils. Work experience was one of those things that got hit by COVID and is only just being meaningfully re-instated, albeit with the additional challenge that so many people now work from home.

Our secondaries ask pupils to use contacts they may already have to source work experience placements and also do what they can to assist those with less social capital to find placements.

To support this, our secondaries will share lists of potential companies/employers for students to contact.

It would be really helpful if you could respond to Anita indicating whether you would be happy for students/schools to contact you in regards to work experience placements, and if so, which weeks.

It might be that you would be particularly interested in welcoming back a former pupil or a Y10 or Y12 pupil who is interested in teaching or child care as a career.

Noted below are the weeks that work experience is planned for Notre Dame, we will add the other Trust School dates as we get these.

22/6 , Notre Dame Y12 pupils (full week)

29/6 , Notre Dame Y10 pupils (full week)

Thank you

Maths Curriculum – visit request

St Thomas More are currently in the process of reviewing their maths curriculum and would be interested in visiting a couple of schools that don't use Ark materials. If any Heads could accommodate a visit for a couple of hours (to look at what you use and discuss the pros/cons) please pass a message on via Anita.

SEND Training

At the end of last academic year the SEND Network organised a number of training opportunities for staff, we made a commitment to training as many members of staff in key areas of SEND over the year but also on an ongoing basis. There was lots of discussion about the timing of training as we are acutely aware of

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the challenges of releasing staff to attend CPD. AS you will see the sessions mentioned below are after school. We have attached the SEND Training Plan as a reminder of the opportunities we have on offer this year.

For Teaching Assistants

As you all know we have booked SEND TA Training and the first date is 18th September (next Thursday) at Learn Sheffield for anyone who doesn't know the address is Suite 6, Albion House, Savile St, Sheffield S4 7UD, there is parking at the back of the building.

For SENCOs and Class Teachers

We have booked a number of training opportunities with the Sheffield Autism Service (ASCETS) and the first of these sessions is also on Thursday 18th September at Hallam Pastoral Centre. This session will be repeats on 23rd April 26. These sessions are aimed at SENCOs and Class teachers.

Please book places via the links on the attached SEND training plan

Writing Subject Network meeting: 5th November 2025: 3.45pm – 4.45pm (online)

The subject network meeting is for any literacy lead or teachers interested in developing writing in their school.

Following on from the writing fundamentals work and the Trust subject immersion days, we are re-establishing the subject leader networks to ensure that we can continue the work we have started across the Trust.

The writing network meetings will be hosted and led by Claire Round. The first meeting in November will be an opportunity for literacy leads to discuss the implementation of the new Trust assessment framework

Items from previous bulletin for reference

Heads' Briefing on 22nd September cancelled

Please note that we have had to cancel the virtual Heads' Briefing on 22nd September as John, Fiona and I will all be involved in some work developing Trust website and recruitment materials that morning. Given that we have Head's Forum the following day we thought it would make sense to cancel.

Art Subject Immersion

The Art Subject Immersion session is at Notre Dame school on Monday 8th December.

Preparation for new OFSTED framework

As part of our deployment of Learn Sheffield LSIP days for 25/26 we have provisionally booked the following dates to support with preparation for the new framework. We are all at different points in the cycle, but we will all need to understand the new framework and adapt self-evaluation and evidence

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gathering processes for the new framework. These days will be an opportunity to work together on this, supported by Learn Sheffield School Improvement Partners.

Primary Phase: 19th January

Secondary Phase: 19th November

Please pencil these dates in your diaries.

As previously shared, following discussion during the school improvement visits in September, we will allocate the remaining bulk of our Learn Sheffield Improvement Partner days.

Curriculum working group

Session 1: 1st October 2025: 9.15am – 12pm @ Pastoral Centre

Session 2: 15th October 2025: 9.15am – 12pm @ St Catherine's Catholic Primary School*

Suitable for: Curriculum leads, Senior leaders: EYFS, KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4, KS5

Following the successful Quality First Teaching sessions in the summer term, these sessions aim to continue with the Trust work of establishing 'characteristics of excellence' across key areas of our practice. The sessions are an opportunity for your school to be involved in research led discussions leading to the development of shared curriculum principles that ensure every child reaches their potential.

*Please note, you or a colleague would need to attend both sessions.

Please book on to these sessions [here](#).

Reading Lead Network.

Here are the dates for the Reading Lead Network. The Network will focus on phonics in the first instance but this work will develop to cover reading post phonics.

Tues 30th Sept 2-3:30pm

Tues 9th Dec 2-3:30pm

Tues 3rd Feb 2-3:30pm

Tues 23rd June 2-3:30pm

Headteacher report and School Improvement Documents

I know many of you will have already started working on your school improvement planning for next academic year, and that you will want to get going with your headteacher report on your return.

The school improvement handbook is also attached to the bulletin to refer to. The following additional information hopefully answers/clarifies any questions you may have, although if it doesn't, please just drop Fiona or I a message and we'll get back to you.

24/25 School Improvement Priority Documents.

These need the term 3 evaluation completing by Friday 26th September. You will include these on your LAC agenda in the autumn.

25/26 School Improvement Priority Documents.

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I have attached a blank word template to the bulletin as I know that some of you prefer to collaborate on a word document before uploading to MATPad.

There will be a '25/26 School Improvement Priority' option on MATPad by the start of September to populate. Again, this needs to be completed by Friday 26th September, and will be included on your autumn term LAC agenda.

Headteacher Report, reporting on the summer term

The template will be live on MATPad for the 1st September, with a deadline of Friday 26th September. Again, to support Associate Members who are wanting to use the Trust format for the report (and those who prefer to collaborate on a word document prior to submitting on MATPad), I have attached a word template for the Headteacher Report.

The various highlighted text in the template works as follows:

You enter information here, you would replace this with your response/commentary

Guidance as to what information is required, you would delete this before sharing with your LAC.

To be updated depending on the time of year, you would update these headings for each report

Dependent on school, you would remove either 'Christian' or 'Catholic' depending on the school.

Obviously the word template doesn't pull through any of the data from your Management Information System.

For Trust schools, when you run the Headteacher report within MATPad in September, you will notice that the data that is pulled through from the MIS (and also pulled through from previous headteacher reports) is displayed slightly differently than in the word template. We think that this will be a big improvement in terms of supporting interpretation of the data, in particular seeing patterns over time and in making comparisons to local and national data.

For Associate schools who are using the word template, you will obviously need to self-populate all of the data in the template for the time-being, and we will be able to migrate you to MATPad later.