

Head Teachers' Bulletin 5th September– 2025

Upcoming Events

- 10th Sept – Heads and Chairs meeting 6.00pm @ Pastoral Centre
11 Sept - DSL's network 1.30 @ Pastoral Centre
12th Sept – Trust RWI Day 1 for Reading Leads and Heads* @Pastoral Centre
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

*For primary schools currently in/supported by the Trust only

Actions from this bulletin

Actions from previous bulletin

- Book on to the Curriculum Characteristics of Excellence sessions here

New Updates (since last bulletin)

Trust Mass/Choir

We have sent out information about plans for this years' Trust Mass, along with a link to a form for each school to complete. It is really helpful if you can get a response back to us from your school as soon as possible.

Numbers were tight in the Cathedral last year, so the earlier we have a picture of expected numbers the better for planning. Likewise, we would also love to gather as many children as possible who want to be part of the choir for a rehearsal day on 26th September. If you can support this, it would again be helpful to know as soon as possible for planning purposes. The rehearsal will be at the Cathedral.

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Heads & Chairs Meeting

It is our annual Heads and Chairs meeting next Wednesday, 10th September. Kev, Adnan, John, Fiona and I will be there to set the scene for the year ahead and it would be great to see and hear from all Heads and Chairs. Anita has sent out a message checking on attendance. Fr Chris has also offered to celebrate mass at 5.30pm at St Charles (next to the Pastoral Centre). Again, it is really helpful to know numbers for planning.

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.

Leadership Development Day

Jes Smith has been able to confirm that he will be back in the country again in the Autumn and is able to offer another leadership development session on the morning of Thus 2nd October. Please put that as a hold in your diary.

The session will be open to Heads and Deputies as before and will build on the previous work. This one will focus on coaching and will tie in well with the revised Appraisal Policy.

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 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.

SEND Teaching Assistant Training

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In the summer term we circulated our SEND Training Plan for 25/26. Below are Eventbrite links for booking. Please note the first session is on Thursday 18th September. Our SEND Network would really like all of our schools to commit to ensuring that our Teaching Assistants are offered the opportunity to attend both sets of training in time but obviously not all this year! We intend to repeat and develop this training over time.

SEND and the role of the Teaching Assistant

Advancing SEND Knowledge and Skills for Teaching Assistants

These sessions are for our Trust Schools, Learn Sheffield have sorted the training space and have set up the Eventbrite just to help us!

Reminder - New Early Career Teachers Starting in September

As of Monday 16th June, schools will be invited by the DfE in batches to register new participants on the ECF teacher portal - [DfE portal Manage training for early career teachers \(education.gov.uk\)](https://education.gov.uk). To ensure a smooth registration process, please note that for the Training provider section, **the Lead provider is Ambition Institute, and the Delivery Partner is Diocese of Hallam**. Please contact Jen Benzies jbenzies@notredame-high.co.uk if you have any questions at all about this process

Reading Lead Network

Here are the dates for the Reading Lead Network (for schools currently in, and not yet in, the Trust). The Network will focus on phonics in the first instance but this work will develop to cover reading post phonics.

The sessions will be held at the Pastoral Centre.

Tues 30th Sept 2-4pm

Tues 9th Dec 2-4pm

Tues 3rd Feb 2-4pm

Tues 23rd June 2-4pm

Items from previous bulletin for reference

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

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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.

Safeguarding Training for start of term

We have published the resources on the DSL's SharePoint for start of term Safeguarding training. All DSLs have been sent the link directly. If anyone is having difficulty accessing the resources, please let Steve know.

Thank you

Finally for this academic year, I want to say thank you to each of you for your service and support through the year. Many of you have faced challenges greater than any you have seen and all of you have rallied in support in those times.

You are all in my prayers as we head into the summer break. I hope that you and your colleagues who have a break in the coming weeks are able to rest and be refreshed and renewed.

God Bless

Steve

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.

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.

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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.

Secondary Careers Education Service (CES) Peer Review

Thank you to colleagues from the three secondaries who attended this on Wednesday. Everyone left with a really good understanding of careers provision across the Trust and the opportunities for further collaboration. What was brilliant was that each school was able to offer experiences and perspectives to the others, and take away the same. It was also really obvious that we are building from a place of strength with careers provision across our schools. Following the peer review each careers lead will receive a series of recommendations from the CES which will form the basis of work between the Careers Leads and the CES during the next year. The CES have also offered to lead further collaborative work in the future which we are keen to take advantage of.

Head Teachers' Conference 13th and 14th November 2025

Just an early reminder to make sure you have the Heads' Conference dates in your diary. We will be in York as in previous years and we will be checking who is coming and who is staying at the hotel before the end of term.

As always, a theme for the conference is your development and nurture as leaders of distinctive Catholic Christian schools and this year we will be connecting to our priority around tending to Trust culture.