

Head Teachers' Bulletin 14th November– 2025

Upcoming Events

19th Nov – OFSTED Prep for Snr Leaders of secondaries @Pastoral Centre

20th Nov – DSL Network meeting 1.30 @Pastoral Centre (12.30 for lunch)

24th Nov - Subject Leader Guidance Booklet online session 3.30pm

25th Nov – Senior Leader Network 1.30-3.30 @Pastoral Centre

26th Nov – RWI Day 2 for schools on the Trust Package @Pastoral Centre

1st Dec – DSL Sub Committee 1-4pm @Pastoral Centre

1st Dec – SEND Network 2-4pm @Pastoral Centre

Actions from this bulletin

Secondary Schools please **respond here** with who will attend the OFSTED Prep from your school.

Heads of schools currently in the trust complete the **expression of interest form** for workshops for the Trust Inset day. (Attachment sent with bulletin has full details).

Actions from previous bulletin

Let Anita know who from your school will attend the Art Subject Immersion Day at Notre Dame on 8th December.

Please complete this FORM with the names of colleagues for the Senior Leader Programme.

Reserve places on the RWInc training here.

New Updates (since last bulletin)

For Heads Currently in the Trust

Steve sent email requesting feedback for the Directors with your views on the 5-year goals, strategic trust development etc. There was a link to a form to complete. Just a reminder that the Board meet next week, so you are asked to please complete the form by close of play Monday.

Aspiring Leaders

Thank you for supporting attendance on the final full day for our Aspiring Leaders. The focus was on accountability. Given our work on the characteristics of excellence for leadership, you may be interested in the definition they came up with for productive and healthy accountability in schools:

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Accountability is a collaborative, transparent, and integrity-driven process in which individuals or groups are held responsible for their actions through honest dialogue, ethical decision-making, and a commitment to fairness. It fosters effective practice and outcomes, guided by principled philosophies and a moral compass to serve the community.

Also, one great personal reflection on what their learning was from the day:

That as a head you are accountable for a lot!! But, you are supported....curiosity and improvement, not judgement.

Feedback on this programme has been very positive, and we'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to the design and delivery, to mentoring and in supporting attendance. It is a really important piece of work to help ensure a pool of future headteachers who are excited about the prospect of applying for a headship within our Trust. The Aspiring Leaders have really valued the support they have received.

The final component of the programme will be presentations around their school improvement projects and learning. We will hold these during w/b 22nd June. The format will be panels of 3 mentors, hearing 20-minute presentations from their 3 mentees. Anita will send round a request for availability - and we will organise this around availability in order to minimise disruption.

Secondary OFSTED Preparation Day

This is on 19th November 9.00-3.30 pm at the Pastoral Centre.

The purpose of this day is three-fold:

1. To give headteachers and senior leaders a better understanding of the new inspection framework and how inspections will run.
2. To give headteachers and senior leaders time to engage with some self-evaluation activity against the new framework.
3. To give headteachers time with Helen Lane to plan in-school activity for LSIP days on 25th Nov (NDHS), 26th Nov (HT), 28th Nov (AS).

The morning will be spent together on item 1, and the afternoon on items 2 and 3. Lunch will be provided. We understand that schools will be limited in the number of colleagues that can be out of school at the same time, but it would be really helpful for at least one other colleague to attend with the headteacher.

Please could you respond here to let Anita know who will be attending from each school .

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If there are particular school constraints (e.g. staff meetings/parents evenings etc) that would be helpful to work around when we are ordering individual time with Helen on item 3, please can you let Anita know in your response.

Items from previous bulletin

Secondary Phase – Equal Ambition

Please see the attached document in relation to some shared work to ensure equal ambition and expectation across our three secondaries.

We will be running an initial exploratory meeting this half term – I'd be grateful if you can complete this **FORM by Friday 14th Nov** to indicate which time slots you would be able to make appropriate colleagues available for an initial online meeting. This is likely to include the senior leader who leads on progress/data for KS4 and/or KS5. Having the data manager able to attend would also be helpful.

Optional Online Session: Introducing the New Subject Leader Guidance Booklet

We're pleased to invite Headteachers to an optional online session on **Monday 24th November at 3:30pm**. This short session will introduce the **Subject Leader Guidance Booklet**, designed to support staff who are new to the role of Subject Leader.

The session will provide an overview of how to use the booklet effectively, key features, and ideas for supporting colleagues as they develop in their leadership roles.

Date: Monday 24th November

Time: 3:30pm (online)

Audience: Headteachers and colleagues supporting new Subject Leaders

The **Subject Leader Guidance Booklet** will be shared in advance of the meeting to allow colleagues to prepare any questions.

Art Subject Immersion – 8th December

Notre Dame are leading the Art Subject Immersion session on Monday 8th December. For planning, we need an idea of numbers. Please let Anita know who will attend from your school.

Read Write Inc Face to Face Training

We have secured training dates for two days of face-face RWInc Phonics Training.

This training is for staff in your schools who are teaching RWInc, but have not had face-face training from a RWInc trainer.

Dates are below and further details will be sent out nearer the time. The training days will take place at St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

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8th January - St Clare's Trust RWI training day 1 - full day (speed sound lesson)

27th March - St Clare's Trust RWI training day 2 - full day (storybook lesson)

Senior Leaders

Please see the attached document setting out the programme for senior leaders for 25/26. This is aimed at senior leaders across all Trust schools and Associate Schools. Please complete this FORM by 21st November to register interest from any senior colleagues in your school

Secondary Careers Network

Secondary Careers Leads had a second really productive session yesterday, facilitated by the Careers Education Service. This is a great example of a network of colleagues across our schools that has 'come to life' as a result of opportunities to network and talk about shared challenges. This group has committed to aim to continue to meet termly, with an initial focus on what is a shared challenge of meeting Gatsby Benchmark 6 through the provision of meaningful modern work experience opportunities.

Sickness and Leave of Absence

As you may remember following a period of consultation, we provided a standardised list of sickness reasons. Schools were asked to embed this information into their respective systems and use going forward. We would now like to start reporting on this information providing analysis and comparative data. In order to support schools to extract the raw data, we have designed a SIMS report which will be made available to all schools next week. The report takes less than a minute to run and the output will need to be uploaded to each school's respective SharePoint HR File Exchange.

Key points:

- An alternative arrangement is in place for our non-SIMS school.
- There are no GDPR concerns as the information will be strictly controlled and data will be presented at summary level for comparison purposes.

We will also be starting a similar exercise in regard to Leave of Absence (LOA) standardisation, an initial list will be made available next week for colleagues to review and comment upon.

Revised Annual Budget

We have been making structural amendments to your 2025/26 original budgets to reflect the following:

- UPS progression
- LGPS Employer Contribution

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The revised (original) budget will be uploaded into IRIS next week and will be incorporated into your October management reports.

In regard to ongoing budget adjustment to the Master Budget, we have developed a budget amendment tracking document. Details will be provided to SBM/Finance colleagues or directly discussed with Head Teachers.

Please note that changes to the Master Budget should typically maintain the agreed budget position or improve upon it. No changes will be permitted unless they are recorded and agreed in advance. Further details will be provided next week.

e-Procurement - Amazon

We will be extending our trial of the Amazon e-procurement punchout facility to a larger number of schools (relevant school have already been contacted). This facility will ensure orders are raised in IRIS Purchasing and approved prior to being passed to Amazon for processing. Our aim here is to provide improved clarity and accountability, while trying to release process efficiencies. If successful we hope to roll out the facility to all schools by the Easter term.

Lloyds MultiPay Cards

Each year we review card usage in terms of frequency, volume and value of purchases made during the course of the prior academic year.

We have identified a number of cardholders where we feel their usage no longer substantiates the need for a MultiPay card. Therefore, we will shortly start to contact colleagues informing them of our decision. Headteachers will be copied into these communications for reference and/or should you wish to appeal the decision.

Change of date for 'The importance of early maths' - 19th November 4 - 5pm

Vicki John-Lewis has let us know that this DfE event has changed date (from 12th to the 19th)

This webinar will cover:

- The importance of early maths to the life chances of young people.
- Approaches to teaching early maths and supporting children to meet their early learning goals.
- Overview of early maths in the Early Learning Goals, and a review of the evidence and tools that school leaders should be aware of.

Who should attend?

This webinar is specifically designed for multi-academy trust CEOs or deputies, school leaders and senior leaders in local authorities and dioceses. The session will be recorded and made available for those unable to take part in the live event.

Book your place

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UPS applications and pay progression

This is a reminder of two things in relation to UPS progression.

First is that Heads of all Trust schools should send Steve any applications that you have received for progression to UPS, along with your recommendation. He will review these for consistency and then get back to you to confirm the decision. Thank you to everyone who has already sent recommendations.

Second, a reminder that all teachers who are on UP1 or UP2, who under the previous policy wouldn't have been eligible for progression until next year, will be automatically progressed in line with our new policy. If there are any individual cases where there may be a different agreed approach, please make sure that you have let Steve know about this, so that he can ensure that colleagues in payroll and HR are aware.