

Head Teachers' Bulletin 12th December – 2025

Upcoming Events

7th Jan – OFSTED Preparation session for primaries @Pastoral Centre

13th Jan – TA Advanced Training Session 1 @Learn Sheffield 3.45-5.45

22nd Jan – Trust Choir Workshop @ St Marie's Cathedral

Actions from this bulletin

Actions from previous bulletin

- Book places on the writing moderation sessions

New Updates (since last bulletin)

A message from Helen Simmerson

Dear Colleagues

I have decided to bring forward my retirement plans and will now retire at the end of April 2026. I will not be returning to Emmaus in an official capacity.

I want to thank you all for all the support you have given me over the years.

God bless

Helen Simmerson

Art Immersion Day

This was held on Monday, and was the first fully cross-phase immersion day that we have run. There was such a lot of valuable discussion/awareness raising/appreciation of the challenges/opportunities/constraints within each phase of education and it was genuinely uplifting to hear colleagues discussing ways in which, by working cross-phase, we can improve the overall student experience, and make better and more productive use of curriculum time.

There are some key avenues coming out of this to explore for future collaboration. In particular, there seems to be an appetite for creating a shared understanding of the 'big ideas' in art across our schools. This would provide real coherence to the art curriculum across all phases (without prescribing the particular curriculums to be taught) and support all staff to confidently place emphasis on the aspects of their art curriculum that matter the most (i.e. the big ideas).

Some of these big ideas may naturally lead to a formalisation of some key bits of non-negotiable knowledge/skills that may be set as foundational knowledge for all primary students to acquire by the end of Y6.

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We also discussed the idea of students in Y6 putting together a portfolio of 'their best work' across subjects, including Art, that travels to secondary school with them and becomes part of the way that we support successful transition.

We will pick this work up after the Trust INSET.

Thank you to colleagues at Notre Dame for hosting this.

St Clare Singers Rehearsal Day – 22nd January 10.30 – 2.15 at St Marie's Cathedral

On 22nd January, we will be running another rehearsal day for the St Clare Singers (choir). This will run on the same format that worked so well in preparation for the Trust Mass.

This rehearsal day serves a few purposes. First, it is about building on the start we have made in giving opportunities for children across our schools to sing together. Second, the singers will be working on a contribution to the opening liturgy for our Trust INSET day. We also have our eyes to a potential event in the summer term - more about that in the new year.

We want to know if you have pupils who want to be part of the St Clare singers, if you are able to enable them to get to the rehearsal on 22nd January and also if any of those children or young people would be able to attend All Saints in person on the Trust INSET day to sing as part of the opening liturgy. We have a plan B if it is difficult for pupils to get to All Saints on the INSET, but we would love to find a way to have as many pupils there in person on the day.

Please complete the form to book places at the rehearsal, let us know if you have pupils who can sing at the INSET and also let us know if you have pupils who want to be involved, but for whom there are practical challenges.

Trust INSET day

Plans are coming together well for our Trust INSET day. Thanks to all the schools who have put forward people to lead workshops.

We will be in touch with those people this week to brief them on next steps.

When we come back in the new year, there will be a few asks of you as Headteachers.

We need your help identifying any members of staff who have different working patterns and those who do not work full-time. We want to ensure that every member of staff knows that they are invited and welcome and we will need to understand if there are any colleagues who won't be joining us on the day.

We also want to check in with you about transport for the day as parking at All Saints is very limited so we want to avoid staff trying to park at the school.

Information will come out to you on all of this early in the new year and we will be asking you to help coordinate things at your school.

Finally, I just to remind everyone that the day is planned around the schools that are already in the Trust.

This is largely around capacity and logistics for this first Trust wide training day. We hope to be able to open some slots for schools in the wider St Clare family to be able to attend – we'd love to have everyone there

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and look forward to when that can happen. For schools who are not yet in the Trust, but who are hoping to have some colleagues attend the Trust training day, please do get in touch so that we can see what we can do and so that you can plan accordingly.

Centralised Services Availability

Please note that there will be a very limited service offer available from centralised services after Friday 19th December 2025 until Monday 5th January 2026. Any requests submitted via email or helpdesk (IT) which cannot be resolved during this period will be addressed upon our return in the New Year.

Supplier/3rd Party Payments and Banking

The final BACS payment for the year will be processed on Wednesday 17th December, remittance advice notes will be issued on 18th and payments will credit supplier/3rd party bank accounts on 19th December. Please note we will not be able to process any other form of payment after the 19th December until the next BACS payment run which will be processed on Wednesday 7th January 2026

If you have any cash/cheques please ensure these are banked and details passed onto the central finance team prior to the last day of term.

Charging and Remissions and Expenses Policies

New policies relating to Charging and Remissions and Expenses have been developed and will be shared with schools early in the New Year. Guidance material and support will be provided to ensure the policies are clearly understood and appropriately implemented.

School Condition Allocation (SCA) Funding

Details for the 2025/26 SCA application cycle and assessment criteria will be made available early January. We will also be scheduling a workshop to provide advice and guidance on the application process and the level of details required in order to effectively assess applications submitted. Further details will be provided upon our return in the New Year.

Items from previous bulletin

Writing Moderation – looking ahead

This is a reminder that our writing moderation dates will be coming up after our return from the Christmas break. The dates are as follows:

Foundation/Y1/Y2 - Thursday 12th Feb

Y3/Y4 - Thursday 26th Feb

Y5/Y6 - Thursday 12th Mar

All of the moderation sessions will be hosted at the Pastoral Centre and will run from 2.30-4.00pm

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Headteacher Reports

John will be circulating guidance during the final week of term in relation to completion of the headteacher report for the autumn term. The deadline for submission is not until Friday 30th January.

The format of the report is virtually identical to the most recent report that you completed. The only change will be the addition of data entry fields for nursery numbers.

Support for new leadership of teaching for mastery - Hallam Pastoral Centre

Vicki John Lewis has shared the dates below. This is a three-part programme and places can be booked at this link.

21st January 9 - 12

26th March 9 - 12

30th June 9 - 12

Equal Ambition - target setting in the **secondary** phase

Thank you for your responses in relation to availability of key staff. Based on the availability of colleagues, we will meet online 2.00 - 3.30pm on Friday 12th December.

Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust

You will remember from the Heads' and Chairs' meeting at the start of term, Joe McNally spoke to us about the Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust, a Hallam Diocesan charity that many of you have supported in the past. Like many charities, they are finding it really tough to raise the money they need to provide palliative care in Bethlehem. Joe asked if schools across our St Clare family would consider an own clothes day, or other similar fundraising event during advent.

If you are planning an event, or would be happy to run fundraising for this charity in your school this advent, please let me know. Please also let me know who in your school is best to act as a contact. Joe is happy to liaise directly with those people about any support or input that would be helpful from the charity.

I would ask you to email Anita by the end of Wednesday 26th Nov if you can support with fundraising and, if so, who is the best contact person.

Good News from Schools

A reminder to highlight for me any good news from your school that you would like me to highlight for Directors in the CEO report. Every term I capture stories from school visits and look at your websites & social media to highlight for Directors, but I don't want to miss things that you would want to share. Please just drop me an email if there is anything you'd love me to share – even better if you can email with a link to your website. Thanks to those who already have.

Heads' Conference 2026

An early date for your diary – we are booking next years' Heads' Conference on Thursday and Friday 19th & 20th November. These dates seem to work best to help ensure everyone can be there.

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Important RWI Training

We have booked and paid for Two Day RWI Training as a result of a number of schools informing us that they have staff who require this. Anita has sent out the following email to all reading leads. Can heads please make sure they book staff onto this training.

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

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)