

## ST FRANCIS LENT TO EASTER BULLETIN 30 MARCH 2022

As many look forward to a well-deserved Easter break, I wanted to take a moment to wish you all a blessed Easter. For those breaking up later – hold tight! Nearly there. I know it has been another challenging term. Many continue to battle Covid, personally and amongst your colleagues, children, and families. I know that there are other bugs circulating too. Please take care of you and yours.

### Lent Journeys

My Lent began at St Marie's Cathedral for Bishop Ralph's Ash Wednesday service. My Lenten journey this year is accompanied by the book 'Lent and Easter Wisdom from St Francis and St Clare of Assisi' which has been compiled by John V Kruse in 2008. I can recommend. The first daily meditation opened with St Francis' prayer before the crucifix.

Most High, Glorious God,  
Enlighten the darkness of my heart  
and give me true faith, certain hope, and perfect charity,  
sense and knowledge, Lord,  
that I may carry out  
Your holy and true command.

Work continues through Lent on our CMAT journey, meeting DfE, Trustees and the St Francis Board regularly. It has been a real delight to visit many schools and spend time with you, your chairs and join your Governor meetings in recent weeks too. Thank you for your hospitality and engagement. Our Board meets again in the first week of April. We will be reviewing progress, financials and taking stock.

### CMAT News

The Phase 1 schools which resolved to join the CMAT continue to await DfE Advisory Board dates – we expect this will be May. Nevertheless, we have held weekly meetings so far, and Heads from our 3 schools are already collaboratively working on their ICT curriculum. We have all also benefited from discussing the recent Ofsted at St Mary's Maltby. Good news on recent appointments where a new Head has been appointed for Holy Family Worksop, and a new Deputy, has now been appointed to St Joseph's Retford. Exciting times. We have also said a sad farewell to Richard, School Business Manager at Holy Family Worksop, as he moves into a new role, thankful for his great service. Kev has offered to help in transition.

Margaret Helliwell our Chair hosted a Heads and Chairs event on 15 March where colleagues enjoyed a presentation and Q&A about growing a CMAT from St Ralph Sherwin CMAT Primary and Secondary Heads. Thanks too for your support at our recent St Francis Heads Forum on 10 March. Congratulations to those who have undergone a Section 48 inspection too.

Steve Davies, Interim CEO at St Clare, and I shared our School Improvement Paper– we hope that everyone got a chance to look at it on 22 March in lieu of our joint CMAT Heads Zoom. Thanks to all who have responded so far, and those who have requested an extension. **The consultation closes on 31 March.** We look forward to hearing from you.

Working with St Clare, we continue to review the best options for the CMATs moving forward together. Last week we had considered options whereby Kev and I might be able to offer support HSPAT schools because they are currently without full time CEO and CFO. Board members also considered with Heads and Chairs whether HSPAT might have been a potential vehicle to bring the CMAT into operation sooner. Neither of these options are now being progressed.

## Ukraine Refugees – School Places

I understand that Doncaster Counselling Network has been notified that Doncaster will welcome its first group of refugees next week. Our thoughts and prayers are with those affected by the conflict at this time.

No-one seems to have an exact list of wants / needs but one issue which has been raised this week is school places for after Easter. Doncaster Heads, if not already sighted, may want to consider before schools break up. It would be helpful to know which schools do have capacity and are willing to accept pupils in particular year groups. It may also be helpful to agree a point of contact over the Easter Break? Other Heads, likewise.

## Schools White Paper

With the launch of the Education White Paper, education is very much in the news. I am sure you will have seen, but if not please do take time to browse, headlines and press notice [Schools White Paper delivers real action to level up education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) which includes a link to the White Paper itself:

**Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child.** This is the first schools White Paper in six years, and sets out the Government's long-term vision for a school system. The Schools White Paper sets out a series of new measures to support the delivery of these ambitions, including:

- Schools will offer a minimum school week of 32.5 hours by September 2023
- Ofsted will inspect every school by 2025, including the backlog of 'outstanding' schools that haven't been inspected for many years
- By 2030 all children will benefit from being taught in a school in, or in the process of joining, a strong multi-academy trust, which will help transform underperforming schools and deliver the best possible outcomes for children
- At least £100m to put the Education Endowment Foundation on a long-term footing so they can continue to evaluate and spread best practice in education across the country

The strategy is expressed as four pillars:

- **An excellent teacher for every child**, through 500,000 teacher training and development opportunities by 2024, and teacher starting salaries are set to rise to £30,000 to attract and retain the best teachers.
- **High standards of curriculum, behaviour and attendance** leading to calm and collaborative environments, with access to funded training for a senior mental health lead to deliver a whole school approach to health and wellbeing, and Oak National Academy becoming a government body with sole focus on supporting teachers to deliver the very best lesson content.
- **Targeted support for every child who needs it**, enshrined in a pledge to parents, supported by the existing commitment of up to 6 million tutoring courses by 2024 and action to cement tuition as a permanent feature of the school system.
- **A stronger and fairer school system** ensuring all children benefit from being taught in a strong family of schools, within a system with clear roles and accountability.

## SEND

The SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper - [SEND review: right support, right place, right time - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) was also published for consultation this week.

Please also consider personal or inclusion/SENCO opportunities to engage with the SEND and Alternative Provision debates and responding to the Green Paper. It will shape the future of SEND provision for some years to come. The consultation launched 29 March and will run for 13 weeks, closing on **Friday 1 July 2022**. DfE is running webinars with the Council for Disabled Children in May. You can register for any of the DfE sessions using Eventbrite. Links are below:

- [Thursday 12 May, 10am to 3.30pm in London](#)
- [Tuesday 17 May, 10am to 3.30pm in Manchester](#)
- [Thursday 19 May, 10am to 3.30pm in Leicester](#)
- [Monday 23 May, 10am to 3.30pm via Zoom](#)

## To Close

As I write, it has just started to snow here. I wanted to close with extract from St Clare's third letter to Agnes of Prague:

'Who is there then, who would not encourage me to rejoice over such marvellous joys? Therefore, dearly beloved, may you too always rejoice in the Lord. And may neither bitterness nor a cloud overwhelm you.'

I hope the sunshine we enjoyed this past weekend will return soon, and you will be able to rest, relax and catch up with family, friends.

Happy Easter when it comes and God bless.

Heidi Adcock

Interim CEO St Francis MAT