



Easter Term 2022 Newsletter

Welcome to our Easter Trust newsletter. Every term the Headteachers and I will be in touch via the newsletter to keep you informed about some of the projects that we've been working on across our schools. This year as a group of schools we are working on around 50 different projects covering a range of themes including Quality of Education, Personal Development, School Support, Business Function and Franciscan Values to mention just a small variety of examples.

This newsletter focuses in on just one of those projects – albeit a very important project – where our schools have paired up to lead on four themes across the Trust: Chaplaincy; Catholic Life; Early Years Curriculum and Subject Leadership. In the paragraphs that follow, I hope you will get a flavour of the magnificent work that has been undertaken and which continues to develop and improve the provision for the children in all schools across our Trust. You may have noticed that our mission (shown above) is to provide the 'very best Catholic education now and for generations to come'. The projects described below are truly great examples of how schools are working together across the trust to achieve that very mission, and I am delighted that this newsletter celebrates and showcases that work.



Andrew Celano

Chief Executive Officer

Chaplaincy Team

Co-ordinated by St. Joseph Hertford (Mr Maloney, Headteacher) and St. Cross (Mrs Walsh, Headteacher)

Building cohesion between the Chaplaincy Teams amongst the family of schools was the starting point for this project. One of the main objectives was to make sure that students in Chaplaincy Teams in every school saw themselves as part of a collective group of members across the Trust. Their first task was to create a Chaplaincy Team prayer. Each school looked at the Franciscan values and expressed through prayer how they were going to live them out. These responses were collated and a beautiful prayer was created that embodied the Franciscan values.

The first Trust Chaplaincy liturgy took place in January this year by Zoom. It was wonderful for students to join with their peers and celebrate a liturgy led by St Joseph's Bishop Stortford.

Chaplaincy Teams were invited to design a badge that each member across the Trust would wear. After considering a large number of wonderful designs, the winner was Sebastian from St Joseph's Waltham Cross.





Chaplaincy Prayer

Lord God our Father,
Thank you for our school community.
Just as you inspired St Francis of Assisi,
Inspire us to **work together**
To spread your word within our school
And across our family of schools.
Help us to create a community
Where **love** shines through us.

Help us embrace **God's creation**
By showing others how to
Love and care for our environment
As stewards of the earth.

Let the world grow as we follow Your path.
Let us bring **peace and care** to one another
And listen to God's Good News.

May You guide us and our academy
Today and always,
On a path of a shared mission.

St Francis, pray for us.

Early Years Paired Project

Co-ordinated by St Joseph's Waltham Cross (Mrs O'Connor) and St Thomas of Canterbury (Mrs Keating)

The purpose of this project is to provide strategic direction and school development in Early Years across the seven primary schools, through sharing best practice.

The autumn term was spent examining the new Early Years Curriculum and approach. This term's focus has been on early reading and phonics. With a clear understanding of approach and resourcing, schools can benefit from economy of scale and shared purchase. Early Years Leaders for all schools have been moderating standards as well as discussing key developments and experiences of good practice, whether that is a deep dive or a quality assurance visit.

The shared good practice that Early Years Foundation Stage teams are benefitting from allows us to continue to deliver an excellent Early Years offer in every primary school. We plan to look at outdoor provision in the summer term.

Catholic Life

Co-ordinated by St Mary's (Miss McHugh) & St Augustine's (Mrs Napier)

Stations of the Cross

The Trust has united in Lenten prayer preparations and spiritual journey for all students. It is important to teach our children about prayer and model how to pray. With the aid of our talented students, a booklet of the Stations of the Cross has been created for every family to use and pray through together this Lent. The artwork has been produced by pupils across the Trust from ages 4 to 18, and you can find the [full booklet here online](#) – perhaps you might to have a look at the beautiful artwork and use this as a prayer aid for yourself this Lent?





The First Station
Jesus is condemned to death.



The Second Station
Jesus accepts His cross.



The Third Station
Jesus falls for the first time.



The Fourth Station
Jesus meets His afflicted Mother.



The Fifth Station
Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry His cross.



The Sixth Station
Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.

Franciscan Values Award

This academic year has been a time of review, reflection and unity across the Trust. Every school has its very own unique and distinctive ethos that is lived out daily by its students.

Schools within the Trust have worked collaboratively to look at the qualities inspired by St Francis and consider how students can live these out daily through their values and actions.

Students will grow to be educated, committed and articulate ambassadors of the Catholic faith.

The Franciscan Values Award will be launched in September 2022 and will recognise students from Early Years through to Year 13 who exhibit 'Franciscan Values' (below) in their words, actions, kindness and leadership to make school communities a shining example of the Gospel and faith in action. Those who meet the award criteria will be awarded a certificate and a badge once per half term as examples to their community.

Community

We build supportive and encouraging communities by celebrating achievements, recognising individuality, and keeping our Chaplaincy teams at the heart of school life.



Compassion

We show the love of Christ by working for the Common Good through supporting charities locally, within our diocese and internationally, both practically and through fundraising initiatives.



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Creation

As caretakers of God's creation, we recognise it is our responsibility to care for the world around us. We model behaviour that inspires students to take this from the classroom and into their lives.



Peacemakers

We show the love of God by offering forgiveness, supporting each other through mentoring and anti-bullying schemes, and give opportunities to reflect prayerfully on resilience, positive mental health and wellbeing.



Subject and Curriculum Leadership

Co-ordinated by St Joseph's Bishop's Stortford (Mr Coldwell), Sacred Heart (Mrs Fusi) and St Mary's (Mr Johnston)

The Trust is blessed with talented staff who are always keen to keep on improving on the excellence already delivered.

The Subject and Curriculum Leadership project involves developing our curriculum and effectiveness of subject leadership in all our schools. The first Subject Leaders' meeting took place in January 2022. All staff were positive about the outcomes in all our meetings – with leaders sharing current schemes used across the schools and refining best practice. These meetings provided an invaluable opportunity to overview how subjects are taught and monitored across the schools, as well as providing peer to peer teacher support. Each subject group has agreed a lead teacher to take the group forward into 2022 and facilitate consistency across all schools.

Areas we will be looking at more closely in future meetings include:

- Comparing skills/knowledge mapping
- Reviewing/comparing the strengths of the various schemes of work on offer
- Assessment, tracking and moderation across schools

The next meeting will be held in May, focussing on 'deep dives' in each subject; highlighting effectiveness of leadership within subjects, and how this translates into classroom expertise.

Easter Blessings

Finally, I would like to wish you a very happy Easter holiday. However, as I write we are in the midst of Lent, so celebrations of Easter seem a while off yet. When we reach Holy Week I pray that you will journey with Jesus through his passion and death, experiencing in a very real way how He died for us all; nailed to the cross by our sins, and in so doing defeated death and evil once and for all. As 1 Corinthians 15:55 reminds us "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?". May we all celebrate the glory of the risen Christ, and may His peace, blessings and joy be upon you and your households this Easter, Amen.

