

Our Journey Together

- news from across the St Ralph Sherwin Trust

NOVEMBER 2018

ISSUE 1



Welcome to the first edition of our new half termly St Ralph Sherwin newsletter where we showcase some of the best of what is going on in our 25 schools across the trust. As a trust we have been functioning for just over 8 weeks, however in that time I have been fortunate enough in my role as CEO to be able to

visit many of our schools and am always met with such a warm and friendly reception in every school. Indeed, the Catholic ethos of our schools is very tangible to any visitor and I am hugely proud of the work being carried out around chaplaincy, which is led so well by our Lead Lay Chaplain Joe Hopkins. As I write, I know preparations are well under way for our celebration of the Feast Day of St Ralph Sherwin on Friday 30 November. Our key note speaker will be Fr Adrian Porter and Bishop Patrick will celebrate

mass at the end of the day. We are expecting 800 colleagues from our 25 schools to gather at the Winding Wheel in Chesterfield to join our celebration, the theme of which is 'Building Community'. I hope in this season of Advent we shall continue to work and support one another as we build a trust which we are all proud of and exudes the Christian values of love, compassion, justice and truth. Wishing you every blessing.

Sean McClafferty



CELEBRATION AT SAINT BENEDICT CVA

Hundreds of students were rewarded for their academic and extra-curricular achievements at Saint Benedict Catholic Voluntary Academy's Presentation Evening. Students from Year 8 to 11 received awards in front of a packed audience of parents, family members, carers and staff at the academy in Derby. House awards were also made, with the Athletics Day Trophy going to Kolbe House and the Attendance Shield being won by John Paul House.

WHOLE SCHOOL CREATES REMARKABLE POPPY DISPLAY



Students and staff at Saint John Houghton Catholic Voluntary Academy in Kirk Hallam have been working on a special Remembrance Day project.

The school's design department encouraged everyone to create hundreds of poppies from plastic bottles.



Each week we will run a profile on a member of our trust. This edition we focus on trust CEO, Sean McClafferty.

Personal

I live in Sheffield and I have a 22-year-old daughter who is training to be a teacher and a 20-year-old son who is at university.

Where are you based?

I have a base in Glossop and a second base in Derby, at St Katherine's House.

What is your vision for the St Ralph Sherwin CMAT and the schools within it?

What we want to do is protect and grow Catholic education and ensure that there is structured

support in place for schools so that we can target that support where it's most needed. I want every school in the CMAT to be Good or Outstanding and every school will be a giver and receiver of support. Every school will retain its individual identity but there will be a collective responsibility for one another. We have to build a sense of community throughout the 25 schools; we are all part of a family and no school will be left behind. There are 8,000 children in this CMAT and we can influence their futures. We have a real opportunity to make a difference.

Can you tell us about your role day-to-day?

Our trust covers a large geographical area and much of my time is spent in schools

meeting colleagues, admiring the wonderful work taking place in our schools while at the same time listening to their concerns. I am surrounded by an excellent group of professionals in our HR, Finance and School Improvement teams who are an absolute pleasure to work alongside and spending time with them is also a priority.

What do you enjoy most about your new role?

That's an easy one. Visiting our schools, meeting staff and pupils and hearing about the difference the trust is already making to some schools, that is what I love most.

In the next edition we will profile our Lead Lay Chaplain, Joe Hopkins.

STUDENT WINS UK-WIDE PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

Seventeen-year-old Peter triumphs at the Catenians National Public Speaking Competition



public speaking but I seem able just to put the fear to one side."

The teenager won £200 and a trophy for himself and £100 and a trophy for school. Aidan Smith, headteacher at

"We encourage our students to be resilient, challenge themselves and conquer their fears."

A Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy student is celebrating after winning a national public speaking competition. Peter Firbank admits that speaking in front of an audience terrifies him but he still managed to triumph at the Catenians National Public Speaking Competition.

The 17-year-old's speech was titled 'Freedom is not given, it is won.' He said: "I don't like

Blessed Robert Sutton CVA, in Burton, said everyone was extremely proud of Peter. He said: "Peter is a fantastic ambassador for Blessed Robert Sutton CVA and we are all delighted about his tremendous success. We encourage our students to be resilient, challenge themselves and conquer their fears and Peter is a great example of this."

PRIMARY SCHOOL NOMINATED FOR NATIONAL AWARD

Holy Rosary Catholic Voluntary Academy has been nominated for a national award for its hugely popular walking buses for pupils and parents. The academy, in Burton, runs two walking buses and is currently in the process of organising and training volunteers in order to operate both walking buses five days a week. As a result, the school has now been nominated for a Modeshift STARS National School Travel award. The awards recognise best practice in the promotion of walking, cycling and other forms of sustainable travel for the journey to and from school. The school has already achieved the Modeshift STARS bronze and silver award. The awards ceremony takes place on November 26th 2018 in Stoke-on-Trent.

FUND-RAISING RAMBLE

More than 100 children from St Mary's CVA in New Mills went on a ramble to Mousley Bottom Woods to raise money for Children in Need.

Reception children walked with their Year 6 special friends.

It was wonderful to see all ages of children enjoying walking in the countryside whilst reaping the benefits of fresh air and exercise and raising money for this great cause.

To date the school has raised an amazing total of £111.67.



New Beginnings

I thought this newsletter would be a great opportunity to introduce

myself and share some thoughts on the first half term. My name is Joe Hopkins and I am the Lead Lay Chaplain for the trust, this means that I have oversight of chaplaincy across the 25 schools, supporting them with animating the Catholic life and collective worship in school; as well as leading the chaplains of the trust and helping forge stronger community links.

I have always loved the first few weeks in September, I always call it new pencil case time, as I used to get ridiculously excited about getting my new pencil case for the school year... to be fair not much has changed. It is strange how much people who work in education can get so excited about stationery! That aside, this September was a real time of change and new beginnings for Catholic education in our Diocese.

With every change their can be anxiety and fear but also hope and wonder, a new energy. The positives of change are the only thing that I have witnessed in

these first eight weeks visiting all 25 schools in the trust. Never before have schools had such dedicated support readily available, and such close links with their neighbours who share their mission of educating children in more than just being able to pass exams.

The most wonderful thing about our Catholic faith is we do not have to wait for some huge legal and structural change to have a new beginning. Each day we are called to encounter Jesus, to encounter the love of God and his healing presence made incarnate – made approachable. I saw a great quote on Twitter the other week, 'You will never look into the eyes of someone not loved by God'. What a powerful message, God will never stop loving us, never stop offering us his friendship, support and healing presence. In my interview I said that the greatest thing a Catholic school can do is hand on faith, to help all in their community form a deep personal friendship with God so that they are able to respond joyfully to his calling for them.

I believe that starts with letting people know that they have a new beginning, they have that excitement of a new term with an untrodden path in front, with the gift of Jesus' friendship, the power of the Holy Spirit and the

love of the Father being their stationery for the journey! The next stage is to actually accept that offer of a new beginning but we can't if we insist on holding on to our past mistakes, this stops us being the person God created us to be as we are too busy focusing on the person we shaped ourselves into being, a shadow of our potential and God's plans. Take today as your first week of September, you don't fully know what the future will hold but you are sure there will be challenges and celebrations, mistakes and successes, the one thing to be sure of is that God has incredible

"When we encounter Jesus with an open heart we are changed for the better in ways we can only dream of."

plans for you that you will not have to face alone. God became human in Jesus so that we could know him, approach and encounter him, turn to Jesus and ask him to enter your life (maybe for the first time, maybe for the ten millionth time)! When we encounter Jesus with an open heart we are changed for the better in ways we can only dream of.

New beginnings are not just for September, they are for you!

Meet the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-Academy Trust Executive Team

Chief Executive



Sean McClafferty

Directors of Performance and Standards



Adrian Gray



Kate Mann



Amanda Greaves



Fionuala Boucher

Lead Lay Chaplain



Joe Hopkins

PA to Exec Team



Chloe Sammarco

Data Manager



Becky Hill

Estates & Facilities Manager



Andrew Muldoon

Finance Director



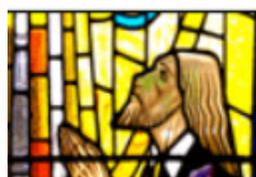
Phil Curtis

HR Manager



Gemma Tovey

We would love to share your good news across our trust so please submit items and photos to pr@srscomat.co.uk. We will try to use as many as we can. Thankyou.



St Ralph Sherwin
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

