



PLYMOUTH CAST NEWSLETTER

2019/20

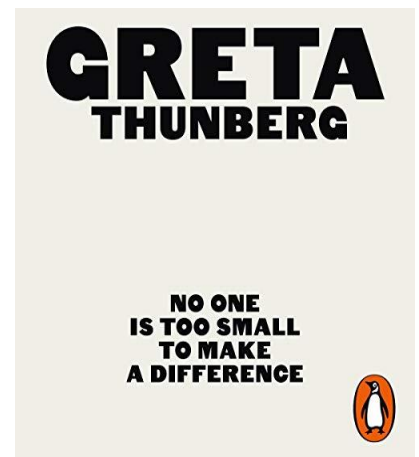
No.3: January 2020

"Our mission is to be a community of outstanding schools in which our pupils flourish in safe, happy and stimulating environments and leave us with the knowledge and skills, personal qualities and aspirations, to make the world a better place, inspired by the Gospel."

Happy New Year

A very happy new year to all our staff, pupils, governors, parents and carers. There are many challenges ahead, on the local, national and international stage, but as a Catholic Trust we face the future always with hope, inspired by the Good News of our Teacher, Jesus Christ. Whatever our own feelings about the landscape ahead of us, our duty as educators will always be to give our children and young people the skills, knowledge and values they need to face the future with hope and a determination to make a difference. As the title of the new book by Greta Thunberg puts it, "No one is too small to make a difference."

Speaking to reporters at the 12 December publication of Pope Francis's message for the 2020 World Day of Peace, celebrated on 1 January each year, Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Vatican office for Integral Human Development, called Greta Thunberg "a great witness to what the Church teaches on the care of the environment and the care of the person." The new book contains Greta's speeches. The texts are short but very powerful, well worth a look in school as we commit to *Laudato Si* as a central part of our curriculum strategy.



Welcome and Farewells

We welcome **Sarah Terrey**, who has been appointed as Interim Headteacher at St. Catherine's in Bridport until the summer. The permanent post will be advertised early in the new year. Please help to spread the word. We also welcome **Tina Parkes** to the team after her permanent appointment as Executive Officer.

We bid farewell to **Amanda Burt**, who served as Interim Headteacher at St. Catherine's until Christmas. Amanda is a well-regarded and experienced colleague who has helped a number of our schools and headteachers over the years. We also bid farewell to **Sharon George**, our Finance Manager, who has helped the Trust through some very difficult financial times. We wish them both every blessing for the future.

Before Christmas we also said farewell to **Matthew Barnes**, our Deputy Director of Education and Standards. It was a pleasure to work with Matthew and I know many of us benefitted greatly from his wisdom and experience. We wish him every blessing for the future.

Plymouth CAST Progress

Pupils meeting expected standard in reading writing and maths ?



Key stage 1 average point score on entry ?



Types of school ?

Total schools: 32

MAT progress scores in reading, writing and maths ?

Reading

Above average 0.5

[More score details ?](#)

Writing

Average 0.2

[More score details ?](#)

Maths

Average 0.1

[More score details ?](#)

Pupils meeting expected standard in reading, writing and maths ?



The MAT performance table were published before Christmas and made very encouraging reading for our Trust. All our key indicators have improved as a Trust and for Reading our primary schools were above average. In a framework in which reading should be at the heart of the curriculum, this is hugely encouraging. Clearly, we'd like to see our Writing and Maths catch up with the Reading, but they will very soon no doubt.

The overall attainment for our primary schools in Reading, Writing and Maths is now exactly in line with the national average. We are ambitious for our young people, of course, and want then to achieve even higher standards, but this level of attainment represents real progress.

Our secondary schools also have shown improvements in attainment and progress and both have improved by an Ofsted grade in 2019, with Notre Dame achieving Good and St. Boniface's College coming out of Special Measures.

The "word on the street" is that Plymouth CAST is in a much better place than it was. A colleague told me that during one of the inspections last term, one of the inspectors said in an aside, "Plymouth CAST, yes, you're doing very well these days aren't you?" That's how belief and confidence is restored and spread. Everyone in the Trust has played a part in this story of recovery and everyone has a part in spreading the word that Plymouth CAST is on the up.

On Wednesday 15 January, Bishop Mark, Lord Burnett, Karen Cook, Kevin Butlin and myself will be meeting Lord Agnew, the Academies Minister, in London. The troubles of Plymouth CAST were known in the highest reaches of government, so it is only right that we take the story of our rapid recovery back to the government's ministers, who now see us in quite a different light.

We still have much to do and challenges ahead, colleagues, but thanks to your commitment to our children and young people we have made great strides and will continue to do so. Thank you all.

Heads' Day Conference: Tuesday 14 January

The next day conference for headteachers will take place on Tuesday 14 January at St. Rita's Centre, Ottery Moor Lane, Honiton, EX14 1AP. The programme for the day is as follows:

9.00 am	Registration open, refreshments on arrival
9.30 am	Morning Prayer followed by CEO Updates with Raymond Friel
10.30 am	Governors' Accountability Schedule – Ann Harris
11.00 am	Break
11.30 pm	“Good” in the new inspection framework – Clare Tickel
11.50 pm	Early Years Qualification – Demelza Bolton and Angela Folland
12 noon	ESM updates
12. 15 pm	GAG pooling consultation – Karen Cook
1.15 pm	LUNCH
2.00 pm	Cluster Meetings - led by Cluster Coordinators
3.30 pm	Depart

Next Heads' Briefings

3/4/5 March – West/Central/East

29 April – Heads' Day Conference – CAST Office, Plymouth

2/3/4 June – West/Central/East

Meet the New Director of Education – Wed 29 Jan at CAST Offices, Plymouth

On Monday 20 January, we're delighted that **Kevin Butlin**, our new Director of Education, will be with us for two weeks to get to know the Trust. I'll be working with Kevin and Tina on a programme, which will involve visits to schools with the ESM team, but there will be a meeting to which all heads are invited at the CAST office in Plymouth at 1.00 pm (sandwich lunch) for a 1.30 pm start on Wed 29 Jan. Kevin will speak about his new role and then there will be an opportunity for questions and discussion.

Revised Scheme of Delegation

On Fri 13 December the Board approved a revised Scheme of Delegation for the Trust, with the prior written approval of Bishop Mark. In the version attached with the newsletter I have retained the deleted parts highlighted in red and the additions in green so you can easily see the changes. The version on the website will not highlight the changes. It is important that heads and local governing boards makes themselves familiar with the Scheme of Delegation. At the governors' briefings on 2/3/4/5 March, Ann Harris, the Board's governance lead, will be sharing the work she has led on an Accountability Schedule for local governing boards and Checklists to help them fulfil their role outlined in the revised Scheme of Delegation.

Policy Updates

The following four policies attached with the newsletter were approved by the Board on Fri 13 December:

Equality Objectives. These are the Trust's equality objectives, designed to tackle discrimination and to ensure that we follow the Equality Act 2010. Each school will be asked to draw up their own equality objectives which should be summarised in the new Head's Report to the ESM and thereafter in the School Improvement Plan under Leadership and Management.

Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy. This policy is designed to clarify the expectations for safer recruitment and selection with Plymouth CAST schools. It outlines our recruitment procedure and is in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', the DfE statutory guidance on safeguarding and must be read in conjunction with the Trust's Safeguarding policy. Through this policy, the trust aims to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures to ensure a robust safeguarding culture within the Trust.

All those involved in any stage of recruitment and selection should be aware of and adhere to this policy. Any external consultants, recruitment agencies or external experts who assist in recruitment and selection are required to act in accordance with this policy.

Allegations Against Staff Policy. The purpose of this policy is to provide school leaders with clear guidance to follow when managing any allegation made against a member of staff or a volunteer. The policy supplements the Trust's Safeguarding Policy and should be read in conjunction with that policy. When managing allegations against staff, the Trust expects school leaders to put the interests and needs of the children first. Therefore, the assumption should always be 'it could happen here'. No allegation is too small to be considered using this policy.

Pupil Welfare Policy. As a Catholic Trust, we believe in protecting the dignity of the individual. Therefore, the trust expects school policies to focus on promoting positive behaviour. The trust also recognises that the only way to ensure that behaviour is managed effectively is to ensure that staff are emotionally intelligent, empowered to be flexible, to be present in the toughest moments and to judge slowly. Therefore, every school's behaviour policy should be underpinned by the following seven pillars of practice:

1. Consistent, calm, adult behaviour.
2. Basic, concise and easily remembered standards of expectation (eg - ready, respectful, safe)
3. First attention for best conduct.
4. Clear and predictable routine.
5. Scripted and easily understood strategies for adult intervention.
6. Restorative follow-up.
7. Be no longer than two sides of A4 paper.

Emotional Health and Well-Being Policy. This was emailed out to schools for consultation on 13.12.2019. Please take time to consider this important Trust-wide policy and get your comments back to me by close of play on Friday 14 February, to allow me to take a final policy to the next meeting of the Board on 28 February.

Spring Checklist

The spring checklist is attached with the newsletter with a reminder of key dates and deadlines. Please note Karen's comment about the importance of the census return to ESFA (census date: 16 Jan). Please also continue our 100% record of Census returns to the CES (14 Jan – 14 Feb).

INSET Days: Reminder

A reminder that the next CAST INSET day, on Monday 24 February, following the February half-term, is at the discretion of clusters to use as they see fit, to follow up on the work on the first INSET day, or develop other priorities. The content of the third CAST INSET day this year, on Monday 1 June, following the final half-term break, will be directed by the Trust, in consultation with colleagues. This will give Kevin, our new Director of Education, an opportunity to be involved in the planning.

Please remember, in your planning for 2020/21, that we will follow the same pattern: the Monday after every half-term break will be a common CAST INSET day for our schools (with local authority variations) and we will have **five INSET days** in total.



Headteacher Rep for Health & Safety Committee

The CAST Health and Safety Committee is looking for a headteacher representative to replace Angela Folland, who has stepped down due to increased commitments in the Trust. This is an important role and a good professional development opportunity for one of our headteachers. Please let me know if you have any interest in this role. Thanks to Angela for her invaluable contribution.

Raymond Friel, CEO

Finance and Resources update

The Trust's accounts for 2018/19 have been approved by the Board and submitted to the ESFA. They are now published on the Trust website. The overall Trust financial position has improved, but there are a number of schools with increasing deficit reserves and these schools are currently under review and will be subject to financial recovery plans. These will be reviewed by the SEL and the Finance and Resources Committee of the Board over the next few months.

As part of the financial calendar all schools will prepare a mid-year budget review in February with the School Business Manager, and will also commence planning for future years with the Head Teacher and ESM at the spring meeting.

Local Authorities have been consulting on funding arrangements for 2020 – it is unlikely that these funding arrangements will be impacted by the pre-election pledges of the Government, but we will continue to monitor the policy landscape.



**Education & Skills
Funding Agency**

A General Annual Grant (GAG) pooling paper was presented to the Board meeting in December and options discussed. A more detailed discussion/consultation paper will be presented to Head Teachers at the meeting on 14th January, with the intention that a final paper be presented to the Board at the end of February. The GAG pooling working group recognised the advantages of pooling funding and cross Trust procurement of services, but also highlighted the need to ensure that pooling was not used to maintain the current position in schools with financial challenges, but that these matters were addressed to ensure self-sustainability.

Leavers and Joiners

Sharon George, the Trust Finance Manager will be leaving us in January to seek employment opportunities closer to home. Sharon was instrumental in the implementation of the new finance system, and has been a great help to me in respect of setting up systems and processes to improve the financial management of the Trust, and she will be missed.

Claire Garden has joined the Trust as the School Business Manager for St Mary's Marnhull, St Mary's Axminster, St Catherine's Bridport and Our Lady's Barnstable. She comes with a wealth of school-based finance and resources management and is used to having to travel, which given the schools she is working with is very welcome.

Procurement

A draft IT strategy was present to the Board in December which proposed a cross Trust position in terms of resources to support the business of schools, including delivery of resources to pupils and the needs of teachers in terms of their technology. The curriculum working group will be working up the IT needs to support pupils in their learning.

The impact will be that the Trust will tender, where necessary, for the procurement of the following in order to secure best value:

1. IT business systems (management information/finance etc)
2. Back up and filtering services
3. IT support services
4. IT equipment – desk tops, laptops and projectors
5. Printing and Photocopying arrangements
6. Broadband provision
7. Phone systems

The timing of tender/procurement arrangements will be confirmed over the next month. In the meantime IT based procurement needs to be approved centrally by the CFOO.

Deadlines

The January school pupil census is a crucial return as it impacts future funding. Please ensure that copies are sent to Tina.parkes@plymouthcast.org.uk as this data informs the planning processes for 2020 and beyond. See Spring Checklist for dates.

Karen Cook, *Chief Finance and Operating Officer*

Safeguarding



Thank you to everyone's return of the SG4 forms – a summary and analysis will be provided at the next Area HT briefings.

Safer Internet Day - Tuesday 11th February 2020

Safer Internet Day is coming up in around a month's time, so if you haven't already, now is the time to doing some planning.

Safer Internet Day is designed to empower young people to take control of their digital lives. For 2020 the UK Safer Internet Centre are putting the focus on online identity and asking young people to consider whether they and their peers are truly free to be themselves online.

To help schools deliver practical and impactful activities for Safer Internet Day they have created a range of free resources, including films, lesson plans, assemblies and more!

All the resources can be found here: <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2020/i-am-educator>

**Keeping children
safe in education**
Statutory guidance for schools and
colleges

September 2019

Safer Recruitment

ESM visits have identified that in several schools there is missing information in staff files and doesn't meet the safer recruitment requirements.

If you are in any doubt, use the resources available on the HR portal, the Safer Recruitment Policy and the HR team.

Safeguarding Links

There a number of resources and links on the Trust's website:
http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/safeguarding_links/441316

This will continue to be updated, if you have come across any useful links and resources, please let us know via the safeguarding@plymouthcast.org.uk address.

Neil Maslen, Interim Trust DSL

Governance

The next round of governor briefings will take place on 2/3/4/5 March. The main agenda item will be the new Accountability Schedule for local governing boards. Ann Harris, the Board's governance lead, has also developed a suite of helpful checklists in consultation with a number of our governors. Ann will take us through all the paperwork at the March briefings.



Formatio Governor Training Joining Instructions for Governors

We are delighted to inform you that this free online training resource for all governors of your Catholic school, designed by the Catholic Education Service, is available.

The governance training is for all those involved in governance in schools and academies of all abilities and experience. This includes governors, local governors and directors of Catholic Multi Academy Trust Companies.

You can access the training here: <http://formatio-ces.org/moodle/login/index.php>

The training consists of five modules to support you in your particular role as governor of a Catholic school:

1. An introduction to Catholic Education – **available now and takes about 30 minutes**
2. The environment of a Catholic school – **available now**
3. Strategic Leadership – *available Spring 2020*
4. Accountability – *available Spring 2020*
5. Financial Performance – *available Spring 2020*

To access the training please follow the instructions in the attached letter. If you have any questions or are in need of any support please do not hesitate to get in touch with Elisa McLaughlin, Education Officer at the Catholic Education Service (emcloughlin@catholiceducation.org.uk) or Anna-Marie Kenny, the e-learning developer, at a.kenny@st-josephs.hants.sch.uk.

"I found it informative and interesting and it gave a clear overview of the context of Catholic education and how and why Catholic schools exist."

Feedback from pilot participant, 2019

"Thought this was a really well-designed training with lots to think about. It presented complex material with clarity"

Feedback from pilot participant, 2019

HR Updates

Welcome back, I hope you all had a lovely Christmas and New Year.



Policy Update

Policy	Position
Absence Management Policy	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Disability Leave Policy	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Appraisal Policy	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Capability Policy & Procedure	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Code of Conduct Policy	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Disciplinary Policy & Procedure	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Equal Opportunities Policy	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Family Friendly Policies: Maternity; Paternity; Adoption; Parental Leave, Shared Parental Leave	To be drafted
Flexible Working Policy	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Grievance Policy & Procedure	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Special Leave Policy	In drafting
Pay Policy - Support Staff & Central Team	In drafting
Pay Policy - Teachers	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257
Reorganisation and Redundancy Policy and Procedure	Procedure in use. Policy to be drafted.
Social Media Policy	Plymouth CAST policy adopted- See http://www.plymouthcast.org.uk/web/plymouth_cast_policies/278257

Contracts and Offer Letters

New templates for contracts and offer letters can now be found on the Plymouth CAST portal, please ensure you use these templates for now on and delete any old versions.

<https://plymouth-cast.eschools.co.uk/login>

Teacher Recruitment/Adverts

To support the work of Diana Taylor, we would like to start advertising all Teacher vacancies on the Plymouth CAST website, in addition to the normal recruitment platforms that you use. This will ensure all prospective teachers can access the vacancies in one place. If you have a teacher advert, please could you send the details to your School Business Manager who will add this to the website.

Teachers' Pensions (TPS)

Could Headteachers please remind members of their teaching staff that, if they have a teachers' pension, they are required to establish a log-in on the Teachers' Pension website

<https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/forms/registration.aspx> Registrations are monitored by TPS and the Trust receives monthly reminders to ensure compliance.

Adelle Pope, HR Manager

Premises Matters

Capital Works

A 3-year capital spend programme has now been developed and approved by the Board. Every School will receive a notification of approved works to date. This is based on the currently identified needs of each School listed as capital requests developed as part of the business plans. This will obviously have to be fluid to take account of unforeseen emergency works.



H&S Training

Just to let you all know that I am in the process of organising some more H&S training for the Trust.

I am organising another Senior Premises Overview training day for Head Teachers that were not able to attend last year, as well as some more Asbestos & Legionella Awareness training for Administrators or Site Staff. Details will follow shortly.

HSE Safety Alert for Platform lifts

Following guidance from the HSE (Health and Safety Executive), daily checks must now be undertaken in every School that has a platform lift. It is now a requirement that a member of staff is assigned responsibility to confirm **DAILY** that the landing doors **cannot** be opened when the platform is **not** at the same level. A daily check must also be carried out to confirm that the platform **cannot** travel without the doors being closed and locked.

I will be updating and releasing an updated Premises Compliance Checklist to reflect this change in premises management.

For further information please refer to guidance HS30 Lifting Equipment found on the OSHENS document library. The Devon Health and Safety Team are also available to answer any health and safety related questions or concerns that you may have.

They can be contacted on 01392 382027 during normal office hours. Keith Furzeland, our dedicated adviser is usually in the office on a Monday. He can be contacted at keith.furzeland@devon.gov.uk

As always, if you require any further information or support on any of these premises matters, then please get in touch.

Paul Stewart, Premises and Procurement Manager

NEWS FROM THE CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY (PLYMOUTH)



Patchwork Parenting

PATCHWORK PARENTING, part of the Diocesan Catholic Children's Society, offers free programmes to schools with the aim of providing a safe environment for any parent or carer to share their ideas and concerns, and to develop good practice in parenting.

Our courses are fully booked for the academic year 2019-20. We are running 16 parenting courses and all but one of these is being hosted by a CAST school.

Some feedback from Autumn primary courses in Exmouth, Dartmouth and Plymouth:

'The course has helped me to see just how much I do as a parent and not to be as hard on myself' **Parent**

'I found learning that other parents face the same problems and issues about child behaviour, makes me more comfortable about how mine acts'. **Parent**

'It has been helpful thinking about how I deal with children as a grandparent but also when in loco parentis'.
Grandparent

'I have changed by thinking outside the box and looking for different approaches to dealing with behaviours'. **Parent**

'It has been great to offer this course to parents as they have been able to have the time and space to talk about the aspects of being a parent'. **School SENCO**



Plymouth Cast
Edmund Rice Building, St Boniface College, 21 St Boniface Lane, Manadon Park, Crownhill, Plymouth, PL5 3AG
Tel: 01752 686710

Some reflections from the parents of teenagers on how their thinking and attitude has changed following our Autumn 'Hormones and Harmony' course in Plymouth:

'I think that I need to do less for my child and get him to take more responsibility'

'The importance of setting clear boundaries and rewards'

'Being able to talk about issues with other people/parents'

In this Spring term 2020 we have eight 'Parenting through the Primary Years' courses booked :

Tuesday mornings @ St Joseph's, Newton Abbot 7 th Jan – 11 th Feb	Tuesday afternoons @ St Peter's, Plymouth 25 th Feb – 21 st Apr
Tuesday afternoons @ Our Lady of the Angel's, Torquay 7 th Jan – 11 th Feb	Wednesday afternoons @ St Joseph's, Poole 26 th Feb – 22 nd Apr
Wednesday afternoons @ St Mary's, Bodmin 8 th Jan – 12 th Feb	Thursday mornings @ Christ the King, Bournemouth 27 th Feb – 23 rd Apr
Thursday afternoons @ Our Lady's, Barnstaple 21 st Nov – 2 th Jan	Thursday afternoons @ St Catherine's, Bridport 27 th Feb – 23 rd Apr

If you would you like to attend one of our Patchwork Parenting courses or host some Patchwork Parenting sessions at your school in 2020/21, please contact our Patchwork Parenting Facilitator, Caroline Hambly via email at caroline.hambly@prcdtr.org.uk

A choice of three Patchwork Parenting courses are available:

'Parenting through the Primary Years' focuses upon everyday issues faced by parents of primary age children. Following discussion with parents and schools, we now offer this, our most popular course over six sessions as well as the standard eight week course. We hope this will encourage more parents to take up the opportunity to attend.

'Parenting through the Pre-Teen/Teenage Years - Hormones and Harmony' provides the opportunity for parents to talk about some of the changes, challenges and opportunities facing young people and their families. **Recently, several primary schools offered these sessions to the parents and carers of Year 5 and 6 children**, providing the opportunity to talk with others who, like them, are striving to understand and support their youngsters as they complete their time in primary school before moving onto secondary school.

'Parenting through the Early Years' provides six or seven sessions particularly suitable for parents and carers of preschool and reception children. This course focusses upon the same issues as the primary course, but with a greater focus upon those more pertinent to younger children, ie. starting school.

If you would like more information please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Caroline Hambly - Patchwork Parenting Facilitator

Plymouth Cast
Edmund Rice Building, St Boniface College, 21 St Boniface Lane, Manadon Park, Crownhill, Plymouth, PL5 3AG
Tel: 01752 686710