



## CMAT NEWS



BRENTWOOD DIOCESE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST NEWSLETTER

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### Special points of interest:

- Reasons to join a CMAT
- School Funding
- Levelling up Agenda

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## Catholic Multi Academy Trusts in our Diocese: Moving Forward Together

Children are the priority....

Change is the reality....

Collaboration is the strategy....

There is no doubt that we are moving forward to a position where all our diocesan schools will be part of a strong and effective CMAT. There are currently 6 Diocesan CMATS and they are thriving with each one adding additional schools every year. There are plans for a seventh CMAT to be formed to accommodate more schools next year. **Why is this happening?** The reasons are clear:

1. Schools see that working together collaboratively in a formal structure works for them and benefits pupils and staff. Clearly pupils are the key, they are our priority. The whole point of a CMAT is to improve the education and subsequent life chances of the young people in our care. Diocesan CMATS are vibrant, tangible examples of this working in practice.
2. Schools are responding to the Bishop's vision for education in his Diocese. He has clearly stated he wants "families of schools where all schools will give and receive to each other in a spirit of joint endeavour, solidarity and trust".
3. In the face of an increasingly challenging economic climate it makes sound financial sense to share resources and expertise across a number of schools to maximise potential savings through economies of scale. Trusts are in a stronger

position to meet the demands of increased energy costs and those associated with staff pay increases.

It is important to remember that we are governed as Catholic schools by canon law. In this respect two canons are particularly relevant namely:

Canon 806 - 'schools being the best they can be' and Canon 795 - 'the common good of society'.

Now the diocese recognises that for those school leaders who are still unsure this may indeed require a genuine culture shift. It is really important that all our schools join their established CMAT as everyone has something to contribute and has expertise to share. In relation to our championing of the concept of the common good, we could paraphrase JFK and say: **"ask what can I do for the CMAT... NOT what can the CMAT do for me."**



*"where CMATs have been established in our diocese benefits have already been identified, including financial savings, greater inter-school support and renewal of the mission they share as Catholic schools."*  
Bishop Alan



*OLOG schools are "places where mercy is freely given; where everyone is loved, forgiven and encouraged"*

## Focus on .....

### Our Lady of Grace Trust

This is a trust consisting of 6 primary school in the London Borough of Newham. It is a very high performing trust where pupil attainment and progress is exceptional. Three of the schools are rated "Outstanding" by Ofsted while the other 3 are all rated as "Good". All six schools hold "outstanding" section 48 judgements from the diocese. The total number of pupils in all the schools combined is around 2,500. The Trust has plans to grow and add another school in due course.

Our Lady of Grace Trust places great importance on the faith development of pupils and staff:

The Trust has had the benefit of some excellent leadership exemplified by Gael Hicks who led the Trust with real expertise during its formative years. The new CSEL, Nuala Cashell, also brings great strengths and will aim to build upon strong foundations. The strong head teacher leadership group work collaboratively on a wide range of educational initiatives including peer review, joint moderation and CPD. The trust employs a central team which aims to cover the financial, and estates management functions thus enabling head teachers to concentrate on teaching and learning in their schools. IT support across the Trust is strong.

*"Our Mission is for all pupils to grow in God's love and aspire to develop their full potential within excellent Catholic schools, where collaboration and innovation are promoted. The Trust will strive to transform children's lives enabling them to form their place within the world."*

Faithfulness	Humility	Truth	Forgiveness
'How happy are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven'	'Happy the gentle: they shall have the earth for their heritage'	'Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied'	'Happy the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them'

## Gillian Keegan

What do these people have in common?

Nadhim Zahawi

Michelle Donelan

James Cleverly

Kit Malthouse

Gillian Keegan




Yes, they have all been **Secretary of State for Education** over the last 12 months. That's 5 people in the last year, one of whom was in the job for just 2 days!

We all hope the present incumbent, Gillian Keegan, lasts a little longer to provide much needed stability and direction for education in our country.

Gillian was born in Lancashire and grew up in Huyton on Merseyside. She attended St Augustine Catholic secondary school and left at 16 to work as an apprentice at a car factory in Kirby.

She later studied for a business studies degree at Liverpool John Moores University and the London

School of Business. Her father in law is Denis Keegan the former Conservative MP for Nottingham South. Gillian was elected MP for Chichester at the 2017 election. Her previous roles in government include being under secretary of state for apprenticeships and skills and Minister of state for Care and Mental Health. She has stated her support of degree level apprenticeships and has often said she is the only MP in parliament currently to hold one. She highlighted this from the Autumn statement:

 £2.3 billion in additional funding for our schools



## School Funding

The **Autumn statement** by the Chancellor of the Exchequer revealed that schools will get an extra £2.3 billion in each of the near two years – a yearly rise of 4 per cent.

The education sector was one of the few to benefit in a bleak statement that came amid official forecasts of the biggest drop in living standards since records began.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies confirmed the additional funding will at least restore real-terms per-pupil funding to 2010 levels.

The Treasury said the rise equates to an “average cash increase for every pupil of

more than £1,000 by 2024-25, compared to 2021-22”. The 2021 budget forecast that core school funding would rise to £56.8 billion in 2024-25. It will now rise to £58.8 billion. Paul Whiteman, general secretary of leaders’ union NAHT, said additional cash was “welcome” but “this doesn’t mean schools are completely off the hook”.

Academies minister Baroness Barran said it was “great news for schools, I know trusts and schools have been really concerned about rising costs. I hope this helps take some of the pressure off.”



*THE EXTRA CASH  
FOR SCHOOLS WAS  
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WELCOME.*

## Setting the tone for Mental Health provision

You will all be aware of the Department for Education's objective to have a Mental Health Lead within every school by 2025. The Government's intention is to identify and upskill senior Mental Health Leads so they can initiate a whole school approach to mental health to ensure the best outcomes for all students, including the most vulnerable. We must also, of course, not forget the wellbeing of staff because without emotionally healthy, emotionally literate staff, schools will not work as effectively .



Most CMATs in the Diocese are using the expertise and resources provided by the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society.

BCCS has a wide range of resources available and can help schools identify the steps they need to take to ensure that their approach to Mental Health is effective. BCCS will help you identify what a whole school approach looks like. They will stress the importance of the culture and ethos of the school and how the organization thinks about Mental Health. Ready access to provision and a triage system being in place is important. Moreover it is crucial to acknowledge that an embedded ethos helps staff and pupils feel safe, valued, and ultimately enables people to thrive.

### Who are BCCS?

They are an established children's charity delivering vital mental health and emotional wellbeing services in schools across Essex and East London.

They work to improve the lives and life chances of these children and young people, by offering a wide range of highly professional support and advice services in schools. Their diverse school team is made up of well qualified counsellors, therapists and social workers who provide support services to over 100 schools for over 1,000 children and their families each year.

Their biggest undertaking is the one-to-one work we do in schools with children. However, this is not right for every child, and so they also provide therapeutic support to children, young people and families in their dedicated counselling rooms at their head office. For further information about this, please visit [Support for Families](#)

As an extension of our services, they also provide expert training and supervision to school staff as well as specialist support to parents for developing skills to enhance the wellbeing of children and young people.

BCCS state:

The most crucial element in supporting children and young people is fast and easy access to help and support. The key for staff who are supporting children and young people is in understanding what form of support a student will benefit from: pastoral support, group work, group therapy, 1:1 therapy, or family therapy for example. The biggest challenge in access to mental health provision is two-fold: identification of need and identifying the right response.

**BCCS**

*“supporting the health and wellbeing of young people”*

## Mental Health & Wellbeing training

The Department for Education (DfE) is offering a grant of £1,200 for eligible state-funded schools and colleges to start quality assured senior mental health lead training in the 2022 to 2023 financial year.

Grants will be provided to cover, or contribute towards, the cost of DfE quality assured training to be undertaken by a senior member of school or college staff who will become the 'senior mental health lead' for that setting. The training will develop the knowledge and skills to implement an effective whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing in their setting.

All eligible education settings can benefit from senior mental health lead training, and courses are available to meet a variety of learning needs and preferences of senior leads depending on of their level of experience, type of setting or location.



Any element of the grant not spent on a DfE quality assured course can then be used:

- for supply cover for the senior mental health lead, should a school or college need to backfill a senior lead while undertaking training.
- to fund further training, activity or resources that support the development of a senior mental health lead, and contribute to the implementation of an effective whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing in a setting.



**Education & Skills  
Funding Agency**



## School role supporting Mental Health

The school role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

- **Prevention:** creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos;
- **Identification:** recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible;
- **Early support:** helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions; and
- **Access to specialist support:** working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

*The culture, ethos and environment of the school can have a profound influence on both pupil and staff mental wellbeing.*





## The Real World Impact of MATs

According to a national survey undertaken by the National Governance Association the top challenges facing schools and trusts are:

- ◆ Balancing the budget
- ◆ The attainment of disadvantaged children
- ◆ Staff wellbeing including workload
- ◆ Improving attainment
- ◆ Support for pupils with special educational needs
- ◆ COVID-19 recovery

Top strategic priorities for governing boards:

- ◆ Ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum
- ◆ Improving attainment
- ◆ Support for pupils with special educational needs
- ◆ Pupil mental health and wellbeing
- ◆ Staff wellbeing including workload
- ◆ Ensuring best use of resources

Other findings include:

Safeguarding concerns have risen following the pandemic, with 71% of respondents reporting an increase in concerns, including domestic abuse, concerns around mental health and neglect.

Challenges in recruiting teaching staff are at their highest level since first asked in 2016. Just over half of those surveyed (53%) said their school or trust had found it difficult to recruit teaching staff – an increase from 29% in 2021.

Overwhelmed external support services are impacting provision for

pupil mental health. 76% of respondents said that improved access to specialist services, and 75% said access to additional funding, would help their school or trust further support pupil mental health and wellbeing.

Almost all schools provide additional services for families. 1 in 5 (21%) schools respondents govern at now provide food banks, a significant increase to pre pandemic levels (8.2% in 2019). Those providing meals outside of term time is also now more than 8 times higher than in 2019 (37% compared to 4.2% in 2019).

8 out of 10 (82%) governors and trustees say additional funding is needed to further support families experiencing poverty.

Just 10% of governors and trustees have a positive view of the government's performance on education, the lowest since first asked in 2011.

From this it is pretty obvious that CMATs in our diocese are having to play an increasingly important role in supporting the young people in our care, just as other MATs are doing up and down the country. Schools which do not belong to that supportive family will find it increasingly difficult to provide that level of support and consequently young people will miss out.



### BRENTWOOD DIOCESE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Cathedral House, Ingrave Road,  
Brentwood, Essex, CM15 8AT

Phone: +44 (0)1277 265284  
Email:  
education@dioceseofbrentwood.org  
Website:  
www.dioceseofbrentwood.net

