



NEWSLETTER

Issue 7 - October 2022

A New Academic Year and a Growing Community

Dear Community,

As the first half of the Autumn term comes to a close I find myself reflecting on what has been a tremendously busy time for us all. I am always so impressed with the amount of hard work, energy and commitment that is fully evident in and across our schools. The Trust team are so grateful for the care and dedication that you all give to our schools.

We have been so delighted that St Benedict's Catholic School in Bury St Edmunds are now within our extended family of schools. This augments the size of our Trust to five primaries and two secondaries (with sixth forms). This presents us with some wonderful opportunities to enable our schools to further develop and enhance the important professional and strategic relationships which will ensure that our schools continue to grow and flourish through the prism of a Catholic Trust of schools.



St Benedict's Catholic School

The Catholic Secondary School for West Suffolk

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a restful and restorative break over half term. Please do find a little time to read through this edition of our

Newsletter and I'm sure you will agree on the positive and energetic work of our schools. I will leave you now with the following quote from our Holy Father.



Pope Francis tells us that "Catholic Educators are called to collaborate in the growth process of humanity through their professionalism and the consistent witness of their lives. To help young people become active builders of a more fraternal and peaceful world". In particular, he said, "Catholic educational institutions have the mission of offering horizons that are open to transcendence so that Catholic Education can make a difference by cultivating spiritual values in young people. You must not only teach content, but the values and customs of life. There are three things that you must pass on. A computer can teach content, but to understand how to love, to understand values and customs which create harmony in society, it takes a good teacher".

Yours sincerely,

Flavio Vettese

Chief Executive Officer

Christ at the Centre,

Children at the Heart



Newly Appointed Docescan Director of Education Service - Andy Stone

I'm delighted to introduce myself to everyone in the Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi-Academy Trust community. I have worked as a teacher for twenty-nine years, initially for one year in Greece teaching English and then spending twenty-eight years in Catholic schools and colleges, including fourteen years as the headteacher of a large Catholic secondary school in north-east London. I'm now the newly appointed Director of Schools' Service in the Diocese of East Anglia and I'm enjoying getting to know everyone and visiting schools, including those in the Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.



To work in Catholic education is a wonderful privilege. There is something special about the role of being a teacher in a Catholic school. Teaching is a vocation because great teachers commit so much to the role. Helping pupils learn and grow and develop is a hugely rewarding job. It's not always easy being a teacher, or member of support staff, though and it's not always easy being a school leader. That's why part of my job is to try to support our Catholic schools and their staff to enable them to do the very best job they can for the young people and the families that they serve.

I wasn't a Catholic when I began working in Catholic education, but in the year 2000 I was received into the Church and I've never looked back. To be rooted in a faith brings great strength and great comfort and it is vital that our Catholic schools nurture the faith and spirituality of all our children. I think one of the greatest strengths of Catholic education is that we offer an education of the whole person and this is really evident across the Our Lady of Walsingham Trust. I really like the idea that 'Christ is at the Centre and Children are at the Heart'.

As the Trust grows and matures, the benefits of being part of a family of schools working together for the good of all, becomes more and more evident. I'm delighted to play my own part in supporting the outstanding work of the Trust and I'm very much looking forward to visiting the schools and meeting staff, students, governors and parents in the months and years to come.



*Christ at the Centre,
Children at the Heart*



www.ourladyofwalsingham.co.uk

Joining the OLOW Trust Community - Imogen Senior St Benedicts High School, Bury St Edmunds

Imogen Senior is the Headteacher of St Benedict's Catholic School and has been teaching for over 20 years. She holds a BA in History, and an MA in Religious History both from St Mary's University. She studied her PGCE (Secondary History) at Cambridge University and also holds a Post Graduate Certificate in Teaching Psychology. She completed the MA in Catholic School Leadership in 2020 and is currently studying part-time for a PhD looking at the formation of female Headteachers in Catholic schools. She is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching.



We are very proud of the community of St Benedict's and our mission statement 'Developing Wisdom, Compassion and Resilience through Prayer and Work' informs all that we do and our approach to the education of young people.

The 2021/22 summer term saw both a visit from Ofsted and our Diocesan Inspection and we are delighted that in both inspections the mission of the school was seen as being at the heart of what we do, why we do it and how we do it and the two excellent reports brought together all the changes that had taken place over the previous few years and the journey of the school community in this period.

St Benedict's has grown and changed considerably over the four years that I have been at the school. At the heart of this has been a relentless focus on the mission of the school, the centrality of our ethos and a willingness to innovate, adapt and develop to set and achieve the highest standards for all.

The summer/autumn of 2019 saw the whole school move onto one site and the final move from the St Louis Middle School buildings on St Andrews Street in Bury St Edmunds. Whilst it was sad to leave the site and the memory of a wonderful predecessor school, being on one site made an immediate and immeasurable difference to the school and our sense of identity as a single community. The move to one site coincided with an increase in our PAN and a growth in Sixth Form numbers and we are very proud of the continued growth that we have seen in student numbers so that we are now at capacity in most year groups.

The physical changes to the school gave us an opportunity to review the school day and following this a re-evaluation of our school curriculum. We have worked hard over the past two years to develop and embed that curriculum, built around those values of wisdom, compassion and resilience, to ensure that in all we teach young people there is a clarity of purpose and intent. We have also worked hard

*Christ at the Centre,
Children at the Heart*



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with our staff to embed excellent classroom practice and teaching and learning to ensure that the way in which we implement our curriculum takes into account current research and evidence-informed practice. Throughout COVID the school continued to develop its sense of community and identity, adapting the curriculum to remote working and learning. We have embraced small group interventions to support our students and prioritised extra-curricular opportunities as soon as we were able to provide students with a really ambitious programme. Our Chaplaincy plays a huge role in the life of the school and we have worked hard to ensure that the Catholic life of the school is vibrant, welcoming and alive in faith. Our St Benedict's Award (launched September 2021) rewards and encourages students to embody and aspire to the values of the school and to recognise their excellence. Staff training has focused not just on teaching and learning, but on staff-student relationships, the Benedictine tradition and seeking a deeper understanding of the purpose of our school and subsequent role of teachers in Catholic schools as witnesses to the faith.

We maintain that excellent exam results are a by-product and not an aim of education and that the real success is young people achieving their potential and using their unique skills and attributes to go and make the world a better place once their studies with us are complete. Our results this year once again showed this with excellent outcomes both in terms of progress and attainment at both GCSE and A level. Despite these strong indicators of success we continue to strive to improve further and to share the ambition for excellence that we hope our students develop.

As we join the Trust this academic year therefore we start another phase in the school's journey. We hope to be able to continue to serve our mission and seek and develop new ways to improve the lives of our students and all those within the Trust and wider community.

Foundation Governor Recruitment

If you are interested in becoming a school governor or would like to find out more about the fantastic impact that you could make within our Trust schools then please visit the Trust website by scanning the following QR code.



Please share with anyone who is interested in learning more about the positive impact of good governance on pupils' life chances and might be interested in joining one of our school boards.

www.ourladyofwalsingham.co.uk/governorrecruitment

*Christ at the Centre,
Children at the Heart*



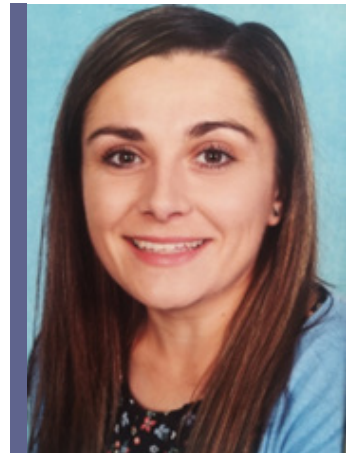
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St Mary's Primary, Ipswich

Introducing Miss Southgate

Hello, my name is Natalie Southgate. I have just recently started my position as Assistant Headteacher at St Mary's Catholic Primary School in Ipswich. I am now approaching my 10th year of teaching which has seen me predominantly teach in Key Stage 1 and one year in Year 3. During this time, I have been Mathematics subject lead having achieved my MaST and a Masters in Education (Mathematics), as well as Phonics lead for one year. I am really excited to take on this new role at St Mary's as the Curriculum lead and leader for PSHE and RSE.



In my spare time I enjoy running, watching football and relaxing with my cat Oreo! I have recently just completed my first ever marathon, running the London Marathon to raise money for the Anthony Nolan charity.

I look forward to getting to learn lots more about the trust and the people that work within it over the upcoming years.

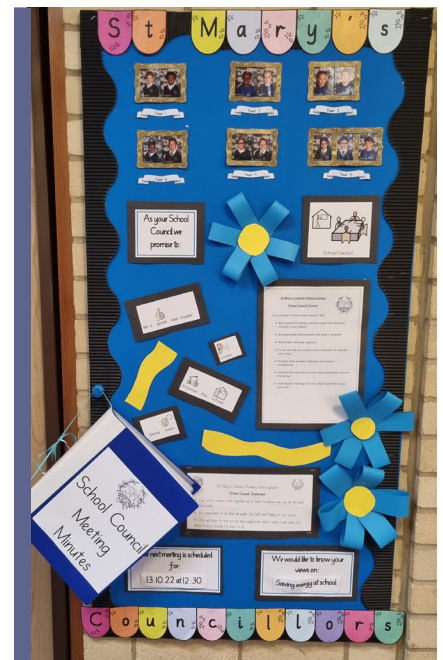
Meet our School Council

Our School Council is a student body that works to make improvements to different areas of the school, including a focus on environmental sustainability.

Our School Councillors are democratically elected at the start of each academic year and then work on the School Council for all of that year. Any children can put themselves forward to be part of the School Council.

During the first School Council meeting the children devise a School Council Charter stating all of the responsibilities they will undertake to fulfil their roles effectively.

The School Council then meets every 3 weeks to discuss issues within the school and to work on future projects. The School Councillors meet with their classes between meetings to discuss ideas, projects and issues and they then feedback to the rest of the School Council members during our meetings. Each term the School Council will complete an action plan of things they aim to work on and achieve by the end of that term.



Harvest Festival

This year, for the Harvest Festival we have collected donations for a local charity FIND and have been truly touched by the generosity of our children and their families. Last week Jane Crone from Cafod visited us to talk about Harvest around the world.



Learning and Living

Through Faith



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St Pancras Primary, Ipswich

New Academic Year

The children have returned to school this new academic year with great focus and we are particularly proud of our new reception 'Rainbows' class children have settled into school life beautifully and attended their first Mass with Fr Joseph this half term.



Mini Vinnies and CAFOD

Catholic Social teaching is at forefront of our agenda this term at St Pancras. The Mini Vinnies group wanted to support families within our local area and have been collecting donations for FIND Ipswich foodbank.

We welcomed Jane Crone from CAFOD who spoke to the whole of Key Stage Two about Catholic Social teaching and about areas of the world that are currently suffering drought and famine.



School Games Mark

We are also pleased to share that the school has been awarded the Gold School Games Mark for 2021-22. A particular thank you to Mrs Rafferty and Mr McGill who worked together on this. We are so grateful to continue to have Mrs Rafferty's expertise in supporting Sports and PE at St Pancras.



*We are Loving and kind,
We Pray and we Play*



Retreat to Clare Priory by St Louis Year 6

As part of the students transition into school leadership and in preparation to move to secondary school, Mrs Blakeley, Mrs White, Mrs Muscionico and Mr Mannell took Year 6 St Louis students to Clare Priory. Beginning the day with Mass celebrated by Fr. Gladson followed by a tour of the historic site led by Fr David.

Clare Priory is one of the oldest religious houses in England; situated in the shadows of Clare Castle on the banks of the River Stour, Suffolk. Established in 1248 at the invitation of Richard de Clare it was the first house of the Augustinian (or Austin) Friars in England. Following its suppression in 1538, the house passed through many hands and uses until the Augustinian Friars purchased the house in 1953 and returned to their origins in England. Clare Priory today acts as a Parish and as a Retreat Centre. It is the home of a mixed community of Augustinian friars and lay people, open to both men and women, seeking to live the Christian life according to the Rule of St. Augustine.

Staff each spoke to the children of the life stories of their chosen saints and saints in the making, who they felt provided inspiration through the lives that they lived.

Children spent time reflecting on their year ahead and considering how they could use their skills and talents in service to others. During the day, teachers selected four student chaplains to take leadership throughout the year in whole school liturgy and prayer. The children have demonstrated commitment to living out our Gospel Values throughout their time at St Louis.

On the glorious autumn day, there was a time to sketch quietly in the grounds and capture images of the trees, architecture and sculptures. Clare Priory is a wonderful place for everyone to visit and we hope that some Year 6 children encourage their families to return with them in the future.

Harvest Liturgy and Food Bank Collection

St Louis children gathered for a liturgy service led by Mrs Muscionico, Student Chaplains and Year 6 children. It was a time to learn about CAFOD Family Fast Day and the support we can each offer so that families around the world survive today and have food for all their tomorrows.

No-one deserves to go hungry and in response, families contributed enough food to fill two supermarket trollies. The groceries have been gifted, to Newmarket Open Door, a local Foodbank which redistributes food and other household products to those in need and other charities, as well as running a Community Pop-Up Shop in conjunction with other charities and church organisations.





Introduction from Mrs McGhee Wallace - Head of School

As the new Head of School, at St. Laurence, I am delighted that we have started the year so well with the children becoming involved in so many initiatives already. In just half a term, they have accomplished so much and I can't wait to see how the year progresses.

Wrens

Our new Reception class, Wrens, have settled into their new school routine beautifully. They have enjoyed becoming familiar with their classroom and accessing the continuous provision during busy time as well as exploring the forest during Forest School.



This term, the children have been learning that they are special and loved by God. They each carefully painted their portrait which is displayed in the school hall and they made handprints on a special altar cloth ready for their Welcome Liturgy.

The children have also been working hard to learn their phonics and they are particularly enthusiastic about blending practice and reading their first words.

Well done Wrens, the whole school is proud of you!

Students in Fine Voice

This year, we are extremely lucky to be able to work with Daniel Justin who is the Musical Director for the Diocese of East Anglia. Each week, he is coming into school to teach our Y3/4 children how to sing even more beautifully than they do already.



The children take part in fun singing games before getting down to the more serious work of hymn singing. This will help us continue to deepen networking links within the Our Lady of Walsingham Trust (St. Louis are joining us in this endeavour) to support further improvements in prayer and liturgy, leading to our pupils being literal voices of change within the Church as they share their singing with others.

Year 6 Competition Winners

Our Y6 pupils were awarded new football kits by Marshall Skills Academy as part of a special site visit to Marshall's headquarters. They were awarded the football kits after accepting – and winning – a special skills challenge set by Marshall Skills Academy General Manager, Dan Edwards.

Creation

It has been a wonderful start to the Autumn term. Naturally we have had a big focus on Creation for September. The class displays demonstrate the pupils' understanding from their RE lessons and they were keen to share their thoughts:

Emilia Y1: "God made the world and on the seventh day he rested. We need to rest to grow. God has to grow too."

Amy Y3: "First there was Grrr! and then there was a big Woo! God said "Let there be light," and sun appeared. God needed a rest after creating the whole planet."

Ajay Y6: "God created everything in six days. He wanted to create humans in his own likeness."

Evana Y6: "God appointed us to be stewards of Creation but we are not doing a very good job as we are polluting the Earth."

Our season of Creation culminated in our Harvest Festival on Friday 7th October. We sang our favourite harvest hymns and the whole school clapped joyfully along to Laudato Si. Our offertory comprised a small selection of the wonderful donations pupils and their families have donated to the Reach Food bank here in Haverhill. In total we collected 346 items.



St Felix prepares to celebrate 50 years

"In May 1973 we walked our chairs down from the middle school and then St Felix became our school."

This is the recollection of one of the first pupils of St Felix RC Primary School and she is still here! Jenny Goodall is the welcoming face of St Felix on Thursdays and Fridays.

To commemorate this momentous year, we are planning lots of events and hoping to involve pupils and teachers past and present with the support of our amazing Home School Association (HSA). Pupil voice is central to our celebrations. House Captains were asked as part of their initial interviews how we should celebrate. From balloons to banners, their ideas were both creative and considerate. One thoughtful young man pointed out the impact of the cost of living crisis on families and that we should factor this into anything we plan.



St Benedict's High School, Bury St Edmunds

International Languages Day

On 26th September, St Benedict's had special activities to celebrate the many languages spoken by the pupils and staff. There was a number of fun activities for the pupils. All tutor groups had a Languages and Culture quiz with a prize for the winning tutor group!



Year 7 were invited at lunchtime to join in various language activities and volunteer teachers made up of pupils and teachers taught Years 8 and 9 their languages for 1 lesson. Here were the languages available:

Portuguese, Italian, German, Japanese, Hungarian, Romanian, Polish, Arabic Spanish

Cambridge Museum's inspire our GCSE Artists

Fifty four of our Art and Textiles GCSE students enjoyed a packed day of drawing at the Cambridge Museums this week to start off their first GCSE project exploring the theme of 'Structures'.

We managed to squeeze in four museums, the Sedgewick Museum of Earth Sciences, The Museum of Zoology, The Fitzwilliam Museum and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, all providing a range of inspiring artefacts to draw from. Students were fantastic at gathering their own research with full camera rolls of photographs and some excellent drawings to help them develop their projects in the coming months.



We certainly saw enough to find something for everyone. Thank you all for a fantastic day of observation and reflection. Great to see those sketchbooks brimming with ideas!

*I have come that they may have life,
and have it to the full*



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St Benedict's Sixth Form, Bury St Edmunds

Year 12 Team Building Trip

On Friday 16th September all the Year 12s spent the day at Thorpe Woodlands. The trip was organised as an opportunity for the new cohort to bond as a year group. The year was split into 6 groups which rotated through a series of different activities throughout the day including a high ropes course, team building tasks in the forest and canoeing.



The students all behaved impeccably and were an asset to the school. It was wonderful to see them throw (quite literally in some cases when canoeing on the river) themselves into all the activities with many students trying new things for the first time. The feedback at the end of the day from the students was very positive, and all enjoyed the collective experience. Many thanks to Mr Tatum and Mr Spiller who joined us, and to Mrs Slater for organising the trip.

Mural Making for our A Level Artists

Twenty two of our Year 12 and 13 Art and DT students helped make history today, working with Lou Gridley local community artist to create a large-scale mural for the town centre in Bury St Edmunds.

The students helped to sculpt relief panels from a scene of the story of Bury St Edmunds made using a fantastic new material called 'Pal Tiya', often used by sculptors and prop makers working in film and television. The material will mean the mural is weatherproof and hard wearing, lasting for over 20 years.

Students enjoyed the chance to work with wonderful Lou and the new material, benefitting from the chance to see such an exciting project come together. Everyone worked hard all day to each complete their own section of the panel, which will be situated at the back of the Apex building in the town. The project is part of the Abbey 1000 celebration, funded by the Arts Council and hosted with the support of Abbeygate.

An unveiling of their work will take place in November, so watch this space to find out more and see the excellent work revealed to the public then. A fantastic commitment and sense of community spirit artist's!



*I have come that they may have life,
and have it to the full*



Black History Month

As a part of our celebrations for black history month in October, all departments across all year groups shared a text once a week that focused on an influential black person linked to their subject area.

This text could include articles, pieces of non-fiction, sections from an autobiography or fictional recounts that explored who that person is or was and the impact they had in each area of study. These were then read to classes during the weekly lessons and discussed.

The discussions focused around the impact this person had in each subject area. This proved a simple but powerful strategy that allowed us to celebrate the work of key figures in black history and further develop our focus on literacy and powerful reading experiences.



Transition to High School

Our transition process was a huge success at St Alban's for 2022. During the summer term we welcomed pupils in for two days of taster lessons, activities and a 'meet the tutor' event where parents and carers got to meet each other and our staff over coffee and cake. We also decided to open up the school and invited the families, of the new starters, to attend a special year group service to celebrate the start of their journey with us at St Alban's. This was a really lovely opportunity to show our new families how worship is at the heart of our school.

We then hosted our first open evening since the covid pandemic. Over 200 people attended on the evening and we were able to welcome new families and some familiar faces. Departments went all out with the history team setting up the trenches and body painting being created in drama. Lots of children left sporting dress up moustaches and painted markings, having thoroughly enjoyed their evening.



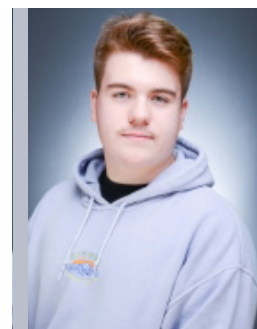
This was followed by two coffee mornings where prospective students and families were able to tour the school and see it as a live learning environment. They were able to meet key staff members to answer their questions and were even treated to some live music provided by our prefects. Our students are what makes our school and they were fantastic both in their lessons and in volunteering to tour parents.

Learning... Respecting... Caring...



A Busy Start to The New Year

The start of the 2022/23 school year has been a busy one. The newly formed Sixth Form Leadership team and Sixth Form Council have been hard at work running various events throughout the first half of this term as well as ongoing planning for big events in the future.



The main event so far this term, has been the organisation of the Sixth Form Open Evening, an event open to the public to showcase what St Alban's Sixth Form has to offer in terms of subject choice and to gain a deeper insight into the friendly community within the Sixth Form. There were a variety of insightful subject taster sessions from Maths and Geography to Textiles and English Language. Our Heads and Deputy Heads of school gave speeches to packed audiences who were curious about what is so great about the Sixth Form at St Alban's.

The introduction of the House Days for this academic year have been getting well underway which have been organised by House Captains in the Sixth Form. These are charity days for students who belong to a particular house from the school's six house saints; each House Day is a non-uniform day for the lower school where there are a variety of fundraising opportunities and break and lunch times to raise money for the school's chosen charities – CAFOD, Mind and SVP (St Vincent de Paul Society). So far, we have had Audrey House Day and, followed by a mass in the main hall during assembly, at breaktime there was a cake sale, guess how many sweets in a jar as well as showing films at lunchtime. These charity house day events are important as it brings the school community together and to collectively fundraise for charities which are incredibly important to the school's ethos.

In addition to fundraising, another key event so far this term has been the #HelloYellow campaign by the charity Young Minds which takes place every year on 10th October as part of World Mental Health Day. Organised by the school's Mental Health Lead with help from the Sixth Form's Mental Health Champion and Mental Health Ambassadors in the lower school, students across the whole school community were asked to wear a yellow item of clothing in order to show that young people are not alone with their mental health and to also raise funds for Young Minds to help support people with their mental health. The Sixth Form Mental Health Champion gave a message to the whole school community marking this important day with a message of support to anyone who is suffering with mental health and there with a voluntary donation of £1 which was collected during form time. These donations will go to Young Minds so they can continue to offer advice and support to young people with their mental health.



Clubs have also been an important aspect of the new academic year, with the return of debate club which was started by Sixth Form students last year to practice debating skills as well as discuss the current affairs which are occurring within the world, debate club happens every Monday lunchtime. Another classic club which has returned has been chess club, which has been particularly popular in the common room and both break and lunchtime by both Year 12 and Year 13 students and has been accredited at bringing together students from both year groups, further emphasising the community aspect within our Sixth Form.

Learning... Respecting... Caring...



Start of School Year 22/23 Staff Joiners

We are delighted to welcome new colleagues to the family of schools within the Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi Academy Trust. They include:

St Felix, Haverhill

Mrs Amy Jeffrey - Office Administrator
Chantelle King - Mid-day Supervisory Assistant
Sophie Reed - Mid-day Supervisory Assistant

St Laurence, Cambridge

Emily Beringer - Class Teacher and Early Career Teacher
Grace Chalklin - Learning Support Assistant
Jenny McGhee Wallace - Head of School
Sarah Ward - Class Teacher

St Louis, Newmarket

Mrs Hayley Bacon - Receptionist
Mrs Kerri Conway - SENCO
Ms Sloane Jaffe - Class Teacher and Early Career Teacher
Ms Freya Le Serve - Nursery Teacher
Mr Ryan Mannell - Class Teacher
Mrs Kirri Wyatt - Temporary Class Teacher

St Mary's, Ipswich

Amy McGarry - Class teacher
Amy Snowden - Class teacher
Natalie Southgate - Assistant Headteacher

St Pancras, Ipswich

Miss Sophie Burgess - Teaching Assistant
Mrs Erika Katkuniene - Teaching Assistant
Mrs Rebecca McGill, Senco
Mrs Cara Nwafor - Teaching Assistant

St Benedicts, Bury St Edmunds

Mrs K Ashcroft - Teacher of Design Technology
Mrs L Tattersall - Teacher of Design Technology
Mrs L Palmer - Teacher of Mathematics
Mrs A Slater - Sixth Form Administrator
Mrs C Titcombe - Administrator
Miss K Young - Learning Support Assistant
Mrs C Faircloth - Design Technology Food Technician
Mrs Y Bell - Teacher of Business

St Alban's, Ipswich

Lisa Hicks - Teacher of History
Grace Compton - Teacher of Modern Foreign Languages
Holly Jeffs - Teacher of Science
Juliet McKenzie - Teacher of Psychology
Joanna Lewis - Teacher of Drama
Dominic Marchese - Teaching Assistant
Joshua Plume Headteachers PA
Emilie Njine Siewe - Teaching Assistant
Olha Bokovets - EAL Teaching Assistant
Tracey Beddus - Teacher of Science
Natasha Horsley-Rai - Teacher of Science
Emma Garstang - School Chaplain
Jerome Ateba - Deputy Headteacher

