



**CATHEDRAL  
SCHOOLS  
TRUST**

**MAY 2024**

Dear parents and carers

As we move into the summer it is important to say good luck to all of our over 750 students taking public examinations over the next few weeks. It is a stressful time for children, however they are well prepared by dedicated staff and pastoral teams. Good luck to all!

Our congratulations go to colleagues and students at Trinity Academy. The school underwent its first inspection in February after opening in 2019. The school received outstanding judgements for both Leadership and for Personal Development and good judgements in all other categories. It is a huge accolade for the school which has clearly matured into a leading school across the city. Please [click here](#) to read the report. We are hopeful that the examination results over the summer will chime with the inspection report and look forward to welcoming the first A level cohort into the school in September.

As we mature as an organisation we recognise the need to grow so that we can develop our structures to support further school improvement. I am pleased therefore that we are growing our primary phase with Henleaze Infant and Junior Schools which are due to join CST in July and Ashton Gate Primary School which is aiming to join in September.

We are all interested to see how a change in local Bristol politics and, with a general election now taking place on the 4th July, potentially national politics might change educational policy and thinking. There are big challenges for schools including the recruitment and retention of teachers, diminishing budgets, place planning and provision for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. With all of the above it is reassuring that we, as a family of schools, are able to work together, looking after each other and taking our civic responsibilities seriously by working with the LA, other schools and trusts to provide sensible solutions for the city.

We were all very sad to hear of the death of Maisie Hughes last month. Maisie was an LSA at Stoke Park Primary School and a much loved member of staff. Maisie was only 25 years old and this tragic news has been keenly felt across the community. Schools are like families and I know that the family of Stoke Park have come together to support one another alongside Maisie's wider family.

I am really looking forward to our Trust activities in the summer months including the sports day at Headley Park and the Year 2 singing project which takes place at Trinity Academy on Friday 21st June. That day is also national 'Thank a Teacher Day', a very important date in our calendar and an opportunity to celebrate the fantastic staff working across our schools.

Best wishes

Neil Blundell  
CEO Cathedral Schools Trust



**Reflective**

**Collaborative**

**Creative**

At CST we are passionate about developing all of our staff and providing opportunities for them to develop professionally as well as personally. We all recognise the challenges of recruitment and retention within the education sector and one of the benefits of the MAT system is that we are able to offer some of our most talented staff new roles. I am delighted that Anna Benoit will move from the Deputy Headteacher role at St Werburgh's to curriculum lead across our primary schools. Jessica Swain, currently Deputy Headteacher at Headley Park Primary School has been appointed as Headteacher there and Ed Gunner, currently Deputy Headteacher at Victoria Park Primary School, was successful at being appointed to the role of Headteacher. My congratulations to all colleagues who have been appointed to new roles, the trust is richer for their work and we are lucky that they will continue to work with us going forward.

## Meet a CST Trustee

### Merlyn Ipinson-Fleming

Merlyn is a Bristolian born and bred and is an experienced Human Resources practitioner who has spent most of her career working in the public sector for many years across the southwest including, the NHS, Local Government, Education and now the Civil Service.



Merlyn describes her love of governance being borne out of attending a programme called Common Purpose, where she got the opportunity to look at Bristol and it's surrounding areas from different perspectives including property development, areas of deprivation, youth justice, immigration, unemployment and learning how the city works in terms of the challenges of each sector including the private and charitable sectors.

This experience has led to roles on the Boards of the Citizens Advice Bristol, Easton Community Association, Quartet Charitable Foundation and currently Chair of 'Raised In' a social enterprise provider of Nursery Care, seeking to support and impact communities by investing and creating fantastic foundations for babies and children in their formative years, as well as Cathedral Schools Trust, where she sits as Vice Chair with continuing roles as part of the governing body at Bristol Cathedral School, Chair of Trinity Academy and Chair of the Trusts HR Committee.

Merlyn is married to Nigel and has 4 children who have all attended Bristol Cathedral Choir school. Merlyn continues to believe that we all have gifts as individuals, that can make a whole lot of difference to our communities and our city.

This time of year is always busy with collaborative events and we are looking forward to a packed summer of events including the Year 6 careers fair at St Werburgh's Primary School, the Year 2 singing event being held at Trinity Academy and our joint Primary Sports Day at Headley Park for Year 5. This week Trinity Academy is hosting a CST staff netball tournament for the second year running. We were also very pleased to hear about the successes of Cathedral Primary School staff in the Bristol 10km and half marathon events last weekend. They have raised over £1700 already for the school's outdoor and forest school provision which is fantastic - if you would like to make a donation please [click here](#).

We are delighted that we have been awarded the contract to write the new Primary Music curriculum for Oak Academy. This work will be developed with the Bristol Beacon and Lucie Bebbington Lewis (Primary Music Lead) is leading the writing team. Our partnership with the Beacon and associated music hub is an important part of our strategic work and we are working on plans for further joint projects to strengthen our music provision and provide even more opportunities for our pupils and staff.



## 🎵 CST presents Music Makers 🎵

Thank you to all those who attended our CST Trust Music Concert at the Bristol Beacon last month. It was a joyous occasion and a memorable experience for children to perform alongside peers from other primary and secondary schools. The programme opened with a specially commissioned fanfare from local composer, James Dorman, and included our Symphony Orchestra and Big Band accompanying massed singing items such as 'You Will Be Found'. There was a performance of the finale from Ravi Shankar's 'Symphony' alongside steel pans, rock bands, the junior orchestra (CST Camerata), many choirs, a harp ensemble and samba band. It really was a fantastic evening showcasing the very best of our students, staff and families and a real tribute to the power of music and collaboration. A huge well done to everyone involved and we are already working on plans for more opportunities like this in the future.

We are very excited to let you know that the concert was filmed by a professional videographer so families can relive the evening and show friends and family who weren't able to be there in person. If you would like to purchase a copy of the concert, please [click here](#) where you can choose whether to stream the video of the concert or to download.

Please [click here](#) to read more about this wonderful evening.



## El Walker - CST Sustainability Lead

I have taught at Victoria Park Primary School since 2007. Prior to teaching, I was a Park Ranger in Cheltenham, working with communities to improve green spaces, increase community engagement and environmental education. Since starting at Victoria Park, Sustainability has been my leadership subject. I feel lucky that my school has always viewed Sustainability to be as important as other subjects for leading and embedding best practice as that is definitely not always the case.



I have facilitated our wonderful school Green Team of enthusiastic Eco Warriors over the years and we have won lots of awards including the Eco Schools Green Flag, WWF Green Ambassadors Green Team of the Year, School of the Year, Teacher of the Year and, most recently, TES Sustainable School of the Year. I am really passionate that children get to experience nature and that they spend time with each other outside of the four walls of school. Throughout my years of teaching, I have championed access to the Great Outdoors and am really proud that we have been able to offer outdoor residential experiences for our children from Year 3 to Year 6 at Victoria Park.

I also lead the CST Sustainability group comprised of brilliant, passionate staff from all our Trust schools. Our biggest achievement to date was our CST Green Team Conference where we brought together representatives from all our school green teams at City Hall. Our pupils took part in workshops, inspiring talks and a climate march round College Green. It's really exciting to now have an official CST Sustainability Strategy leading on from all our work in this group. In my new role as Sustainability Lead for the trust, I am looking forward to working across all our schools to reduce our collective impact on the environment and to support our pupils to have the knowledge and skills to have their own positive impact for the future.

When I am not teaching, I try to get outside as much as I can. I love walking, bird watching, mountain biking and running. I also volunteer at the local hedgehog rescue centre which is really fun and rewarding.

As part of our sustainability work, all CST schools have signed up to [LET's GO ZERO 2030](#) which is a national campaign uniting school communities to work together to reduce their carbon impact. Through this campaign, we have access to Climate Action Advisors who will be visiting all of our schools to support us on our sustainability journey.



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## SAFEGUARDING SPOTLIGHT

Bristol council have recently launched their new Family Hubs virtual offer, including a new package of online learning for every parent and carer in Bristol for free! The courses have been developed by the Solihull Approach, alongside the NHS, health experts and parents too! Their aim is for every parent in Bristol to complete the Solihull Approach – the learning is for everyone, not only for when you are struggling!

Free online parenting courses are available to help parents and carers understand their children's feelings better and how they can support their children through the years as they develop and grow.

The courses cover a whole range of topics to support parents and carers through all stages of a child's development including:

- Pregnancy and post-pregnancy support
- How to understand your child or teenager's mental health
- Help for understanding relationships
- Support for children with additional needs

There are also courses for teenagers to help them understand their mental health and feelings.

To find out more about the courses click here: [Parenting courses](#)

There are also more traditional face to face courses available in Bristol and these run regularly throughout the year. More information can be found here: [Parenting courses in Bristol](#)

For those families who are living in North Somerset, you can access parenting support through North Somerset council and more details can be found here: [Parenting support](#)

## WORK WITH US!

There are a number of vacancies for teaching and support staff roles across our schools, if you know of anyone who might be interested then do pass on the details and visit our website at: [www.cathedralschoolstrust.org/careers](http://www.cathedralschoolstrust.org/careers).