

Dear parents and carers,

It was so good to see so many of you at the trust concert last month in the Cathedral, a wonderful celebration of the talent of our children and staff. We have seen some fantastic collaboration across our schools in recent weeks (see page 3 for more details) and it has been great to see how our wider communities have been involved in recent Iftars to celebrate Eid. Thank you to all who helped to organise or who participated in these events - your efforts are very much appreciated.

As I mentioned in my speech at the concert these are turbulent times for our schools. Given the challenges around recruitment and retention it has never been more important to recognise the energy, talent, commitment and vocation displayed by our teaching and support staff.

So many of our children will be sitting public exams over the coming weeks. My thanks to all of our staff and of course parents for supporting them so well. It is a stressful time and I know how much they appreciate the encouragement and reassurance.

As we work across our schools to prepare for the next academic year I am conscious that being part of a family really helps our children and staff. I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and that the new format is an improvement and celebrates the collaboration and creativity that we value within the trust.

With best wishes

Neil Blundell
Chief Executive, Cathedral Schools Trust



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. We are also on the lookout for estates/site staff so do get in touch by emailing recruitment@cathedralschoolstrust.org if you are interested.

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Staff Spotlight - Simon Eakins

I have been the Finance Director at CST for just over 5 years now, having previously been the FD for a Trust in south Bristol. When I first came into education the landscape of funding for schools was so different to what we see now. My main worry back then was ensuring we got our hands on all the various pots of money available to ensure our students got the best available resources and staffing.



Times have changed and the world has changed. Those "pots" have all but disappeared for now and it is becoming increasingly hard to maximise the income for schools. As a result, my focus has increasingly been on working with schools to get best value from their limited budgets and ensuring every pound of income can be stretched as far as possible. We aren't alone in this I know and it is something we are all facing.

I am really aware that many people and families are struggling and I know our amazing schools will do everything they can to assist and support you where they can. I used to volunteer for a debt advisory charity which helped people get out of debt. There are some amazing charities out there that can help you if you find yourself in this situation. My only bit of advice is if you are in financial trouble, don't bury your head in the sand, find someone that can help.



Meet a CST Trustee - Fiona Francombe

Fiona trained in technical theatre at Rose Bruford College, before embarking on a career in stage management, working at Manchester Royal Exchange Theatre Company and the Royal Shakespeare Company. She moved into the TV industry in 1990 in London, joining the BBC's Drama department as a runner. Following her move to Bristol in 1993, she worked both for the BBC and as a freelancer location manager and producer, before going on to manage production liaison for South West Screen and Creative England.

In response to the BBC's 2009 decision to relocate production of dramas such as Casualty to Cardiff, Fiona successfully lobbied Bristol City Council for support in retaining production industries in the city. In 2010 she went on to establish The Bottle Yard Studios in previously disused warehouses on a seven-acre site situated in south Bristol. The Council-owned studios are now established as one of the leading production facilities in the country, contributing greatly to the millions generated by the media sector for the local economy each year. Fiona moved to Bristol Old Vic Theatre School as Principal and CEO in August 2020.

Fiona has sat on the Royal Television Society West committee, the BBC/Bristol City Partnership Steering Group, the One City Economy Board, is a Trustee of the Cathedral Schools Trust and a member of the Venturers Trust. In recognition of her 'exceptional contribution to film and TV', she was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Arts in 2019 by the University of the West of England (UWE Bristol). In 2017 she received the Women of the Year Award from the Bath Chronicle & Bristol Post for outstanding leadership.



CST Primary gymnastics competition

In March Stoke Park Primary organised the CST gymnastics competition for our Primary schools which was hosted at Trinity Academy. It was a brilliant event with lots of great displays and collaboration across our schools. The children really enjoyed themselves and there was lots of swing, roll and bounce action!

Music Projects - Trailblazers & LEAP project

Over 100 Year 7 students from across our three secondary schools took part in an amazing day of music making as part of our Trailblazers scheme. Students spent the day attending workshops led by the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama which ended with an evening concert where they performed alongside professional brass and woodwind ensembles. Most of the students only started learning instruments last September and it was an inspiring experience for all involved.

On Wednesday 22nd March Trinity Academy hosted the LEAP project with Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. Trinity welcomed pupils from Stoke Park, Victoria Park, Headley Park, St Werburghs and Cathedral Primary to watch an exciting orchestral show featuring RBC's LEAP Ensemble and students from Trinity and BCCS who joined them. It was a brilliant day enjoyed by students and staff alike. A Year 3 student beamed on the way out and excitedly said it was the "best day of my life!"



St Katherine's fashion show

Students came together to create and curate a fashion show to recognise and celebrate the fabulous range of cultural heritage in their community. Sixth Form Equity, Diversity and Inclusion leaders crafted a vision for the show and over 14 nationalities were represented, with more than fifty students wearing their cultural clothing with visible joy. As one parent, commented: "Staff and audience were clearly moved and thrilled to see the students take the space and I have rarely seen a group of teenagers be so supportive of each other in a public event." In the after-school show, families were invited to parade with their children and we were privileged to appreciate the dance abilities of our community and as one audience member wrote afterwards: "A magic had happened that made both children and parents feel proud and want to be visible."



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10 year anniversary of a play in a week with Victoria Park Primary School & Travelling Light Theatre Company

For the 10th year Travelling Light Theatre Company visited Victoria Park Primary School to deliver their very popular 'play in a week' programme. This year's play featured the stone age and the modern skateboard. Children had the opportunity to write, design, sing, dance, act and perform in the play. It remains a highlight of the school calendar for children, staff and parents and builds children's confidence and determination.

[Click here](#) to see the article from B24/7

Inspirational CST "Festival of Music"

On Wednesday 26th April pupils from across our 9 schools gathered in the prestigious Bristol Cathedral for this year's Trust concert "Festival of music". It was a sell-out evening and the audience was treated to a variety of music performances including St Werburgh's steel pan ensemble, the very talented Emma Roberts singing "Castle on a Cloud" from Les Misérables and an amazing rendition of "Shackles" by the Trinity Academy Phase 2 Choir featuring stand out soloists Jessica Holden and Jasmine Muir. There was a brilliant atmosphere throughout the Cathedral with lots of positive feedback from parents, friends, staff, students and their families. Thank you to all those involved!

We're already looking forward to next year's concert which we are hoping to hold at the Bristol Beacon. In order to make this happen and to support music more widely across the Trust, we have launched a fundraising campaign to help cover the costs. If you are able to donate then please scan the QR code on this page or visit our JustGiving site at:

www.justgiving.com/campaign/CSTmusic2023-24campaign



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New science labs for St Katherine's

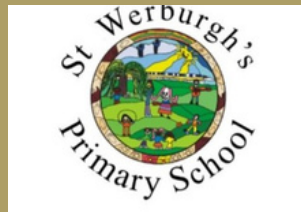
We are delighted to announce that St Katherine's was recently awarded a prestigious grant from the Wolfson Foundation to refurbish its science classrooms.

The grant will enable the school to create a suite of high-tech laboratories to enhance the teaching of science subjects and take their study of practical science to a new level.



The science department's impressive exam results and the progress of its pupils made the school eligible to apply and were contributing factors in successfully securing the grant.

We're always looking for opportunities to raise more money to enhance our schools and are very grateful for work that PTAs in particular do to support their schools with fundraising efforts. Thank you and keep up the good work!



We are very proud of our students at St Werburgh's Primary School for striving to be agents of positive change as demonstrated by these recent press articles:

www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/news/schoolchildren-stage-protest-against-idling-drivers/

www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/news/st-werburghs-students-take-climate-concerns-to-city-hall/

We always encourage all of our students to try to make a positive contribution to society by standing up for the issues that affect us all and this shows St Werburgh's Primary School students doing exactly that - well done!

For the latest news from CST and all our schools connect with us on Twitter: [@CST_Schools](https://twitter.com/CST_Schools)



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We now live in a digital age with children spending an increasing amount of time online. It is important that children and their parents know how to stay safe when accessing online material and where to get advice and support. All our schools teach children the importance of staying safe online and to be responsible and respectful with their communication online through the curriculum. The increased use of social media and messaging services mean that more children are accessing more content at a faster rate than ever before. We recognise and acknowledge that this can be a worry for parents trying to monitor their children's interactions online and the content they are viewing. We have put together some resources and recommendations to support you but please do not hesitate to get in contact with the safeguarding team at your child's school if you have any worries or concerns about your child's online behaviour or activity.

Things you can do to help keep your child be safe:

1. Parental controls

These can be used to monitor the content that your child can view on their mobile phones or other devices. It can also be used to limit what they view on TV streaming services or their interactions on gaming platforms.

2. Talk to your child

Have an open and honest conversation with your child regularly about their online footprint. Talk with them about the apps/platforms/sites they are accessing and encourage them to share these with you to further your understanding.

3. Limit screen time

Whilst there are lots of benefits to having access to the world at your fingertips, too much screen time can have a negative impact on your child's health, mental wellbeing and social interactions. It is important that as parents we model a healthy balance of time away from screens and encourage good sleeping routines, in-person social interactions and physical activity.

Resources for Parents



We strongly encourage all parents to download the National Online Safety (NOS) app which is available free of charge. This has a wealth of information for parents and is continuously updated with really easy to read handy guides. This includes guides on how to set parental controls for all devices, parents guides to commonly used social media sites, parent guides to online gaming and much more.



This website is run by the National Crime agency and has some excellent information for parents.
<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>