



**St Ralph  
Sherwin**  
Catholic Multi Academy Trust



**OUR VISION**  
"We are a Catholic family of schools, working as one, transforming every individual, their family and our Trust community through the building of God's Kingdom, caring for our environment, today rather than tomorrow."

## Our Journey Together

- news from across the St Ralph Sherwin Trust

Pentecost 2022

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It has been the greatest honour to be the first CEO of the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust. To have the opportunity

to build from scratch a Trust of 25 schools, consisting of 8,000 pupils and 1,200 staff across five local authorities is quite unique and an absolute privilege.

We were ensuring that Bishop Patrick's vision for Catholic education materialised; protecting, developing, growing and nurturing all within our Catholic communities, was our aim. We faced many challenges along the way. We inherited schools with large

financial deficits, nine out of the 25 schools were in Ofsted categories when we started and there had been a lack of investment in our school estates. However, we faced these challenges with energy, enthusiasm and some really talented colleagues and, over time, we overcame these hurdles and after four years our Trust is thriving and successful.

I am retiring this summer and am delighted to say that our new CEO will be Kevin Gritton. He has been a hugely successful Headteacher at the biggest school within our Trust, Saint Benedict. Kevin has lived and breathed our Trust for the last four years and is in a good position to build on our strengths and to know where we need to develop further.

I shall miss much about this role, but

I shall probably miss being with the children the most. The higher up an organisation you rise, the more difficult it can be to remain in touch with the young people. At the end of the day, we are all here to serve them and do our best by them, creating, as Pope Benedict said, future Saints! Can I thank you all for your continued support for our schools and Trust and wish you all a very relaxing summer break when it arrives.

God Bless

**Sean McClafferty**  
Chief Executive

# Eco-garden dreams set to come true at eight Trust schools



Eco-gardens will be created at eight schools across the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust after they secured funding from East Midlands Airport.

Blessed Robert Sutton, in Burton, St Thomas', in Ilkeston (pictured right), and St Edward's, in Swadlincote, will share £34,000 from the airport's eco-gardens project.

English Martyrs', in Long Eaton, Holy Rosary, in Burton, St George's, St Joseph's and St John Fisher, all in Derby, will work with a wildlife expert on their garden plans before the amount of funding they will receive is confirmed in the Autumn. The eight schools were among 26 that applied for funding from EMA's eco-garden project.

All schools were asked to submit designs for gardens or green spaces that substantially boost biodiversity and lead to improved wellbeing.

The proposals were evaluated by a panel of experts which included representatives from the airport's corporate social responsibility team, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and the parks, green spaces and environmental management team at South Derbyshire District Council.

The submissions were assessed against several criteria. The designs needed to demonstrate how the gardens would make existing space environmentally richer and more diverse, improve biodiversity, stimulate outdoor learning, and have



wellbeing benefits.

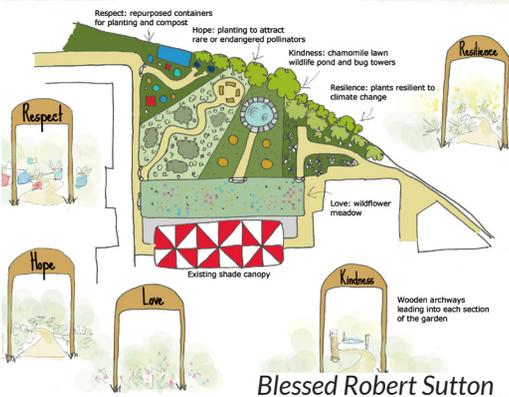
A wide range of designs were submitted, with proposals ranging from creating wetlands, living classrooms, sensory gardens, vegetable patches and wheelchair accessible green spaces.

Such was the standard of entries that the judges decided to award funding to all participating schools. Some will be awarded the exact amount of funding that they asked for, while others will be given support to refine their designs to maximise biodiversity and wildlife benefits.

Turn to page 2 to read more

cont'd from page one

St Edward's



Blessed Robert Sutton

The cost of these will then be re-evaluated and schools will be awarded the appropriate funding to deliver their schemes.

Jo Pettifer, Sustainability Project Co-ordinator for the St Ralph Sherwin CMAT, worked with schools on their garden proposals.

She said: "I am delighted that eight of our schools have been successful in securing funds. The design ideas include 'Flight Path' inspired by the ducks which regularly land on St Thomas' school roof, 'The Lost Gardens of Holy Rosary' which is a magical secret garden idea and The Sutton Way Eco Garden: a garden inspired by Blessed Robert Sutton's Mission Statement – Love, Respect, Hope, Kindness, Resilience - it shows how those values will help us make a more sustainable world. The pupils have worked so hard, carrying out wildlife audits, planning their designs, discussing them with their teachers and filming presentations for the competition. I am so grateful that East Midlands Airport is rewarding all that hard work, what a triumph."



English Martyrs'

## Pupils take to the stage for first CMAT musical



Pupils from the south of the Trust performed in a musical at Derby Theatre as part of the Trust's Stronger Together project, led by Performing Arts Lead Anna West. A total of 150 children were involved in every aspect of the production.



## 50th anniversary celebrations

St Edward's Catholic Voluntary Academy in Swadlincote has been celebrating its 50th anniversary. Pupils, parents, members of the community, the Trust and the Diocese were invited to a special Mass celebrated by Bishop Patrick McKinney. This



was followed by the official blessing of a mosaic in school created to commemorate the occasion.

## Ukrainian student given special welcome

A Year 8 pupil at St Philip Howard CVA, in Glossop, spent three hours using Google Translate to write a letter in Ukrainian to a new student.

Billie - Jo, who is a mental health ambassador for her year, wanted to make the new pupil feel welcome. In her letter, she said: "I'll be here to support you, don't be afraid to come and talk to

me."

When Billie-Jo (pictured) gave her the letter, she apparently smiled for the first time since joining the school and said "thank you" in English. The school has been using Ukrainian subtitles on its interactive screen and translating written work so that it's easier for the new student to understand.



# 'Good' rating for St John Fisher following DCI



St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy has been given an overall rating of good following a Diocesan Canonical Inspection.

Inspectors from the Diocese of Nottingham said that the quality of Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship at the school were all good.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school, and the provision for Collective Worship, were graded outstanding.

The report said that St John Fisher CVA was well supported by the St Ralph Sherwin CMAT, which is committed to increasing all aspects of school improvement.

Inspectors said that pupils were proud to be a member of the St John Fisher community and they enjoyed the responsibilities the school provided for them, including being part of the chaplaincy team, the pupil council and as eco-champions.

The report said: "St John Fisher is a caring school with a family feel which is evident when you enter the school, and which is spoken about by so many of the stakeholders."

Commenting on the Catholic Life of the school, they said: "The Catholic Life of the school is highly valued by all stakeholders and leaders have ensured that it is the driving force for future school improvement across the school. This has a tangible impact on the aspirations that school leaders, staff and parents have for the future of the pupils in their care."

Pupils' charity work and fundraising was also highlighted in the report. Inspectors said: "A very large majority of pupils value opportunities to raise money for local, national and global charities and they have done so with great success. Most importantly, they understand why raising money for those in need is important. A Year One



pupil said, "We raise money because Jesus is our example, and this is how we show we love one another."

Inspectors described St John Fisher as a calm and spiritual school community "where staff want the best for pupils in their care."

Angelina Brett, Headteacher, said she was delighted with the outcome of the inspection.

She said: "Due to the COVID pandemic, we had to wait much longer than we thought we would for the inspectors to visit us! We have worked hard to maintain our high standards and I am so proud of the St John Fisher CVA community. The children, staff, parents, governors and parishioners shared their love and support of the school with the inspectors, highlighting that we are a family who are committed and care deeply for each other."

Trust CEO, Sean McClafferty, said: "I speak for all our Trust schools when I say that we are so proud of this achievement at St John Fisher."

"I know the whole school community, led by Angelina Brett, has worked incredibly hard to ensure that enhancing the Catholic ethos has been the priority for everyone."

"The fact that leaders and governors of the school have been judged as outstanding in their work shows how much progress is being made."

"Well done to all."



St Margaret's CVA, in Glossop, held a Jubilee Celebration Day which included a spectacular Colour Run. Hundreds of people turned out for the event which also included live music, stalls and food.



Congratulations to Ysabella in Year 8 at Saint Benedict, who won Derby Schools Public Speaking Competition. Six Saint Benedict students were also finalists in the city-wide competition. Students worked with the Lost Boys Theatre Company and participated in a series of workshops before the competition. They then delivered their own speech and the winner, Ysabella, picked up a trophy in recognition of her efforts.

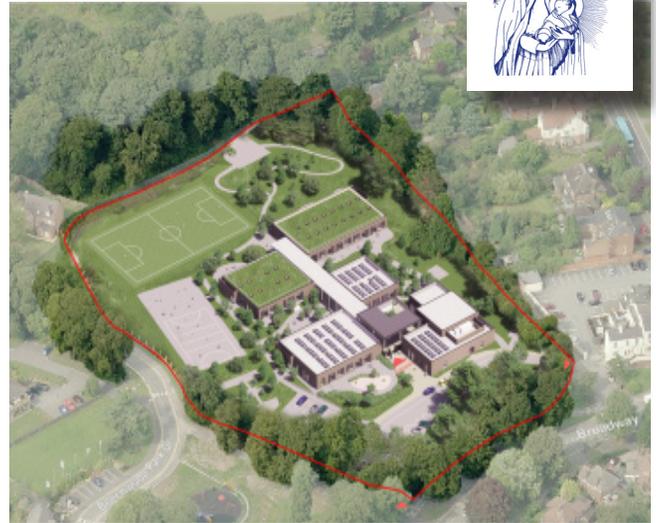
# Plans revealed for unique new building for St Mary's CVA



St Mary's would be the UK's first biophilic school as part of a pilot scheme for the Department for Education.

Plans have been revealed for an innovative new building for St Mary's CVA in Derby. St Mary's would be the UK's first biophilic school as part of a pilot scheme for the Department for Education. Biophilia is an approach that focuses on connecting those inside a building with nature and increasing biodiversity through design. The aim is for the new building to be net zero carbon in operation – which means that the amount of carbon emissions added is no more than the amount taken away. St Mary's original building in Broadway, Derby, was destroyed by fire in October 2020 and the school has been based at St James House in Mansfield Road, since April 2021.

Amanda Greaves, Executive Headteacher at St Mary's, said: "We are delighted to finally be able to share the wonderful news relating to our proposed new school. We would like to thank our parents and carers for their unwavering patience and understanding in supporting us, and we look forward to this new and exciting phase in the



development of our new school." Trust CEO, Sean McClafferty, said: "Caring for our environment is at the heart of our Trust vision and we are thrilled that one of our schools is part of this pilot scheme for the DfE, which is all about increasing biodiversity and sustainability, something we are working on with all 25 of the schools in our Trust family."

## Year 5 chaplaincy teams from schools across the Trust celebrated Mass with Bishop Patrick McKinney



MP Robert Lorgan paid a visit to Saint Mary's in New Mills. Students performed poems, chants and songs to demonstrate their knowledge of democracy and their 'Global Learning' topic.



Pupils at St Thomas' in Ilkeston have been busy fundraising.

Henry (pictured) raised £75.25 for St Thomas' link school in Gambia by holding a football fundraiser.

Children in Year 3 raised money for the people of Ukraine, Year 4 pupil Willow sold ice pops and took part in a race to raise money for Cancer Research.



# Saying a fond farewell to....

A number of our colleagues are leaving us after many years of long service.

We are saying goodbye to **Dan Morgan**, who is an IT Network Manager for Ilkeston. Dan started as an IT technician at Saint John Houghton 21 years ago. He was made an ICT manager after 7 or 8 years and in recent years began supporting the Trust. Dan is known at Saint John for walking around with his tea mug attached to his belt! Thanks for all of your hard work and good luck for the future!

We are also saying farewell and thank you to **Anne Thomas**, who is leaving St Joseph's in Matlock. Anne had a cover contract in 1990 and started on a permanent basis in 1992. During her time she has been a midday supervisor, worked in the office, been a Governor and Chair of the PTA. She has played a huge part in St Joseph's over the years and will be very sorely missed.

**Christine Barnes**, Head of PE, is leaving St Thomas More after 37 years. She said: "I accepted the post of teacher in charge of girls PE and Needlework at St Thomas More, Buxton, in 1985 at the age of 22. I remember thinking that I would stay only one year due to the size of the school (approx. 260 pupils), the poor facilities and cold weather! However, what I had not bargained for was the opportunity to work with such kind, caring and supportive colleagues. I very quickly became sucked into what is the family of STM. "At first lessons proved challenging, the playing fields were frequently invaded by cows and sheep and 'Do It Now' activities often included re-gathering stray cattle! The indoor facilities were very cramped, but lessons were fun, popular and option groups well subscribed.

"The new Sports Hall, built in 2008 was a game changer. The updated facilities had a massive impact on opportunities for all pupils, teams were successful and the hosting of events became possible. It was at this time I realised there was nowhere else I would rather teach! "I am therefore thankful for the opportunity to have observed pupils grow in confidence, develop new skills and foster the love of sport.

"But now it is time to hang up my trackies, spend more time with my family and friends, and improve my own fitness, taking time to plan ski holidays without pupils!"



June Haynes



Judy Kilbourne



Christine Barnes



Dan Morgan

**Judy Kilbourne** is leaving St Thomas' in Ilkeston after 17 years as a teacher and **June Haynes** is saying goodbye to St Alban's in Derby after around 22 years. June started off as a parent helper then a dinner lady, SEN TA for 7+ years and went on to being a TA across the school. June said: "I started in nursery and reception, I have supported all staff and loved supporting all the children of all ages, specially seeing how much they have achieved over the years. I will miss my St Alban's family; it is truly a beautiful school!" **Margaret Nadin**, a TA and Nursery Nurse at St Mary's in Marple Bridge, is retiring after 25 years. **Rebecca Spencer**, who works in the office at Saint John Houghton, is also leaving us after 11 years.

Thank you to everyone for everything they have done for the children in their care, for their school and the Trust. We wish you all well for the future!

## More goodbyes...

Farewell and thank you to our CEO Sean McClafferty who is retiring after four years, Jeremy Spencer, Senior Director of School Improvement, who is moving on to be CEO at the Fallibroome Trust and our Trust Board Chair Jacqueline Rodden. Farewell also to Graham Lobb, Executive Headteacher at St Joseph's in Matlock and St Thomas' in Ilkeston. Thank you for everything that you have all done for our Trust and good luck for the future!



Graham and Sean



Jeremy and Sean



Sean and Jacqueline