

Newsletter

A very warm welcome to you all at the beginning of a new school year - and a special welcome to the pupils, families, staff and volunteers who are just joining the St Chad's family. We are delighted you have joined us.

Fresh starts are exciting and I warmly invite you all to embark on this new school year full of hope and determination. As a Trust we aspire to provide the very best care and educational opportunities for all of the children in each and every one of our academies. The year ahead will provide all of us with new experiences, new opportunities and new challenges. Let us work together to be enriched by those experiences, open to diverse, exciting opportunities and resilient in our response to challenge. It is exciting to be taking the next step of our journey under the leadership of Sarah Cockshott, who we welcome as our new CEO. Together we will continually strive to improve the outcomes for all pupils, with all that we do underpinned by caring, inclusive, Christian values and a never wavering focus on Children First.



Dr Alison Primrose,

Chair, St Chad's Academies Trust Board

Hi everyone and welcome back to the academic year 2022-2023 - didn't the summer holidays fly!?

It is a great privilege for me to take up the role of CEO and be working with you all.

I am really looking forward to visiting your academies throughout this term.

Just a little bit about me. I have two grown up boys who I am immensely proud of.

I am a Nana to Reagan who is 3 years old. I am a musician and love music but especially musicals.

My husband and I like to go and watch sports together (athletics, rugby and more recently football).

I recently met most of our ECTs from across the Trust and this was wonderful to see so many enthusiastic teachers wanting to impart their wisdom on our children. They were all very positive and a credit to your academies. They had great ideas and contributed well to the discussions we had. What a great opportunity for us all to 'grow our own,' our future, in the St. Chad's way!



Over the next 12 months as a Trust, we shall be consolidating and working closely with our academies whilst navigating our way through the green and white papers. This means that we shall have a focus on outcomes for pupils, SEND, vulnerable pupils and the wider curriculum.

Across the Trust we have welcomed, to our family, some new members of staff and I am sure you have made them feel very at home and answered their questions. As I said to the ECTs, we are very lucky to be working with children and making a difference to their lives and communities. 'Children First!'

Have a great half term and I shall look forward to hearing your stories of achievements over the coming months.

Grace and Blessings be in your path,

Sarah Cockshott

CEO - St. Chad's Academies Trust.

Help with cost of living: info and support

The cost of living is rising rapidly, putting huge pressure on people across the country.

This page includes links to external information that could help if you are struggling financially.



The following support is in addition to the information shared with all academies as we navigate our way through the cost-of-living crisis, whilst managing our own financial and mental health and well-being.

Government cost of living payments

View [a list of payments available from the government](#) for the rising cost of living. There are different amounts of money depending on your circumstances.

Do beware – scammers are targeting people. You won't be asked to apply by text, so don't follow up a message to claim. No one calling about money given out by your council will ask you to share your bank details either.

Money and benefits advice

[Money Saving Expert](#) covers a range of general advice on making your money go further.

[Turn2us](#) gives free advice on benefits and grants you may be able to claim.

Use the [Turn2us Benefits Calculator](#) to check if you are entitled to any benefits that you aren't claiming

If you're worried about paying money back

Don't pay for debt advice, try [National Debtline](#) or call them for free on: 0808 808 4000

[Stepchange](#) also gives free expert debt advice

If you have borrowed money informally and are being pressured to pay it back, the [England Illegal Money Lending Team](#) tackle loan sharks and can help you. Their 24 hour helpline is free and anonymous on 0300 555 2222. A call won't commit you or anyone else to doing anything. Borrowing money from loan sharks isn't illegal, only lending it, so you won't get into trouble.

If you're trying to spend less on energy

[National Energy Action](#) is a great source of advice. Call them on 0800 304 7159 and ask about the [Warm Home Discount](#)

Use [Sust-it](#) to check how much it costs to run your electrical appliances and learn about energy efficient products

Learn how much each of your appliances costs to run with this [online activity](#)

If you're trying to cut down food costs

Compare prices across supermarkets with [Trolley](#)

Use [Trussell Trust](#) or [Food Aid Network](#) to find a foodbank

The [Too Good to Go](#) app gives you a chance to get low cost surplus food from cafes and restaurants

[Olio](#) helps you share food and resources in your community

For budget recipes, try Jack Monroe's [Cooking On A Bootstrap](#)

[Bags of Taste](#) is a fun project that gets you trying new healthy recipes on a budget





I'm Lynne Hardcastle and I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Principal at Stoke Minster Primary Academy. Together with my vice-principal, and two assistant principals we are looking forward to a very exciting year at the school. The school is placed in an area of some deprivation but this does not in any way detract from the sense of community and commitment to the school demonstrated by our parents. Our children are keen to learn and take full advantage of all the opportunities the school offers them. Our school mission of Faith, Love and Hope allowing our children to flourish is foremost in all we do.

I look forward to meeting my fellow Trust Principals at future meetings .



My name is Laura Hopley and I have recently taken up the position of Executive Principal at St. Peter's, Stonnall and St John's, Wednesbury.

Prior to taking up post I was in the very fortunate position of opening a school from scratch in Lawley, Telford. This was a very daunting task as a brand new head, but a journey that I thoroughly enjoyed! Being able to create something from nothing as a true privilege and I am proud of everything we achieved there. During my time at Lawley I was also asked to take on an executive head post temporarily to see another school in our cluster through a period of change and challenge. This provided me the opportunity to see a very different aspect of leadership, having to drive rapid change, and has prepared me well for taking up my new post. I am very much looking forward to working in the trust – I have been so struck by the level of care and support that everyone shows each other and the warm welcome I have received from everyone I have met. Outside of work I am a keen baker, and have even won the Shropshire Bake Off in the past! I also play netball twice a week and took up pottery after lockdown which has been amazing for making me focus on something else outside of work! I am a huge believer in having a work life balance, even if I don't quite manage to achieve it all the time! I have 3 children – 2 boys and a girl aged between 18 and 10. Having had 2 biological children I thought our family was complete until one of our children in the reception class at school's adoption fell apart... a few conversations with my husband and children and a long process with social workers, I took 'bringing your work home with you' to a whole new level as our daughter moved in with us in 2019 and has finally completed our family. I am really looking forward to getting to know you all over the coming months and working with you.



St Chad's Office signage

The Trust central function moved in to their new office space in October 2021.

As we have settled in, we have finally got our new signage up, to avoid losing any visitors around Birchills.

From the carpark.....



To the front of the academy.



Salary sacrifice—employee benefits

If you would like more information on either Scheme please contact the Trust Operations team, who will be able to provide more guidance on 01543 622433.

Alternatively, please use the employer scheme reference and link to find out more about these exciting saving opportunities:


<http://www.cyclescheme.co.uk/b213c8b>

<https://www.techscheme.co.uk/b213c8b>


Spread the cost and save on the latest tech.



 techscheme.co.uk

 **How much can I save?**

Hybrid Bike
£1,400



RRP: £1,400

	Basic Rate:	Higher Rate:
Our Price	£1,032	£892
Monthly Cost	£78	£66
Monthly Saving	£367	£507

End of hire cost: £98

Check your savings at www.cyclescheme.co.uk

Your Pension Matters

Research shows that poor financial wellbeing affects 1 in 4 employees which in turn may affect their work.

St Chad's Academies Trust views supporting their employees through their work life cycle as paramount, providing you with access to information, answers and when required face-to-face help, supporting your financial health and wellbeing.

Please find details for the relevant pension schemes administered by the Trust, as well as additional signposting for independent pension services. Please use the QR codes to get to the websites.

Shropshire Pension Fund
Call 01743 252130
<https://shropshirecountypensionfund.co.uk>
Register for **My Pension Online** to view your pension account and update your personal details.

SCAN ME



Staffordshire Pension Fund
Call 01785 278222
<https://www.staffspf.org.uk/members/membersaspx>
Register for **My Pension Portal** which enables you to view your pension online, calculate your own pension estimate to help you plan for retirement. You can also view and change your contact details and keep up to date with your pension.

SCAN ME



West Midlands Pension Fund
Call 0300 111 1665
<https://www.wmpfonline.com/>
Register for the **Pensions Portal** to view and print your annual benefit statements, view and update your contact details and other personal information and calculate pension estimates on active pension accounts.

SCAN ME



Teachers Pension

Call 0345 606 6166

www.teacherspension.co.uk

Join **My Pension Online (MPO)** to get access to your pension information online. There are tools and resources available online which are designed to make things easier and give you all the answers you need.

SCAN ME



Other useful independent pension services

Money Helper is a Pension Advisory Service whether you're just starting to think about your retirement, are about to retire, or have been retired for some time, they've got guides for you.

www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement

Unbiased empowers people to make confident financial decisions, from buying a house to planning for retirement. Not only can they connect you quickly and easily to the best experts, they can also help you choose the right type of advice to help you achieve your goals.

<https://www.unbiased.co.uk/life/pensions-retirement>

Citizen's Advice shows different ways you can save for your pension, how to get started and what to think about when you're getting near to retirement.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/pensions/>

Government Pension Tracing Service if you need to track your personal or workplace pension, you can find the details through:

<https://www.gov.uk/find-pension-contact-details>

Or by calling **Pension Tracing Service** on 0800 731 0193

Planning for Retirement is very important, even if it isn't for another 40 years, everyone needs a plan.

Whether you are a member of West Midlands Pension Scheme, Staffordshire Pension Scheme, Shropshire Pension Scheme or Teachers Pension scheme you can all access a Pensions Portal each year you can view a new Annual Benefit Statement and see what your Pension will look like on retirement, Scan the QR code for access to the schemes.

Planning is key, you can get advice from Independent Pension Services, and you could pay extra AVC's into the scheme if you wanted too.

If you are struggling to keep being a member of the Pension Scheme, then please give them a ring. There are options of you joining the 50/50 scheme, so contributions will be reduced but membership is still kept up to date.

Contact Numbers for the all the schemes are on the picture above, any general queries please contact **Becky Green Pay-roll & Pensions Officer** on 07938 603151.