

The PostgateNews

ISSUE 01 | DECEMBER 2019

More than 600 members of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust family gathered at St Mary's Cathedral to prepare themselves to meet Jesus at Christmas – Photo by Stuart Boulton



FORMING LIVES READY TO FACE THE FUTURE

IN THIS EDITION

A Christmas reflection | A message from our CEO
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The season to be jolly – but is that all it's about?

In his reflection “Peeling off the Whitewash”, Father Daniel O’Leary talked about an old church in Holland where people stop to bow in the direction of a whitewashed wall as they enter.



Everyone did it but nobody knew why. Then when they started renovating the church, they began stripping off the paint and beneath the whitewash they found a centuries-old painting of Christ. Nobody in living memory had seen it, yet they still showed reverence towards it.

Christmas can be a bit like the wall in the story. We spend hours online or fighting our way through crowds as we search for just the right presents to give to all those who are important to us. It can sometimes feel that we have missed the meaning behind these traditions. Amid all the festivities, do we pause to reflect on what it is we’re celebrating?

Maybe, deep down, we are remembering the gift of the first Christmas. Could we actually be remembering the gift God gave us because he loves us, the gift of his own son? Could the bright lights of the season point to the Light of the World entering our lives?

As we set out our crib at the beginning of the Year of the Word, could we take a moment to read the Christmas story in the Bible? During this year we are being challenged to spend more time reading scripture and reflecting on what God is saying to us through it. The Christmas story could be a good place for us to start.

Father Daniel finished his reflection by saying maybe it’s better for traditions to continue so that

when we are faced with the dark times, we can start to explore the real meaning of what we do to provide us with hope. Hope is the theme of the season. We have hope because God loved us so much to send us his only son.

At Christmas we engage in activities such as giving to charity and helping the homeless in order to give hope to others. In our schools we can point to the many activities we have been involved in, such as making up hampers that will bring hope to others in our local community. So let us pray that we remember the meaning of Christmas and that we can give hope to those around us.

Let us pray: Be with us, Lord Jesus, as we celebrate the joy of Christmas traditions. Thank you for each one that brings us closer together. For trimming trees and hanging stockings, for wrapping gifts and welcoming guests, for preparing meals and sending seasonal greetings.

Make each tradition an opportunity to deepen our awareness of your presence in our lives. Enlarge our capacity for hospitality, generosity and joy. Attune us to the traditions of our Church and, through them, draw us together in faith, hope and charity. In your name we pray. Amen

Angela O’Brien | Lead Lay Chaplain



Forming lives ready to face the future



Hugh Hegarty CEO

*"I hope
you have
a peaceful
and safe
Christmas."*

I hope you enjoy reading the first ever edition of our trust magazine and getting an insight into the rich and varied educational experiences from across our 26 schools.

The season of Advent is drawing to a close and we look forward to the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Christmas is a time of joy. However, as the Christmas carol *O Little Town of Bethlehem* reminds us that when we ponder the birth of Christ, *"the hopes and fears of all our years are met in thee tonight"*, we must consider those within our communities who may see Christmas as a time of challenge.

As you gather as families and friends over Christmas, I hope you have an opportunity to share stories and experiences of how your children's lives are being enriched through attending our schools.

With the application window for new entrants to primary schools closing in January, it's vital that you see us as a family and take the opportunities to visit a range of our wonderful schools within Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust in advance of reaching your decision – for further guidance on primary admissions, please contact Rebecca Chambers on 01642 529200.

I want to thank all the staff, governors and volunteers at Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust who work tirelessly for our young people and who ensure ours is the multi-academy trust of choice within Teesside and North Yorkshire.

I hope you have a peaceful and safe Christmas and look forward to the New Year.

Regards

Hugh Hegarty | CEO

NPQH | MSc | PGCCGC | BEd Hons | CTC

Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust

All Saints Catholic Primary School, Thirsk



Triple Crown For Sporty All Saints

Children at All Saints had lots of fun taking part in sporting events where they also showed their resilience, determination and teamwork skills during our first term as part of NPCAT.

Key Stage 2 children fought off tough competition to bring home silverware in tag rugby, dodgeball and football and some pupils were lucky enough to join our first-ever Sports Crew.



Pupils Become Past Masters

Our pupils focused on different periods in history as part of their curriculum learning this term.

Across the school we also dedicated time to understanding the importance of Black History Month.

Children learned about the lives and achievements of Usain Bolt, Rosa Parks, Mary Seacole and Barack Obama, as well as the importance of speaking up against any kind of racism.



Christ Welcomed Into Children's Hearts

Our children enjoyed welcoming Christ into their lives by attending Mass, participating in collective worship and learning about the Gospel in the Wednesday Word.

They met our new parish priest, Canon Pat, who we look forward to seeing more of, and Key Stage 2 children also led their own assemblies on the Mysteries of the Rosary and the life of Pope John Paul II.



Christ the King Catholic Primary School, Thornaby



We've Got What It Takes To Bee Designers!

Christ the King offers a dazzling variety of extracurricular activities centred around the interests of our children.

Clubs are led by external providers and our dedicated staff. Our many sports clubs include rugby, basketball, table tennis and yoga. We also offer creative activities, such as craft and choir.

One of our talented teachers, a specialist in design, leads our popular Young Designers' Club, introducing children to the world of design and helping them create their own products. One recent project involved designing cushions on the theme of bees, to coincide with the two new beehives in our school forest.

The children used design boards to write down the source of their inspiration, who their target market would be and features they wished to include, before moving on to produce initial drawings.

They then experimented with various

techniques before making the products. Finally, they undertook the very important task of evaluating their work by discussing what went well, what they would change if they were to make it again, how they would do things differently and why.

The children were very proud of the final results, as were the staff. Our young designers were delighted to take home a unique product designed and made by themselves.



Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



Drumming Their Message Home

Corpus Christi drummers danced to a new beat when they joined young musicians from across the region for a musical event at major concert venue Sage Gateshead.

Our drummers, who were facilitated by Teesside musical inclusion partnership MUSINC and therapist Cathie Sprague, thoroughly enjoyed taking part in a variety of workshops and a wide range of musical genres.

Their exciting Sunday event culminated in a rhythmic performance from our children in the impressive Sage Two auditorium.



Poetic Pupils Have A Way With Words

Year 5 pupils joined 130 children from schools across Middlesbrough as they defended our title as inaugural Our Stories Middlesbrough Poetry Slam champions.

The children wrote their own performance poetry, honing their skills with poets Bob Beagrie and Andy Willoughby.

The poetry continued on National Poetry Day, when a call into BBC Tees resulted in pupils being featured throughout Gary Philipson's Drivetime show.

It was another unforgettable experience for the children, whose pride for the school shone through their words.



Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



Serving Up A Boost For Charity

The school council organised a coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support as part of our "Called to Serve" mission.

Children helped serve tea, coffee and a wide selection of cakes. With the support of staff, pupils and parents, the coffee morning raised £250 for the charity, which offers emotional, physical and financial support to people living with cancer.



Rising To The Challenge Of Pope Francis

Staff and pupils celebrated the Extraordinary Month of Mission, when Pope Francis called on us all to renew our missionary commitment and share the Good News of the Gospel.

Each class thought about five good deeds they could do throughout October.

We also undertook a whole school mission to pray the Rosary for the work of the missions overseas.



Remembering Those Who Died In Conflict



School Council members placed crosses around Middlesbrough's Cenotaph as part of our Remembrance observances.

We also placed tributes to those who have died in conflict in our school entrance and visitors and parents commented on the moving display.

Throughout November we prayed for the Holy Souls, thinking of a friend, relative or a soldier of the two world wars who had died.

Sacred Heart Catholic Secondary, Redcar



SACRED HEART
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Sleepout Thanks For Helping Baby Arthur

Kind-hearted students gave up a comfy night for a charity very close to our schools' hearts.

Mrs Norminton's baby, Arthur, was born very prematurely and cared for at North Tees Hospital, where the Neoangels charity provided support for the family.

The modern languages subject leader joined 18 pupils for a sponsored sleepout to say thank you – raising a fantastic £750!



We'll Meet Again Next Year!

Pupils and parents from our primary schools enjoyed a taste of what awaits them next year at our Year 6 open evening.

They took part in sporting activities and watched exciting science demonstrations as well as enjoying art and drama.

Headteacher, Dr Caldwell spoke about our school's values and the nurturing, caring and loving environment we provide for all our students.



A Life-Changing Trip To Ghana



Nine Sacred Heart students and three teachers enjoyed a life-changing experience as they spent ten days at our partner school in Ghana.

The visit to Ayensudo High School was the result of almost two years of challenging fundraising activities.

We spent time educating the students about the worldwide problems caused by plastic items being thrown away and damaging the environment.

St Alphonsus' Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



History Comes Alive For Time Travellers

Pupils have been travelling in time to discover life during various periods of history.

Younger children stepped into the Jurassic period while other classes went back to Victorian times, Ancient Greece, Rome and Egypt.

Year 6 experienced the sights and sounds of World War II with a trip to Eden Camp and one class even had a visit from a medieval knight!



Bishop Terry Welcomed Into School

We were proud to welcome Bishop Terry for a thoroughly enjoyable visit to our school.

Bishop Terry participated in a whole school liturgy led by Year 4 children around the theme of making the fruits of the Holy Spirit our mission.

He visited every class, talking to children and chatting about the power of prayer, and also met our Mini Vinnies.



St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



Pupils Live Out Our School Motto

Children have enjoyed finding imaginative ways to live out our school motto, "Serve the Lord in gladness".

Our Mini Vinnies wrote letters about the CAUSE Christmas hamper appeal, which supports families in need.

Pupils were also invited to pray the Rosary in the school chapel every morning during October, with our Chaplaincy Team coordinating our prayers and promoting devotion to Our Lady.



'Queen' Drops In For London Lesson

A royal visitor caused quite a stir when she joined Year 1 children and parents during their tea party.

The children have been studying London and were delighted to provide afternoon tea for parents and carers.

The day became even more exciting when Queen Elizabeth (or someone who looked very much like her!) dropped by to chat and answer questions.



Recruits Experience Roman Army Life



Year 4 children visited Murton Park for a fantastic hands-on experience linked to their Romans topic.

They experienced life as a young Roman army recruit in the 1st Century AD and learned to write, fight and live like a centurion.

Later their fort came under attack from a local tribe, but they used their new found battle skills to repel the invaders.

St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Marske



Brilliant Beamish Is History Topic Highlight

A visit to the excellent Beamish Museum was one of the highlights of Year 6's term as they learned all about the Second World War.

The trip brought the chance to take part in an evacuee experience session and pupils spent the previous day making gas mask boxes, labels and luggage tags in preparation.



We arrived at the museum and were transported by a period bus to Home Farm, where we were met by the farmer and his wife.

They showed us around the farm and talked about how food was grown during the war and why certain animals were kept by ordinary people living in villages and even cities throughout Britain.

In the garden there was an Anderson Shelter for us to have a look in. We then went into the farmhouse, where we were separated into two groups, one putting up blackout curtains so that no light came through and the other making carrot biscuits using a real wartime rationing recipe.

We had a fantastic time, even though the weather was a little damp, and we were able to spend some time during the afternoon exploring the rest of Beamish – including the customary trip to the sweet shop!

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School, Redcar



Best Ever Tally Secures Athletics Title

Our Year 5 and 6 children achieved the school's best ever total score as we won the Middlesbrough Schools Sportshall Athletics competition at Eston Leisure Centre.

We came first or second in every single event and won the competition by a whopping 84 points!

We are now through to the Tees Valley Final – huge congratulations to everyone who took part.



Thanks For Coming By, Bishop Terry!

St Benedict's welcomed a very special visitor when Bishop Terry came into our school.

During the visit Bishop Terry joined in with our worship and chatted with

pupils and staff, as well as listening to our school choir.

It was lovely that he recognised what wonderful children we have here in St Benedict's – thank you, Bishop Terry!

Children Show Great Fort-itude!

Year 4 children learnt how to be Roman soldiers, tried on authentic armour and explored the remains of Hadrian's Wall during a visit to Segedunum Roman Fort.



Meanwhile, Year 6 visited Peat Rigg outdoor centre in North Yorkshire. Staff complimented our pupils for their teamwork, independence and resilience – when the going got tough, our children just kept on going!



St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



Stunning Transformation For Early Years Area

Our nursery and reception area was totally transformed over the summer – providing a stunning new space for our youngest children.

Trust funding, supported by a parental donation, meant we were able to completely landscape our Early Years Foundation Stage area.

New doors were also installed to provide a more fluid transition between indoor and outdoor learning areas.

This much-needed addition has made a tremendous difference to our children's experience and ensures we can maximise their independence as they embark on school life.



'Extraordinarily' Generous Response To Mission Appeal

Our children responded generously to Pope Francis' initiative in asking us to celebrate an Extraordinary Month of Mission in October.

The children learned in whole school worship about special saints including St Thérèse of Lisieux and St John Henry Newman, who was canonised in Rome during the month.

Our pupils were also "extraordinarily" generous in the donations they contributed to their red mission boxes for the Pope's charity, Missio – an impressive total of £419.21 was raised.



St Clare's Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



A Helping Hand To Those In Need

There was plenty of wonderful singing and dancing as we enjoyed a very special harvest celebration with our families.

Our families were very generous in donating food and toiletries in a collection organised by our Mini Vinnies group.

Some items went to families living in our own community while others were taken to the John Paul Centre in Middlesbrough.

This pastoral centre does great work with homeless and vulnerable people in our town and we try to support them throughout the year.



Learning About Friends And Foes



Children enjoyed learning all about friendship and World War II during our first term.

Key Stage 2 children visited Eden Camp in North Yorkshire to undertake research to take back into their history and English lessons.

The children had a fantastic time exploring many different subjects at the museum.

We also saw some amazing World War II models coming in from home as part of our homework and parents later had the opportunity to see all their children's work.

St Edward's Catholic Primary School , Middlesbrough

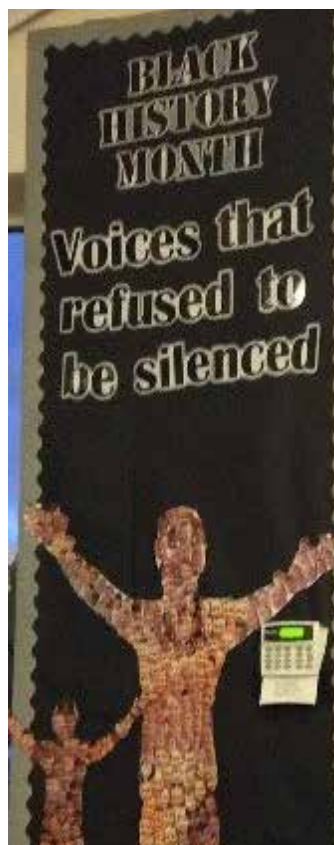


Pupils Learn To Speak Out For Justice

Be a voice of change for the better and don't ever be silenced – that was the resounding message from our Black History Month celebrations.

As part of a whole school themed week – “Voices that refused to be silenced” – each class studied someone inspirational who refused to stay quiet.

It doesn't matter who we are, our skin colour, gender or our interests – God made us all in his image and we are capable of doing amazing things!



Stunning Success For Talented Footballers

Our talented Year 5 and 6 Girls A and B football teams are celebrating after their stunning success in a recent tournament.

Both teams played with great passion, working together well as a unit and showing true sportsmanship as they came first in their respective competitions.

Our A team will go on to represent St Edward's in the County Girls' Football Finals after Christmas. Congratulations to all of you – we wish you the best of luck!



St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



Called To Serve Up On A Plate!

Our school showed its commitment to the trust's "Called to Serve" initiative by supporting families within our own community.

In the latest of a series of events, 150 children were treated to music, food and a free take-home bag at an autumn disco during the half-term holidays.

It follows the spectacular success of our summer-long programme of picnics and sporting events to help keep local children well-fed, healthy and active during the holidays.

The scheme grew and grew until around 200 children were coming each week to enjoy treats including pizza and spaghetti bolognese. They ranged from babies to

secondary school-age children.

"I was very lucky to have again been supported by my family and staff," said headteacher, Mrs Phelps.

"We're planning some more events through the year which include: Christmas dinner boxes for families in need and a Christmas carol singalong between Christmas and new year, with a free lunch for all."

Our children were also very generous as they used their house point tokens to donate to two worthwhile causes, the Mission to Seafarers and Middlesbrough Food Bank.

Each token was worth 10p and the children chose which charity they wanted to donate to.



St Gerard's Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



French Hen Fun At The Reindeer Parade

Year 3 and 4 children made their own costumes and learned a special dance routine before taking part in the Middlesbrough Reindeer Parade.

This year's theme was the Twelve Days of Christmas – and we were the French hens!

The children looked fantastic as they danced and waved their way through Middlesbrough and help start a magical Christmas for everyone.



Big Kids Workshops Explore Fruits Of The Spirit

Our Year 5 and 6 classes have been working with the Big Kids team to explore our school attributes through a range of Scripture, art, drama and games.

The children also thought about the fruits of the Holy Spirit and how we can use them in our daily lives.



We're looking forward to Big Kids working with other classes throughout the year.

Sporting Success, Olympic Values

We've had another busy and successful term of sport, with our teams showing Olympic values at all times.

Our tag rugby, sportshall athletics and football teams all brought back trophies and medals from Middlesbrough Sports Partnership competitions.

Classes also enjoyed learning new judo skills and taking part in our school sponsored run, while Year 4 children have been developing their swimming skills.



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Loftus



Snowy Experience For Little Joeys

Our two-year-olds – the Little Joeys – loved travelling to Danby Moors Centre for an event inspired by Nick Butterworth's book *One Snowy Night*.

The children had great fun learning about living things and their habitats.

Some of our younger children enjoyed a visit from Tessa the guide dog and were delighted to hear how much difference she's made to her owner's life.



A 'Top' Time At Kirkleatham Museum

Key Stage 1 children learned as they played at Kirkleatham Museum in Redcar as part of their "My Story" topic.

They discovered how toys have changed over the years, learning what toys such as spinning tops, cars and dolls were made of, how they worked and who would have played with them.

The children thoroughly enjoyed their day out.



On The Hunt For Prehistoric Prey In Loftus



If any prehistoric animals are lurking around Loftus, they'd better watch out!

Year 3 and 4 have been using Stone Age weapons they made to hunt down any stray dinosaurs.

They also visited Skinningrove Museum, where they created their own cave paintings.

Our oldest children learned about the Mayan civilisation, making special biscuits from an ancient recipe in Design Technology.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



Town In Focus For Whole School Topic

Our children have enjoyed learning all about their hometown of Middlesbrough this term.

This whole school topic allowed pupils from nursery through to Year 6 to learn about our local area, with every phase taking on a key concept to investigate in detail.

This included our youngest pupils learning about the area immediately around our school, while Year 6 learned about the impact of industry on the Teesside area throughout history and the changes that have taken place.

Children enjoyed a variety of trips including visits to the nearby fire station, fantastic workshops led by the Dorman Museum and excursions to Middlesbrough Town Hall and Jarrow Hall.

Year 6 pupils attended the Laying of the First Poppy event at Middlesbrough Cenotaph. During this annual event, St Joseph's pupils are invited to lay



named poppies for 22 Korean War veterans at the request of a niece of one of them. The late Mrs Emma Hall began this tribute, which continues to this day.

Our pupils always feel extremely privileged to take part and this year

they were able to express their gratitude and understanding of the significance of such a key event when they spoke to Mayor of Middlesbrough Andy Preston.



St Margaret Clitherow's Catholic Primary, Middlesbrough



How We Show We Care For Our Community

Some of our Reception children met new friends and shared their skills during a very special visit to Primrose Care Home in South Bank.

The visit was just one of the ways we have continued to work on the trust's "Called to Serve" initiative throughout the school this year.

As part of October's Extraordinary Month of Mission – when Pope Francis asked us to help spread the Good News of Christ in our local communities – the reception children joined in with the residents' autumnal craft activity, working together to create a spiky hedgehog.

They thoroughly enjoyed the experience and we plan to build on this special friendship between the school and the care home throughout this year.

Some of our Key Stage 2 children have been extremely fortunate to have the opportunity to work alongside staff at

James Cook University Hospital as part of the therapeutic care team. There they served patients and spread the Good News through song.

Members of our school choir also supported the hospital's Christmas Fair, enjoying spreading the spirit of the season and hopefully helping to raise lots of money!

We hope and pray that everyone has a peaceful and joyful Christmas.



St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



Healthy Eating On The Menu Thanks To Generous Workers

Sweets, crisps and chocolates scoffed by workers at Sembcorp Energy UK have generated a healthy eating opportunity for our children.

We will now be able to grow and eat our own vegetables and herbs in an outdoor sensory garden that will be developed thanks to a £1,000 donation from the energy firm.

Hungry workers at the company, based on the Wilton International site not far from school, have been buying snacks from an on-site tuck shop for several years.

With profits from their unhealthy eating reaching a healthy total, the two best

customers were invited to suggest a cause to benefit.

Energy trader Dean Grant and commercial account manager Jackie McQuire were both determined that the money should go to a local school to put towards a breakfast club or a healthy eating initiative – and ours fitted the bill perfectly!

Headteacher, Mrs Ruddy said: "It was a wonderful surprise and something that will go a long way to helping us develop a sensory garden full of healthy eating options for the children."

The picture shows Dean tucking into a healthy lunch at the school watched by a group of Year 6 pupils.



St Patrick's Catholic College, Thornaby



Future Pupils Welcomed At Open Evening

Our Year 6 open evening gave students and their families the chance to find out what makes St Patrick's such a warm and welcoming Catholic community.

There were opportunities to meet staff and discover what they will be able to experience when they join us next year.

We hope they all enjoyed their evening and look forward to welcoming them.



Curry And Tips Night Hits The Right Spot

Around 70 Year 11 students and their parents enjoyed delicious food while picking up useful exam advice at St Patrick's first ever Curry and Tips night.

Everyone had a shared aim of providing support for our students, with lots of invaluable revision tips as they prepare for their GCSEs.

In between sessions we enjoyed curry and rice prepared by our kitchen staff.



Putting Our Christian Values Into Action



Year 7 students made Christmas decorations and sold them at local markets to raise money for charity during Advent.

This initiative was led by our DT technician, Mr Anderson, and chaplain, Mrs Fisk.

It strikes at the heart of what we are called to do as followers of Christ by supporting worthwhile causes and forging strong links with our local community.

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Thornaby



Black History Month Brings Important Lessons

Our school community took the opportunity to think about the important issues of equality and racial justice during Black History Month.

This annual commemoration of the history, achievements and contributions of black people in the UK and around the world is always a significant time at St Patrick's.

During their lessons, children found out about the great sporting and humanitarian achievements of famous black people.

They also discussed British values of liberty and tolerance, as well as the theme of equality, and studied the lives of men and women such as Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King, Mary Seacole and Walter Tull.

It is important that we learn how the world has changed and continues changing in order for us to learn from past mistakes.



We also learned that people can make a difference and that impact can influence and change generations. The children were fascinated and inspired by their work and they talked openly about people who have influenced them and the wider world.

We also welcomed past pupils from St Patrick's College to share their story of being welcomed to Thornaby from other countries and the importance of racial equality in our own community.



St Paulinus Catholic Primary School, Guisborough



SAINT PAULINUS
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Volunteers Help Create Unique Prayer Experience

We were delighted to host a very special prayer experience day in school for all our children.

We are always keen to explore different ways to pray and were able to bring in volunteers from St Paulinus Parish to help create a unique event.

We hosted five different prayer stations in the hall for children to visit. Each one encouraged the children to pause and contemplate, saying please, thank you or sorry in their own unique way.

The sessions were beautifully prepared and carefully observed by the children. Each session started and ended with a class prayer before the stations came to life.

We deliberately planned this event to take place before the holy season of Advent, as we can often get caught up in the busyness and festivities of Christmas.

Our volunteers said they were thrilled with the individual responses of each

class and felt the pupils had benefited tremendously from the experience.

The Scrabble word prayer station was a huge hit with the children, as were the prayers for all the people in the world.

One child commented that on the day they felt loved by God in a different way, which made it so worthwhile for us all.



St Peter's Catholic College, Middlesbrough



Remembrance Day Respectfully Recognised

St Peter's played a significant part in the Remembrance Service at Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust.

Head girl Amelia Salt and head boy Ben Mudie were the readers, along with Miss Jamison, and Eddie Woodcock played the bagpipes beautifully to accompany the service.

In school, students respectfully remembered those who have given their lives for our country with a silence.



Mass Is Highlight Of Mission Month Activities

Our students joined children from our primary schools to celebrate the Extraordinary Month of Mission together with Mass at St Andrew's Church.

At the end of Mass, which was celebrated by Father Phil Cunnah, parishioner Michael Clark gave all pupils and other members of the congregation a specially designed prayer card to help us remember we are always called to be missionaries.



Visitors Share In The Vision Of St Peter's

Our Year 6 open evening showcased St Peter's at its very best as we welcomed families and gave them the chance to experience what makes it such a special place to grow and learn.

Our visitors shared in the vision of how St Peter's is prospering and will continue to do so as part of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust family.



St Pius X Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



Community Visits Help To Mark Mission Month

St Pius X children showed their commitment to the Church's work in our community as they marked the Extraordinary Month of Mission.

Year 6 visited the John Paul Centre to learn about how they live out their mission and Years 3 and 4 visited an Ormesby care home, where the elderly residents were able to share some valuable life lessons with the children.



Back To School For Parents And Carers

Parents and carers were given the chance to relive their school days during a visit to the classroom – including some work to do on their own!

Adults and children spent the special curriculum morning working alongside one another.

The grown-ups thoroughly enjoyed seeing the children working in the classroom, while the children valued this special time together.



St Pius X Remembers The Fallen



Children from Years 3 and 6 visited the Cenotaph in Middlesbrough to pay their respects to the fallen.

The November visits allowed the children to honour the service and sacrifice of our armed forces and all who fought alongside them in the two World Wars and all conflicts since. The children showed a great sense of dignity and reverence.

St Thérèse of Lisieux Catholic Primary School, Ingleby Barwick



Inspiring Leaders Stand Up For Democracy

We are so proud of our amazing pupils and know we have many potential future leaders in our classrooms.

During Democracy Week, pupils from Years 5 and 6 applied for leadership positions, stating their passions and offering their ideas.

They produced action plans and are already making a positive difference within our school community and to the quality of our curriculum.

As well as house and subject ambassadors, we also have reading buddies, playground friends, sports leaders and Mini Vinnies.



Change Starts With Us

Anti-Bullying Week was a time to think about how our words and actions affect others and how we can be a positive voice for change.

There were more than 100 entries to our anti-bullying campaign competition, including many T-shirt designs.

It was an extremely tough job to decide the class winners, so much so, that we needed to call in help from our governors and friendship ambassadors.

Class prizes were presented by a representative from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office during our achievement assembly.



St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Middlesbrough



Reaching Out To Our Elderly Neighbours

A Food and Friendship project has proved to be a magical formula for creating links between our pupils and our elderly neighbours.

The project has led to wonderful intergenerational work during Advent involving our school, the St Thomas More Parish family and the local community.

Every Tuesday after school, Year 5 pupils gather in the church hall to reach out the hand of friendship to older members of the parish and the surrounding areas of Beechwood and Easterside.

They have met up to cook delicious meals, dine together, create arts and crafts and make new friendships, enabling those in our community who may feel alone – especially at this time of year – to come together to share.

This is what our children said...

"We cooked delicious tomato soup and blueberry pancakes." – Henley

"I invited my next door neighbour. She hasn't been out much since her husband died, meeting new people really cheered her up." – Harriet

"My favourite part was making Christmas decorations. My new friend helped me make a clay Father Christmas." – Moses

The Food and Friendship project is funded by Ageing Better Middlesbrough and is delivered in partnership between Together Middlesbrough and Cleveland and Middlesbrough Environment City.



Trinity Catholic College, Middlesbrough



Tears As Mizens Spread Message Of Forgiveness

Trinity students were brought to tears by the tragic story of London teenager Jimmy Mizen, who was murdered by another youth in 2008.

His parents, Barry and Margaret, earned widespread admiration by calling for compassion rather than revenge and have spread their message of forgiveness ever since, setting up a charity to promote peace. We're grateful to them for sharing their story.



Hundreds Flock To Open Evenings

More than 600 Year 6 pupils and parents visited for our open evening, enjoying a taster of what awaits them when they join us in September.

Headteacher Mrs Dwyer was joined by student ambassadors as she presented her vision of the Trinity family.

A second open evening was held for prospective Sixth Form students in October and attendance was once again extremely encouraging.



New Pupils Welcomed To Trinity Family

Year 7 pupils, parents and staff gathered at St Mary's Cathedral to celebrate Mass together as an official welcome to the Trinity family.

They were joined by our choir and orchestra led by Mr Knox and Mrs Gargett, who organised the event.

Mass was celebrated by Father Phil Cunah, who spoke about the need to be missionaries of charity within our schools.



CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OVERVIEW

A Year Of Challenges Met And Progress Made



Jim Farquhar COO

"On behalf of all at NPCAT Central Services, I would like to thank our schools and wider community for your support."

As we progress through our second full year of operations, we are continuing to support and embrace major changes in structures, procedures and systems that are ultimately designed to keep our trust safe, compliant and financially sustainable IN the years ahead.

Changes of this nature are not without challenges and the effort and at times sheer endurance of Central Services' personnel in both supporting and challenging our schools across a wide range of areas has made me very proud of what we have achieved together as a family of schools to date.

We will continue listening and responding to the needs of our employees and pupils throughout this period of transition and keep looking outwards to learn from how the most successful multi-academy trusts deliver quality and responsive services that represent value for money.

We are starting to see a real impact of this work – from our new delivery of Attendance services to bringing our Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure in-house, we will be able to provide a more joined-up and efficient service to schools in 2020.

Our financial performance in 2018-19 was excellent and we will now work in partnership with our schools to deliver further efficiencies while incentivising all to save money wherever possible.

Our Estates strategy is very exciting and will result in cutting edge technology and plans being implemented, now our foundations are built.

All of this work is underpinned by a recognition that our employees are our greatest asset and that timely and reliable information is the key to intelligent decision making for any organisation.

This has been why the work of our Human Resources and Data Quality teams has been of such importance this year and I look forward to further developments in these areas throughout the remainder of 2019-20.

On behalf of all at NPCAT Central Services, I would like to thank our schools and wider community for your support and wish you all the best for Christmas and the New Year.

Regards

Jim Farquhar | COO



CAREERS

Raising Career Aspirations For All Our Students

We are committed to ensuring that every child leaving one of our schools has the knowledge, confidence and ambition to make choices that will enable them to fulfil their potential in life.

Our new careers service was launched at the start of this academic year to improve access to information and experiences, beginning in our four secondary schools and eventually extending to our primary schools as well.

One of the highlights of the year so far has been a visit by Year 10 students from Sacred Heart, St Peter's and St Patrick's to St Catharine's College at Cambridge University, raising aspirations and encouraging students to aim for the country's very best academic establishments.

Other events include:

- Roadshows for Years 7 and 8 at St Patrick's and Trinity focusing on STEM careers in the RAF
- Girls Power Your Nation at Hartlepool Power Station for Years 8 and 9 at St Peter's and St Patrick's
- DIY SOS came to St Peter's in the form of the Volunteer it Yourself project, with Year 8 students working on benches for the yard
- Major Sandy Hines visited Trinity, St Peter's and St Patrick's to talk about the resilience and personal skills required to ski up mountains in the Arctic.



Faith At The Heart Of Our Vision

Catholic life is the focal point of everything we do at NPCAT. Our new Chaplaincy service was launched in September, providing support to our schools and bringing them together as a community.

Many schools were represented at our Remembrance service, led by Canon Derek Turnham and lead lay chaplain Angela O'Brien. This was an opportunity to pray for those who have died in conflict. Students contributed by reading, playing music and laying wreaths.

More than 600 members of our NPCAT family came together at St Mary's Cathedral for our Advent carol services as we prepared ourselves to be ready to meet Jesus at Christmas through scripture, prayer and song. This was a wonderful celebration of the faith of our NPCAT community.

This term has brought a focus on prayer, with a daily email offering all staff a moment to pause at the start of the day. During Advent, daily worship was prepared to give a scripture passage, reflection and prayer for pupils to ponder as we journey towards Christmas.

We have also been into each secondary school to explore aspects of Catholic life and collective worship, helping us to plan how we can work together in the months ahead.



COMMUNICATIONS

Here To Keep You Informed

Our Communications Team is here to facilitate consistently high-quality communications, both internally and between the trust and our community.

They have a special focus on spreading the news about all the good work going on within our schools every day.

The trust continues to develop and publish a suite of publications to keep all our stakeholders informed.

These include:

- *The Postgate News* – This is the first edition of our trust's flagship magazine
- Secondary newsletters – These are now becoming firmly established, with Issue 3 published just before the Christmas break
- Additional periodic updates for specific audiences such as staff and governors at least once per term

Communications materials are also being developed to support the recruitment of both pupils and high-quality staff to our family of schools, ensuring they continue to go from strength to strength.

A comprehensive Communications Toolkit is under development for



a launch in 2020, introducing high standards and consistency for all communications from Central Services and our schools.

There has also been positive media coverage of the trust, including extensive press and radio reports on Barry and Margaret Mizen's visit to our secondary schools with their message of peace and forgiveness.

DATA QUALITY

Taking Care Of The Numbers

Accurate and timely data is crucial to the effective functioning of many aspects of school life, including attendance and student progress.

The trust provides data analysis, identification of trends and areas for development, so that intervention and support can be targeted at the right individuals and groups to bring about improvements.

Our Attendance Monitoring System was launched across the trust after being developed over the summer, with all schools being given access to the Power BI platform.

The system enables a streamlined approach. It issues alerts to schools when attendance intervention is taking place centrally. Schools can see which students are being supported by the trust, so that they can raise any concerns or apply context where necessary.

The Power BI platform will be developed further to provide dynamic and standardised reporting across multiple areas.

ESTATES & COMPLIANCE

Building A Brighter Future For Everyone

We are committed to providing engaging and safe learning environments for our young people and the staff who work with them.

Andrea Brown has been appointed as our new estates and facilities officer, working within the Estates and Compliance team.

Estates compliance systems went live in our schools in September and all trust business managers received a half-day training session.

Working in collaboration with head of data quality, Nick Doy, schools will receive access to their compliance monitoring dashboard reports in January.

This will not only highlight areas of trust-wide non-compliance but will

also identify areas of opportunity to improve estates management process and procedures.

The expansion project at St Thérèse of Lisieux was handed over successfully and on time. This project allowed the school to increase its pupil admission numbers in 2019-20.

In addition, the capital works below have been delivered in our schools:

St Bernadette's – Early Years entrance and play area refresh programme

St Augustine's – Early Years play area

St Margaret Clitherow's – Early Years play area refresh programme and toilet refurbishment programme

St Clare's – New outdoor education space.



FINANCE

Working Together To Make Our Money Go Further

As with all public services, education funding remains under considerable strain. It's therefore essential that we work strategically and efficiently to make our money go as far as we possibly can.

Together, we are in a stronger position to provide the 9,000 young people in our care with the best possible educational experience and outcomes.

Our first year-end statutory accounts for 2018-19 have been drafted to be presented to the board. The accounts highlight that the trust is a going concern and has achieved a "clean" audit.

Visits to schools for budget setting ready for 2020-21 have begun.

Monthly reporting is showing there are no key financial concerns emerging from monitoring visits at this stage of the year.

Statutory returns to the Education and Skills Funding Agency were all completed on time.

The centralised exchequer or payments process has now been implemented and will be reviewed continually to refine and improve its operation over the coming months.

GOVERNANCE

Ensuring Our Governors Are Effective And Well-Informed



Important initiatives are underway to ensure our governors are able to support senior leaders, hold them to account and promote aspiration for excellence in our schools.

The academic year began with our first Governors' Conference, held at Trinity Catholic College, where governors from across the trust came together to hear about the launch of our link governor programme.

During the autumn term, several new governors were appointed and we extend a warm welcome to them all, especially our new parent governors.

An induction and training programme for all new governors will start in the spring.

In September, the rollout of NPCAT email addresses for all governors took place, to ensure the security of information within the organisation.

Our governance partners and ICT Services continue to work with governing bodies and individual governors in moving towards a paperless governance system.

It's early days yet, but we would like to congratulate those governing bodies who have enthusiastically embraced this greener way of working.

One of the challenges during the term has been the need for governors' discipline panels to consider the exclusion of pupils from schools. As well as working with their own schools, several governors have given up considerable time to support other governing bodies in this task and their help has been much appreciated.

The Governance Team has provided support for directors and governors in more than 60 formal meetings during the term, as well as giving advice and guidance given to individual heads and chairs when issues arise.

ICT SERVICES

Equipping Our Schools With The Technology They Need

Effective use of ICT is another of the essential ingredients that go into running successful schools.

NPCAT is investing in the state-of-the-art hardware and software needed to help our students to learn and to facilitate all the work that goes on behind the scenes to support them.

We are currently awaiting connections and equipment that will allow us to

begin implementing a shared network that will bring major benefits.

The year ahead will also bring about an upgrade to cloud services, as well as centralisation and standardisation of safeguarding and web-filtering software, while a centralised internet-based telephone system is currently at the review and design stage.

A comprehensive review and

replacement of any outdated IT equipment is underway which is seeing some classroom projectors being replaced with hi-tech touch screens.

We are also reviewing the use of devices such as laptops and Chromebooks and the rolling out of updated encryption and location tracking is underway.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Growing Partnership Boost For Our Teachers

We believe in investing in staff at all levels and giving them the skills, experience and confidence to deliver the best for our students.

One way we're helping teaching staff is through our growing partnership with the Ambition Institute, which works with educators serving children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The partnership has been awarded the contract to deliver the Early Career Framework across the North-East, increasing funding, time and the quality of training available for teachers in their first two years.

NPCAT staff will also be part of the delivery team through "train the trainer" programmes.

Other opportunities through this partnership include an Excellent Middle Leaders programme, Curriculum Development programmes, Future Leaders and a new Executive Leadership course.

The Department for Education's "behaviour tsar", Tom Bennett, will continue his work with NPCAT in the New Year.



SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Get Ready For The NPCAT Sports Partnership!

We are delighted to announce that planning is well underway for the launch of the Postgate Sports Partnership in September 2020.

With 26 schools and 9,000 young people, the trust is one of the largest in the UK and has the regional presence to ensure that it offers the best PE curriculum experiences and vast, varied and rich extracurricular provision.

The next few months will see detailed plans drawn up with primary heads and trust responsible officers consulting with national governing bodies of sport, local sports clubs and coaches to ensure that NPCAT supports and drives forward, the desire for participation and excellence in sports within and across our schools.

For further information contact sportspartnership@npcat.org.uk



SCHOOL STANDARDS

Support On The Road To Becoming Better Schools

Our School Standards Team is here to ensure that schools are supported on their journey of continuous improvement.

A programme of school visits to monitor the quality of provision in all areas is ongoing as we continue to implement our revised and updated School Improvement Framework.

All documents are updated and in line with the Education Inspection Framework 2019 and the Standards Team has created monitoring forms to ensure consistency in quality assurance.

Primary and secondary quality assurance visits are all underway to help drive rapid and sustained improvement in all of our schools.

A headteacher report format has been created, along with a review of governor agendas.

In addition, NPCAT appraisal documentation has been revised and updated and all headteachers have received training to understand the effective use of Career Level Descriptors.

All of this action is aimed at making sure young people get the excellent educational experiences they deserve.

ATTENDANCE

Streamlining The Attendance Process

The trust is dedicated to providing invaluable support so that all our schools have streamlined processes and strategies for helping children attend regularly and on time.

Attendance is known to be one of the key drivers for school success, from Early Years Foundation Stage right through to Year 11 and beyond.

In collaboration with the head of data quality, Nick Doy, our 26 schools have been equipped with a bespoke monitoring dashboard, enabling them to evaluate and report on attendance.

Staff in our Central Attendance Team continue to work with schools in their designated areas of expertise,

such as undertaking daily home visits, maintaining close liaison with schools and issuing attendance correspondence promptly.

Training workshops have been held to familiarise staff with the programme and feedback from schools has been positive as practises continue to be embedded.

Autumn Term at NPCAT In Pictures

New headteachers appointed to drive rapid improvement at all four secondary schools within the trust.

Trinity Catholic College headteacher Mrs Louise Dwyer



Sacred Heart Catholic Secondary, Redcar, headteacher Dr Patrick Caldwell



St Patrick's Catholic College, Thornaby, headteacher Mr Michael Burns



St Peter's Catholic College, South Bank, headteacher Mr Neil Skerry



At the start of the academic year we held our first Governors' Conference at Trinity Catholic College.



Our Central Services team were joined by representatives from schools throughout the trust at a remembrance service at NPCAT's headquarters in November.



Special Masses were celebrated by Father Phil Cunnah at St Andrew's Church, Teesville, for St Peter's Catholic College and at St Mary's Cathedral, Middlesbrough, for Trinity Catholic College in the Extraordinary Month of Mission called by Pope Francis in October. Children from primary schools within the NPCAT family were also invited to attend.



During Advent more than 600 members of the NPCAT family gathered for trust carol services at St Mary's Cathedral.



Forming lives ready to face the future

Serving the parishes of:

All Saints, Thirsk

Blessed Nicholas Postgate, Redcar

Christ the King, Thornaby

Corpus Christi, Middlesbrough

Holy Name of Mary, Middlesbrough

Our Lady of Lourdes, Saltburn

Our Lady Star of the Sea, Staithes

Sacred Heart, Middlesbrough (in the Parish of St Patrick)

St Mary and Romuald, Yarm

St Alphonsus, North Ormesby

St Andrew's Parish, Teesville

St Bede, Marske-by-the-Sea

St Bernadette, Nunthorpe

St Clare of Assisi, Middlesbrough

St Francis of Assisi, Middlesbrough

St Gabriel, Ormesby

St Joseph and Cuthbert, Loftus

St Joseph, Middlesbrough

St Mary's Cathedral

St Patrick, Thornaby

St Paulinus, Guisborough

St Thérèse of Lisieux, Ingleby Barwick

St Thomas More, Middlesbrough

Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust, Postgate House, Trinity Catholic College,
Saltersgill Avenue, Middlesbrough, TS4 3JW

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