



3.7.26

Dear parents, carers and families,

I am writing to you today with further updates from St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Trust.

### **Industrial Action**

UNISON have issued a 'notice of settlement' which means that the planned strike action by UNISON members scheduled for next week will no longer take place. UNISON colleagues have engaged meaningfully and pragmatically with the trust in detailed, cordial and productive talks. I look forward to our continued collaborative working as we deliver the agreed outcomes for members.

Members of the NASUWT balloted during the week beginning 22 June. I am aware of the provisional outcome of the ballot, but I have not received any formal notification from the trade union as of yet. I have been told that I will not receive this until next week. I will write to you as soon as I do.

As you know, the NEU paused planned strike action due this week (with the exception of Monday 29 June). There are still three 'strike dates' that are planned. These are on the 14, 15 and 16 July. I am continuing to work with NEU colleagues to seek a resolution to this dispute so that your children can enjoy their term as it comes to an end, uninterrupted. I have also offered to talk to individual staff and groups of colleagues who are taking action. I shall write to you with an update as soon as I can.

### **School Visits**

This week, I visited St John Fisher Primary school in Derby, Blessed Robert Sutton secondary in Burton, St Philip Howard secondary in Glossop and St Thomas More secondary in Buxton. What wonderful schools we have in our family!

At St John Fisher, I was very fortunate to have had a little glimpse of the rehearsals for the Year 6 leaver production. It sounded wonderful. I thought that the children were beautifully behaved and the student group with whom I spoke were engaging, articulate and inspiring.

The secondary schools were equally impressive. At Blessed Robert Sutton, I could see for myself the attitudes outlined in their most recent Outstanding Ofsted report, which stated, "Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. They exhibit the school's values of kindness, love and respect consistently." At St Philip Howard, I was struck by the range of opportunities that students told me about, including a ten-day trip to Africa, where they helped to build a pipe system to divert floodwaters from classrooms, amongst a range of other activities.

At St Thomas More, developing oracy is a clear priority and a student in Year 8 told me about a national competition that she had entered through school where she was selected to perform a poetry recital at The Globe theatre in London.



**St Ralph  
Sherwin**  
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

## St Ralph Sherwin Day Mass

On Tuesday, I joined students, staff and parishioners for the St Ralph Sherwin day mass at St Mary's church in Derby with Bishop Patrick. It was a very special mass and my first to celebrate with my new trust family. I was delighted to see pupils from St John Fisher Primary, St Mary's in Derby and Saint Benedict take an active role in delivering the readings and prayers. A special 'shout out' to St George's Primary for their gigantic school shield! I do hope that some of you will join us next year.

## Strategic Planning

The Board of Directors and I have now begun to work on the trust's strategic plan for 2026 to 2030 which I will share with stakeholders once it is finalised and approved. I will seek to ensure that there are opportunities for key stakeholder groups, including parents, to contribute to the development of this plan during the next academic year. I am wholly committed to a vision where all members of our trust develop a deep connection to what we are doing and a sense of belonging to the wider trust family. Involving representatives from stakeholder groups is an effective mechanism to realise this vision.

## Finally...

We are making significant progress in the trust but of course, I recognise that things will take time to embed. A commitment to your child's outstanding Catholic education will always remain the absolute priority for now and into the future. My sincere hope is that together, we will create something exceptionally special for our Catholic schools here in the Diocese of Nottingham. To quote a section from the St Philip Howard school prayer, '...help us to come together with kindness as a united family'.

With my very best wishes for a lovely weekend.

*l.walton*

Lisa Walton  
Chief Executive Officer