

For all staff

## Introduction

Welcome to the first 'BOAT Bulletin' for 2024.



### New Member

**New Member of the Trust and Diocesan Secretary John Preston**

John Preston is Diocesan Secretary for the Diocese of Chichester, having previously served a similar role for the Diocese of Worcester. His previous experience includes 13 years as National Stewardship Officer for the Church of England and a number of marketing roles. He has wide experience of trusteeship of charities across both church and educational sectors.

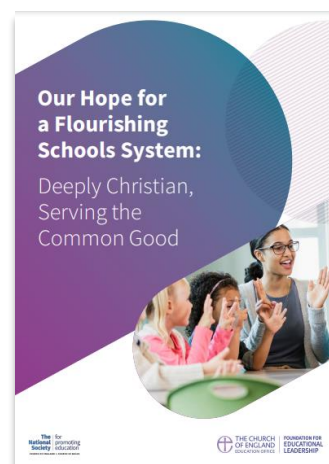
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## Flourishing – Zoe

The word 'flourishing' is used extensively by the Church of England Education Office. As 'Our Hope for a Flourishing School System' says, there many ways to define the concept and many domains from which to draw – for example, theology, virtue ethics, psychology and sociology – but we continue to take our core biblical text as the promise that Jesus gives in John 10.10 – **"I have come that you may have life in all its fullness"**.

The Greek word that we translate as 'life' is the word 'ZOE' – one of a range of words that could be translated as 'life' in English. Through the word ZOE, Jesus offers us a broader, deeper, social, moral, cultural, relational, spiritual life that is far beyond whether we are simply alive or not. ZOE life is the full, abundant, broad, deep, rich sense of living together through all the ups and downs, twists and turns, joy, pain, elation, depression, dancing, weeping, singing and mourning. 'Life in all its fullness' is far less about what is written on our walls or websites than that which characterises children and adults' daily experiences of our school communities – the very expectation of life, or life expectancy that we seek to offer the children and adults across our schools system.

As a trust or school, there are indeed many ups and downs and that is why mental, physical and financial health are all important as we seek to work in partnership together as a team.



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## Workload and Performance Related Play (PRP)

The trust remains totally committed to workload reduction and welcomes all ideas to make this a reality. Our approach to delivering the NPQ within directed time (e.g. staff meetings and INSET) and providing regular updates/guidance is a good example.



Teachers may be aware of the publication of initial recommendations by the Workload Reduction Taskforce to reduce workload for school leaders and teachers – including an end to performance-related pay. The taskforce will help support the Department for Education’s ambition to reduce teachers’ and leaders’ working hours by 5 hours a week within 3 years.

The evidence from the Educational Endowment Fund (EEF) shows that Performance-Related-Pay has little impact on pupil outcomes.

As the unions recognise, the abolition of PRP does not mean appraisal in schools will be scrapped entirely and we will wait for updated DfE guidance that will stand in its place. As a trust, we will continue to work with the unions (Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee) to consider how we can implement new DfE guidance and reduce workload.

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## Dimensions of Wellbeing: Mental, Financial and Physical

The three dimensions of wellbeing are mental, financial and physical:

### ❖ Mental Wellbeing

Don’t forget that **Education Support** is dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of teachers and education staff. They offer immediate, confidential advice, counselling and coaching. They also offer grants help to manage short-term money worries. Tel: 08000 562 561 Web:

[www.educationsupport.org.uk](http://www.educationsupport.org.uk)



### ❖ Physical Wellbeing

The trust pays for **SAS health and wellbeing services** for staff. This free SAS Gym App. Please see posters in school and information on



also includes a **BOAT’s website**

### ❖ Financial Wellbeing

Whilst you are welcome to talk to colleagues and senior leaders about highly recommend **Money Helper** an organisation who work to improve people’s financial wellbeing across the UK, to provide you with free, independent support. This information is displayed in posters in school and on BOAT’s website.



Free and confidential advice including advice/chat lines:

[www.moneyhelper.org.uk](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk)

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## Professional Development

### Opportunities for Teachers

BOAT will be delivering the National Professional Qualification for Leading Teaching (NPQLT), with St Nicolas and St Mary CE Primary School, from March 2024. We are delighted that 21 teachers have signed up and are circulating ‘NPQ Updates’ for teachers who are taking part.



This is a DfE accredited qualification run by the Church of England National Education Office. We will be following the NPQFlex model (Cohort 6).

We will also be working with the Bishop Luffa Learning Partnership (BLLP) who, as our ‘Delivery Partner’, will be quality assuring our delivery.



## Cyber Security – Penetration Exercise

Many schools and national institutions like the British Library have ‘hacked’ into, resulting in personal data being stolen and IT systems being taken down. It can take months of work to rectify! We are likely to undertake a ‘penetration exercise’ where we ask a friendly service provider (JSPC) to test our cyber security systems i.e. look for areas of weakness and try and hack into our school. Please play your part in helping to keep our data safe – be aware of phishing attempts and assume it could happen here!



The following policies have been approved and now available in the [Policies & Advice](#) folder:

- [Pay Policy](#) updated to reflect STRB recommendations.
- [Capital works](#) (New): This document outlines the process of obtaining consent for capital works.
- [Mobile phone](#) (New): To promote and set example for safe and responsible phone use.
- [Stress policy](#) (New): We recognise that workplace stress, particularly in schools, is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.
- [Educational visits](#) (New): This policy sets out our approach to planning and operating educational visits, to ensure the health and safety of our pupils and staff, and to make sure that our visits are available to all pupils.
- [Recruitment of Ex-Offenders](#) (New): The DBS code of practice advises that it is a requirement that all registered bodies must treat DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and not discriminate automatically because of a conviction or other information revealed.
- [ICT and Internet acceptable use](#) (New) New trust policy to replace school policies based on WSCC.
- [Support staff performance management](#) (New) Consultations have taken place with unions, staff and the local governing board.



## Earrings Advice

Trustees have recently reviewed our policy for wearing earrings in PE and concluded that we should continue NOT to allow earrings (or any piercings) in PE and that tape should not be used to cover them up.

This is in line with The Association for Physical Education, FA and Brighton & Hove Albion Foundation. A recent survey found 75% of primary schools also do not allow tape to be used to cover earrings.

As our uniform policy states:

For legal reasons, the trust requires all schools to ensure that:

- No earring studs are worn on swimming days. (As freshly pierced ears take several weeks to heal, piercing should not take place in the two months prior to swimming lessons starting).
- No jewellery is worn for PE by the child including earrings. Covering earrings with micropore tape or plasters is not sufficient. Staff should not accept a disclaimer from a parent giving permission for earrings to be worn or covered up by tape or plasters.
- Members of staff are not permitted to remove or insert earrings and cannot accept responsibility for the safe keeping of such items.

This is not only to protect children, but to protect you from legal liability. Further information about earrings including FAQs and model letters to parents is available upon request. The full Earring advice can be found [here](#).

## Flexible Working Policy – Consultation

BOAT is open to flexible working, such as job sharing, phased retirement, term-time working, working off-site and varied hours. We are an equal opportunities employer and we recognise the contribution that flexible working makes to this ongoing commitment. We recognise that offering flexible working has the potential to:



- Improve staff's work-life balance and help them manage their work around other responsibilities.
- Reduce staff stress and have a positive impact on wellbeing.
- Raise morale and improve staff motivation, performance and productivity.
- Reduce staff absence and help improve retention by creating new opportunities and ways of working.
- Allow us to recruit from a wider pool of talent that includes people with different lifestyles, experiences and perspectives.

If you have any comment or feedback on our [draft policy](#), please email [office@boat.academy](mailto:office@boat.academy) by **6<sup>th</sup> March 2024**.

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## **Staffing Matters**

- **Payroll** – Deadlines for overtime claims: Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March, Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March, Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May.
- **Payslips** – It is vital that you check your payslip every month, especially your tax code and deductions (only you know what deductions you should have!) If there are any queries please contact Wendy. Any errors can normally be rectified quite quickly but they do need to be raised promptly!



## **And finally**

Life in school is not easy and there are many challenges. 'Our Hope for a Flourishing School System', states:





*Our flourishing is dependent upon who we are with—together in community. As relational beings, the degree to which we value, honour, and care for each other— students, teachers, leaders, and families alike—impacts our mutual flourishing. School communities that are characterised by a sense of belonging are places where we can flourish together.*

That is why, as a trust we want to work together to help to ensure that all of our children and adults to flourish. That is why, we often help and support other schools, to help them flourish and thrive. That is why, other schools are thinking about joining our trust, to flourish together.

Thank you for all your hardwork and contribution to our collective flourishing.

David Etherton  
CEO

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Bishop Otter Academy Trust – *Wisdom for Life*

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Updated 26-1-24

# BOAT



Bishop  
Otter  
Academy  
Trust

## Financial Wellbeing

### Money Matters

We know that finances can affect our wellbeing and that many people are increasingly concerned about how to make their money go further. If you do have a *money worry*, do speak to a colleague or senior leader in school. We would also highly recommend the **MoneyHelper Service**, an organisation who work to improve peoples financial wellbeing across the UK, to provide you with free, independent support.



**Money  
Helper**

Free and confidential advice including advice/chat lines:  
[www.moneyhelper.org.uk](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk)

### Top tools and resources from Money Helper

#### [Budget Planner Tool:](#)

This free Budget Planner puts you in control of your household spending and analyses your results to help you take control of your money. It's already helped hundreds of thousands of people.

#### [Couch to Financial Fitness:](#)

Would you like to feel more in control of your finances? Try their free and flexible ten-week plan to help you build your confidence to manage your money. Develop core saving muscles, and create better habits for a long-term cash confident future.

#### [Debt Advice Locator Tool:](#)

If you're struggling with debt, it can be hard to know where to turn. But with lots of free national and local advice services available across the UK, you can use this tool to find help in a way that's best for you.

#### [Debt and borrowing:](#)

For taking control of debt, getting free debt advice, and how to borrow affordably.

#### [Benefits:](#)

Find out what benefits you're entitled to and learn about Universal Credit.

#### [Budgeting and managing your money:](#)

Advice on running a bank account, planning your finances, and cutting costs.

#### [Work and redundancy:](#)

Advice on understanding your employment rights, what in-work benefits you might be entitled to and how to handle redundancy.

#### [Family and care:](#)

Big money decisions often need to be made when looking after family members and partners, expecting a baby, or dealing with problems like illness, divorce or bereavement. MoneyHelper has easy to understand guides to help you.

#### [Help with scams:](#)

Advice for spotting, avoiding and recovering from scams.

