



*The news and information bulletin from the A & B Diocesan Education Service*



**September 2016**



### **Director's Letter**

Dear Colleagues,

I hope the first week of the new school year has gone well and it does not yet feel as if you have never been away! Welcome back to all staff and governors and in particular to those who are new – I hope you will always feel supported by, and included within our Catholic schools' communities.

Last week saw an exciting announcement of potentially seismic impact for Catholic education, namely the Government's proposal to remove the cap on faith-based admissions for free schools and new academies. Clearly, this will be dependent upon a successful passage through Parliament but potentially opens up the possibility – closed to us until now – of opening new Catholic Free Schools to meet parental demand for Catholic school places. We eagerly await further details and will keep you updated.

You will already have received our CPD Handbook for this academic year and I hope we will see as many Headteachers as possible at the forthcoming Headteachers' Retreat Day at Worth Abbey on Friday 23rd September from 10am. This was very well received last September and is again being led by Bishop Richard. I encourage as many Heads as possible to take time out of their busy schedules to spend the day in a guided reflection in each other's company. I am confident you will not regret it.

We look forward to welcoming you and your colleagues to various courses over the year!

With very best wishes for the new term,

Marie Ryan

## Updated Diocesan Admissions Guidance 2016

At the end of August, the Diocese published updated Admissions Guidance. This Guidance is applicable with immediate effect and replaces all previous admissions guidance issued by the Bishop (as the appropriate religious authority for all Catholic schools situated in his diocese). Schools will need to have regard to the new Admissions Guidance when reviewing their arrangements and in setting the school's admission arrangements for 2018 entry.

The whole Admissions Guidance document including model policies, supplementary Information Forms (SIFs) and other appendices (all in a PDF format) is available at:  
<http://www.abeducationservice.org.uk/Policies/>

The Guidance highlights the respective roles of the Governing Body, the Local Authority, priests, the Diocese and parent/carers. It has a section on drafting oversubscription criteria and, on page nine, a chart which clearly outlines the actions required by governors and the applicable timelines to work to regarding 2018 admission arrangements.

The vast majority of schools in the diocese attended the deanery admissions meetings led by Simon Parr in July. As a result they will be aware that the Guidance also includes a choice of four model policies and accompanying SIFs. It is the Bishop's wish that schools use one of the four diocesan model admission policies and SIFs for 2018 admissions and beyond.

The four model policies/SIFs for primary schools are available to download (in Word format) at:  
<http://www.abeducationservice.org.uk/ViewArticle/?section=Resources&id=550&subset=Governor%20Resources>

The four model policies/SIFs for secondary schools are available to download (in Word format) at:  
<http://www.abeducationservice.org.uk/ViewArticle/?section=Resources&id=551&subset=Governor%20Resources>

Part of the reason for the updated Guidance and new models relates to making them more robust in the light of Local Authority comments and recent adjudications. A second major reason is to keep a consistent style and format for admission arrangements across all schools in the Diocese. This will make the process much easier for parents but will also prove easier for schools, priests and the local authorities. We therefore ask all schools to cooperate in this endeavour by inserting the school's logo in the applicable spaces and maintaining the style/formatting of the documents.

### **So, what do schools need to do now for 2018 admissions?**

1. Governors, in the next few weeks, need to review how well their admission arrangements worked last year and select which of the four diocesan models they want to choose (Note: two models do not involve practice in the oversubscription criteria and two models do involve practice). If schools have any question on the models or Guidance, please contact Simon Parr at [simon.parr@dabnet.org](mailto:simon.parr@dabnet.org).
2. Using one of the models, schools will then need to go out for consultation on their proposed admission arrangements for a minimum six week period between 1 October 2016 and 31 January 2017. The Admissions Code highlights the statutory consultees (which include the LA and Diocese). If schools are in any doubt about who they need to consult, again feel free to contact Simon Parr on 01293 511130 or using the above email address.
3. At the end of the consultation period, the governors will need to consider the responses to the consultation, if any have been received. They will then need to formally determine their 2018 admission arrangements by 28 February 2017.
4. Governing bodies are required by statute to send their determined arrangements to the Local Authority and the Diocese and other consultees by latest 15 March 2017. They must also post the determined arrangements on their website by the same date.
5. Schools, if they are using distance measurement as a tiebreak will need to use the applicable wording for their Local Authority. The models currently show the wording applicable to Surrey. Again, please contact Simon Parr if you need clarification on this.

## Buildings Matters

### LCVAP information evening

It may be the case that by the time you read this, the LCVAP information evening on 14 September will have taken place. If you do not/did not attend and would like any information about issues surrounding buildings maintenance for VA schools, let us know and we will send you a copy of the material used.

### Business Managers' Forum(s)

In response to feedback from some of the 'further-flung' schools in the diocese, there will be three separate Forum meetings for Business Managers this term: one in Guildford on 26 September, one in Barnham on 27 September and one in Eastbourne on 28 September – the contents at each will be the same but the conversations may well differ! The topic this term is centred round disaster recovery – but the real value of these meetings is in the contribution of practitioners sharing their experiences and ideas. If you haven't already booked, you can do so at [www.abeducationservice.org.uk/Courses/](http://www.abeducationservice.org.uk/Courses/) - under Leadership.

### LCVAP applications

Applications for LCVAP funding for next year need to be received at the Diocesan Education Service by the end of October. The applicable form can be downloaded from the Education Service website at: <http://www.abeducationservice.org.uk/ViewArticle/?section=Resources&id=356>

This might be a good time to ensure that the school premises development plan is reviewed and up-to-date; if you would like any help with this process, do ask us!

### Insurances

Where contractors are doing building work which has a contract value of less than £100,000 on school sites, the CCIA will automatically cover accidental damage caused during the construction. If the contract is worth more, then additional insurance is required and there is a premium payable for that. This includes works being done by the Local Authority.

The historic arrangement in the diocese is for split insurances for contents and premises; it is worth reviewing the insurances to ensure that there are no gaps for liability for damage to contents, for instance, to fall through. The Education Service hopes to participate in a review of this over the coming term, to see if we can simplify this (and keep the cost down as far as possible).

### Xavier Academy Trust

Finally, our congratulations to the nine schools which, from 1 September 2016, formed the Xavier Academy Trust in the Woking and Weybridge deaneries. Funding arrangements for building works in Multi-Academy Trusts differ somewhat from those that VA schools are used to; we look forward to hearing how this develops. The most notable changes will probably be the ability to recover VAT on building works, and the removal of the requirement for governors to contribute 10%.

## Note to Clerks

### Clerks Forums:

The dates for Clerks' Forums taking place across the Diocese this half term are as follows:

|                          |                   |                                |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Wednesday 21st September | 10.00am – 12.30pm | Salesian School, Chertsey      |
| Thursday 22nd September  | 10.00am – 12.30pm | St Thomas a Becket, Eastbourne |
| Tuesday 27th September   | 10.00am – 12.30pm | St Wilfrid's, Angmering        |

These forums have proved to be very useful, offering an opportunity to share information, update on any changes or developments and to network with other clerks working in Catholic Schools.

Simon Parr, Education Officer, will talk briefly at each of these three forums about the new admissions guidance from the Diocese, details of which can be found on the Education Service website (see earlier item).

We will also advise on the election of Chair and Vice Chair of Governors, with guidance on this distributed at the Forum.

Also, and very importantly, it is a very busy year in terms of Foundation Governors completing their terms of office. **Please make every effort to book onto one of these forums.**

### **Terms of office and re-appointments 2017**

As you are aware Foundation Governors are appointed for a four year term of office that commences from the date of appointment. Historically, regardless of appointment date, all Foundation Governors came to the end of their term of office at the same time, and all were required to be re-appointed at the same time.

The impact of this historic re-appointment cycle is still being felt; consequently August 2017 will see a large number of Foundation governors coming to the end of their term of office. It is vitally important that the Diocese has up to date and accurate records of existing governors, particularly Foundation Governors. Please check your database and start the re-appointment process early. With the additional task of DBS checks and the process of seeking references, re-appointment can take several weeks.

### **CPD Handbook**

The CPD Handbook has been sent to all schools and Governing Bodies. Please look out for this and draw it to the attention of your governors. It lists all the training provided for the next academic year. Please encourage your governors to attend relevant training.

### **Foundation Governor resignations**

Finally, a reminder that Foundation Governor resignations should be notified to this office in writing (an email will suffice). If a Foundation Governor resigns please ask for this in writing and forward this written confirmation to [gill.sajnog@dabnet.org](mailto:gill.sajnog@dabnet.org)

## **GCSE and GCE A Level Religious Studies**

This month marks the introduction of new GCE A Level and GCSE Religious Studies (RS) qualifications. Both are significantly different to their predecessors, GCSE RS probably representing the most significant change to the structure and content of the qualification since GCSE was introduced in 1988. Given the scale of the changes, schools have had little time to prepare, Ofqual only approving specifications in spring-summer 2016 although the structure of the new qualification was published early in 2015.

Their introduction has been the catalyst for diocesan Religious Education advisers, the CES and Catholic Higher Education Institutes to develop a joint group - CREDO (Catholic Religious Education Development Opportunities) - to engage and collaborate in helping schools and colleges to prepare for the new qualifications by providing conferences across the country. The HEI members of CREDO are also conducting a research study into the issues faced by schools as they selected, planned and began to teach their new specifications. CREDO hopes that those schools that are approached to participate in the study will be able to respond positively.

## **Commission on Religious Education**

Religious Education has become the focus of considerable attention recently, doubtless as a result of the new GCSE RS (see above) with its requirement to teach two religions and the publication of several reports in 2015 addressing the subject. This month sees the inaugural meeting of the Commission on Religious Education, an independent body sponsored by the Religious Education Council. Its wide remit is "to review the legal, education, and policy frameworks for religious education. The review will be a wide-ranging, inclusive and evidence-based process designed to inform policy makers. The ultimate aim will be to improve the quality and rigour of religious education and its capacity to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain". It hopes to complete its task in 2018 with an interim report next year.

Previous reports have demonstrated a distinct lack of understanding of the nature and purpose of Religious Education in Catholic schools and colleges so it is hoped that many might consider responding to this review which is committed to receiving submissions from all interested parties. Pending the imminent launch of its website, further details can be found at:  
<http://religionseducationcouncil.org.uk/commission-on-re>

## Pilgrimage Walk and Mass for secondary schools

The Year of Mercy draws to a close in just three months. As part of our diocesan celebrations the Good Shepherd gathering was held in Arundel Cathedral, attended by primary schools together with some secondary schools. Bishop Richard has invited all secondary schools to mark the feast of St Philip Howard, co-patron of the diocese, by joining him in a Pilgrimage Walk and Mass in Arundel Cathedral on 19 October 2016. Final details will be shared with all secondary schools shortly.

## CES employment documentation

May we remind all schools and academies that CES model employment documentation, including CES application forms, CES model contracts, CES model work place policies etc. should be used in all cases. These have all been recently updated and can all be found on the CES website, [www.catholiceducation.org.uk/](http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/).

The Bishops' Memorandum on Appointment of Teachers in Catholic Schools outlines the Bishops' expectations, with CES employment documentation reflecting these requirements. This is why Catholic schools and academies should be using CES documentation, rather than contracts and/ or policies produced by a Local Authority.

You can find a helpful CES User Guide on Model employment documentation, all of which is intended to support the Governing Body in exercising their responsibility to preserve and develop the Catholic character of the school.

## Mary Reynolds DSG

Pope Francis has honoured Mary Reynolds, former Director of the Catholic Schools Service, by appointing her a Dame of the Pontifical Order of St Gregory the Great (DSG).

Her contribution to Catholic Education spanned over 40 years, firstly with posts in Cardiff primary schools, then as Deputy head at St Edmund's First School in Bury St Edmunds, Headteacher of St Alban's, Bury St Edmunds, Headteacher at St Pancras Primary School in Ipswich and Headteacher of St Cuthbert's, Englefield Green. She was appointed RE Adviser to the Diocese in 1997 and in 2000 was appointed Director of the Catholic Schools Service. In addition she has been a member of the Executive Committee of the national body for Catholic Education, the CES.



In Bishop Richard's absence, Margaret Smart, former Director of the Catholic Education Service (the national body that acts on behalf of the Catholic Bishops' Conference to support Catholic education) presented a framed Decree and the insignia to Mary.

## The Life of Christ 2016

Life of Christ week was a great success. Over fifty schools attended and feedback to Wintershall was overwhelming positive. Comments received included:

*'My school children were captivated all day'*

*'I know that this event is one that the children will treasure in their memories forever'*



## Diocesan Education Service Website

The Diocesan Education Service's website ([www.abeducationservice.org.uk](http://www.abeducationservice.org.uk)) has been online since January 2015. We hope that you frequently visit the site and feel that the site has the content and functionality you need.

The website is kept 'live' with up to date with news items ... as there have been quite a few items posted, particularly in recent months, we would suggest schools look frequently at this section and ensure they don't miss anything (i.e. beyond the five latest news items on the front page) by clicking on the 'more items' button

Please continue to send in news items to us. To submit a story (and photo), please go to bottom right hand section of the 'Publications' page of the website.

## Appointments

| NEWLY APPOINTED HEADTEACHERS |  |   |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| Name                         | School   | With Effect From:                             |
| Kate Licence                 | The Marist Catholic Primary School, West Byfleet     | September 2016                                |
| Toria Bono                   | St John's Catholic Primary School, Horsham           | September 2016                                |
| James Field                  | St Robert Southwell Catholic Primary School, Horsham | September 2016                                |
| Natalie McCarthy             | St Cuthbert Mayne Catholic Primary School, Cranleigh | Interim Head<br>September 2016 –<br>July 2017 |
| Helen Townsley               | English Martyrs Catholic Primary School, Worthing    | January 2017                                  |

## Vacancies

| HEADTEACHER VACANCIES |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Post                  | School   |
|                       | <b>Primary</b>   |
| Headteacher           | St Mary Magdalen Catholic Primary School, Brighton (wef Jan 2017)                                |
| Headteacher           | Annecy Catholic Primary School, Seaford (Jane Thompson, interim Acting Headteacher)              |
| Headteacher           | St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Lewes (Michelle Lord, interim Acting Headteacher)            |
| Headteacher           | St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, Crawley (Yvonne Mundy, interim Acting Headteacher) |

Please do not hesitate to contact the school/Education Service if you would like to discuss any of the above posts in confidence.