



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



March 2015



### Director's Letter

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the first edition of **THE ALPHA BETA**, the renamed news and information bulletin for headteachers, governors, clergy and clerks in our schools. I hope that you have enjoyed a very happy half-term and a well-deserved break after what was an extremely busy six weeks in school.

As I write, the evenings are starting to get lighter and there is a sense that the end of Winter is in sight, with the hint of Spring, sunshine and warmer weather not too far away. Spring brings with it a promise of hope, renewal and new life; a sentiment which is mirrored in the forthcoming diocesan Jubilee celebrations on 5 July. This promises to be a great celebration of the Diocese's first fifty years, and there will be something for everyone. Bernadette and I will be in touch with schools regularly about this in the coming weeks and months, as schools and the Education Service prepare together. I know many schools are already preparing for the day, and we are looking forward to seeing as many schools represented - and to hearing as many school choirs - as possible!

Between now and Easter we have an Academies Assembly (11 March); Admissions Appeals 'Presenting Officer' Training (13 March); NQTs Day (19 March); and Cross-phase Headteacher Conference (23 March), full details of which can be found inside this bulletin. Please do not forget to sign up!

An announcement was made just before half-term regarding the provision of LCVAP funding for the year 2015-2016. We are therefore in the process of meeting with each of the four local authorities – and, in the cases of East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove with the Diocese of Chichester - to negotiate our share of said funding. The outcome of these negotiations will then go to the Diocesan Finance Committee for approval and ratification. Inevitably requests far exceed the amount of funding available, so not all schools will be successful, but I will ensure that decisions are communicated to schools as soon as we are able.

As you are probably aware, we were hoping to recruit to the post of Deputy Director just before half-term. Unfortunately it was not possible on this occasion and we will therefore be re-advertising the post before Easter. We are interviewing for the post of Buildings Officer on Monday 9 March. We continue therefore to be extremely stretched as a small team, and are currently covering both vacancies in addition to our own roles. We are all very grateful for your understanding of the situation.

Lastly, sincere thanks for all that you do. Catholic schools are dependent on the people who govern, lead, teach in, and support them – we are very blessed in Arundel and Brighton.

Best Wishes,

Marie Ryan

## Academies Assembly

The Diocesan 'Academies Assembly', to be held on 11 March 2015 at the AMEX Stadium, Falmer, is almost upon us.

Headteachers, Chairs of Governors, Deans and Trustees have all been invited, as well as a range of speakers, in order to ensure that the day is one of information and dialogue, in which all voices are heard. In January, Trustees explored the opportunities and challenges of a diocesan MAT with a representative group of Headteachers, representatives of the Shadow Board and the Director of the Education Service. Trustees are currently reflecting on those discussions and on the implications of the Cluster Model as an alternative to a single DMAT. Marie will be updating schools on the Trustees' position on 11 March and, as you have already seen from the agenda, the meeting promises to be both exciting and useful in moving the Diocese forward.

## Diocesan Golden Jubilee - Sunday 5 July 2015 - Important Festival Information

On 5 July 2015, the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton will be celebrating its Golden Jubilee by holding a Diocesan Festival at the Amex Stadium in Brighton. As well as celebrating the diocesan Jubilee, the Festival offers a great opportunity to celebrate the wealth of Catholic education in the Diocese. In conjunction with the Jubilee Celebrations' organising committee, the Education Service invites every school in the Diocese to contribute to the Festival in the following ways:

- Presenting the school's Mission Statement – each school is invited to create a 5 minute IT presentation which reflects and celebrates your school community. The presentation can be set to music. Throughout the day all presentations will be run on a loop to celebrate our rich and diverse school communities.
- Participation at the Jubilee Mass - every school is invited to bring a group of pupils/students, so that every diocesan school is represented at the Jubilee Mass. in the same way as at the Good Shepherd, it would be lovely to see each group bring a school banner.

In the weeks and months leading up to the Jubilee Festival, all schools will be invited to celebrate a series of Jubilee-themed assemblies in school, enabling us to lead up to the Golden Jubilee Celebration together as a family of schools.

## Electronic Mail Outs - ! ACTION REQUIRED !

The Education Service sent a few electronic mail-outs to schools at the beginning of term (in January). These mail-outs speed up and improve communications with schools on more pressing items that cannot wait until the next edition of *The Alpha Beta*.

While these mail outs worked well in general, it became apparent that some schools were not receiving them, it is presumed due to the security settings at some schools. Please can you pass on to those responsible for IT at the school that these mailings will come from one of the following IP addresses so that these mailings and anything from the Education Service/Dabnet can be 'whitelisted'/added to the safe senders list.

- 27.126.148.96/27
- 27.126.147.96/27
- 27.126.146.96/27
- 205.166.177.0/24
- 204.75.142.0/24
- 203.55.21.0/24
- 103.28.42.0/24

Please would all schools confirm that this has been done as soon as possible to Simon Parr ([simon.parr@dabnet.org](mailto:simon.parr@dabnet.org)) so that we know that these emails will get through. After a suitable test mailing, this communication channel can be restarted.

## Reconstitution of Governing Bodies – ! ACTION REQUIRED !

The governing bodies of all maintained schools have to be reconstituted under the School Governance Constitution Regulations 2012 by **1 September 2015**.

Time is getting short on this and, at the time of writing, 35 schools have still not outlined to the Education Service where they are in determining the constitution. In order to meet the deadlines, **we would advise all schools that have not done so to determine their constitution under the 2012 Regulations by the end of this term.**

Please let Simon Parr ([simon.parr@dabnet.org](mailto:simon.parr@dabnet.org)) know the status as soon as possible. Once the new constitution is known and assuming it meets the Regulation requirements, the Diocese is able to facilitate an easy process for the production of an approved instrument of government.

## Reconstitution of Governing Bodies – Additional points to note

In terms of transition to the new governing body a particular point should be noted. Only the new governing body may decide on who will be co-opted governors. Shedding any governors in a surplus category is far better done by the old governing body, with a key role for the Chair.

In the event that there is a surplus carried forward, the new governing body decides, with the remaining surplus governors present and able to vote on surplus categories other than their own. The exception to this is if there are surplus foundation governors, in which case, as it is the Bishop who appoints, the Diocese will need to be involved. Taking a surplus forward is a situation best avoided!

## Note for Clerks to Governors

The process for re-appointing or appointing Foundation Governors can take a few weeks. We are dependent on the return of references, before we can move the process forward.

One of the tasks for the Clerk to Governors is to keep the Education Service up to date with resignations, appointment of non-foundation governors e.g. parent governor and most importantly advising the Education Service before a Foundation Governor term of office runs out. It would be very helpful if all clerks could monitor their governors' terms of office on a regular basis and inform the Diocese if any are coming to an end. Paperwork and process is the same for appointment and re-appointment and Foundation Governor application forms must be completed.

If a term of office runs out, that person ceases to be a governor until re-appointed by the Diocese; they can attend governor body meetings but they cannot vote on any issues.

It may be beneficial to include a review of 'terms of office dates' at the beginning of each term as a regular agenda item at Full Governing Body meetings.

## Admissions – Wording for Note on looked after/previously looked after children

An item in the November Bulletin advised schools to check the appropriate wording in the 'Notes' part of their admissions policy concerning looked after children/ previously looked after children to ensure it was compliant with the new Admissions Code. As a few queries still emerged, the wording suggested is repeated below:

**'Looked after children'** are children who are registered as being in the care of the Local Authority or provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(a) e.g. fostered or living in a children's home, at the time an application for a school is made. **'Previously looked after children'** means such children who have previously been in the care of a Local Authority or provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(a) and who have left that care through adoption, a 'child arrangement order' (in accordance with Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) or special guardianship order (in accordance with Section 14A of the Children Act 1989).

## Admissions: deferred entry/requests seeking a place outside the normal age group

### Re: Deferred entry:

Admission authorities are required to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. The parent/carer has the following options where the governing body has offered such a child a place at the school. The parent/carer can decide either:

- a) That the child starts school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday with their natural academic cohort; or
- b) To defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made; or
- c) That the child starts school on a part-time basis until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

### Re: Admission of children outside their normal age group:

This new element in the recently published Admissions Code (19 December 2014) concerns the admission of children outside their normal age group. The DfE now requires all schools to make clear in their admission arrangements the process for requesting admission out of the normal age group.

It is the view of the Government, the Diocese, most LAs and, we would assume, most governing bodies, that a child is educated alongside his/her age equivalent peers, in almost all cases. The strong advice therefore is that all children enter into their normal year group, as the responsibility for addressing individual education lies with the school through an appropriately differentiated and enriched curriculum.

However despite this strong advice, parents/carers may request that their child is exceptionally admitted outside their normal age group.

To meet the DfE's requirement to make clear the process for requesting admission out of the normal age group, we would suggest adding the following to school admission arrangements. Please note that the third paragraph (in brackets '[ ]' below) is for primary schools only and would therefore need to be omitted for secondary schools.

#### **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Please note that it is the view of the Government, the Diocese, the LA and the Governing Body of this school that a child is educated alongside his/her age equivalent peers, in almost all cases.

Should a parent/carer request to have a decelerated entry to school i.e. to start later than other children in their chronological age group, they must initially apply for a school place in accordance with the deadlines that apply for their child's chronological age.

[As an example, a request to the school for a summer born child (ie between 1 April to 31 August), to be admitted to the reception class in the September following their fifth birthday, must be made prior or during the application process for the child's normal year group. An application also needs to be made to the LA for a school place in the correct year group. This will ensure that parents/carers are not disadvantaged for a preference school place in the event the request is refused].

If the request is accepted, the application for the normal year group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. The parent/carer will be required to apply in the usual way the following year, along with the cohort of applicants for that year group. It should be noted that the application will not receive priority over or above any other applicant for this year group and the application will be considered in line with the published admission criteria applicable for that year of entry alongside all other applicants to the school.

In relation to the request, decisions are made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interest of the child. The governing body will expect the parent/carer to supply them

with appropriate information and evidence. What the governing body will take into account will include:

- Views of parent/carer
- Information relating to the child's academic, social and emotional development, where relevant
- Medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Any previous history of being educated outside of their normal age group
- If the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- Views of the headteacher of the school.

Please note that parents/carers do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group. It is the governing body who, having considered the circumstances of each individual case, will make a decision. The governing body will set out clearly for the parents/carers concerned the reasons for their decision in each case.

If the parent/carer is unhappy with a decision about which year group their child will be admitted to, the following applies. Parents/carers who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. However, there is not a right of appeal if the child has been offered a place and it is not in the year group the parent/carer would like. In such cases, the parent/carer could make a complaint through the school's complaint procedure.

If a parent/carer requests to have an accelerated entry to school i.e. to start earlier than other children in their chronological age group, they must initially apply for a school place at the same time that other families are applying for that cohort. If the governing body agrees for the child to have an accelerated entry, the application will be processed. If it is not agreed for the child to have an accelerated entry, they will be invited to apply again in the following year for the correct cohort.

## Admissions for 2016 entry – Important statutory dates

All maintained schools in the Diocese (i.e. both schools that consulted on changes and those that did not) have by law to determine their 2016 admission arrangements by **15 April 2015**, at the latest.

Following determination, schools are required to send a copy of the admission arrangements (i.e. the policy and the Supplementary Information Form) to the LA (with a copy to the Diocese) letting them know that they have been determined. The determined arrangements must be posted on the school's website at the same time (i.e. by **1 May 2015**).

From 1 May, schools should ensure that as well as the newly determined admission arrangements for 2016 entry, they also need to have clearly visible on their website the admission arrangements for the current year (ie 2014-15) and for the 2015-16 year.

## Admission Appeals

Just a reminder that schools are required to have published their appeals information on the school website by 28 February 2015. The information should include:

- The closing date for appeals (at least 20 school days following receipt of the letter from the LA).
- The person in the office to contact for information
- The approximate dates on which appeals will take place e.g. the last week in June etc.

## Diocesan Education Service Website

The Diocesan Education Service's new website ([www.abeducationsservice.org.uk](http://www.abeducationsservice.org.uk)) has now been online since the beginning of January. We hope that you are a frequent visitor and find the new site has the content and functionality you need. We would welcome any comments/feedback you might have. Please address these to [kirsty.howell@dabnet.org](mailto:kirsty.howell@dabnet.org) in the first instance.

Please remember the facility is now available on the website for schools to post any vacancies the school might have open. Many schools are already using this facility which can be accessed through the 'Recruitment' section of the Education Service website.

The website also looks to celebrate Catholic Education. We would therefore welcome schools submitting good news stories/photos which will be incorporated into the 'News' area of the website. To submit a story (and photo), please go to the 'Publications' section of the website. We look forward to hearing from you!

## Ofsted, Collective Worship and Religious Education

Your attention is drawn to paragraphs 14-17 of the January 2015 Ofsted Handbook (see below) as they mark a significant change in guidance to inspectors inspecting all schools with a religious character, including Catholic schools. These changes follow conversations that the CES has had, and representations that the CES has made, to Ofsted.

### Inspection of religious education and collective worship

*Schools with a religious character*

- 14 If a voluntary or foundation school (including an academy) is designated as having a denominational religious character ('a school with a religious character'), then denominational religious education, school ethos and the content of collective worship are inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (see chart below). Academies designated as having a religious character by the Secretary of State are inspected in an equivalent way by virtue of a provision in the academy's funding agreement. The inspectors who conduct **section 48 inspections** are appointed by the school's governing body, or the foundation governors in a voluntary controlled school, having consulted with person(s) prescribed in regulations (normally the appropriate religious authority). The inspectors are normally drawn from the relevant faith group's section 48 inspection service, although not all faiths have their own inspectors organised in this way. Section 48 inspections should be conducted within five school years from the end of the school year in which the last section 48 inspection took place<sup>1</sup>.
- 15 In schools with a religious character, section 5 inspectors may not comment on the content of religious worship or on denominational religious education. However, inspectors may comment on the contribution of assemblies and teaching (in any subject with the exception of RE) to pupils' personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their behaviour and safety. In the case of other maintained schools and academies, including free schools that are not designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character, and where RE is being provided in line with the locally agreed syllabus, RE is inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005<sup>2</sup>.
- 16 The relationship between section 5 and section 48 inspections is governed by a protocol between Ofsted and signatory faith group inspectorates.
- 17 The Ofsted lead inspector should check the section 48 arrangements and:

<sup>1</sup> Regulation 4 of The Education (School Inspection) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Inspectors must be mindful of certain circumstances when schools provide RE as part of the locally agreed syllabus irrespective of the schools religious designation.

- if a section 48 inspection is occurring at the same time, the section 5 report should simply mention that a section 48 inspection also took place under the ‘information about this school’ section; evidence from the section 48 inspection should not be used in a section 5 report
- if a section 48 inspection has been carried out since the previous section 5 inspection, inspectors should inform themselves of any key issues raised but should not use its evidence in their own inspection
- if no section 48 inspection by a suitable person has taken place, the lead inspector should check the arrangements; if governors have not arranged for a section 48 inspection, then inspectors should conclude that they have failed to meet a key expectation.

The key point is in para 15: “In schools with a religious character, section 5 inspectors may not comment on the content of religious worship or on denominational religious education. However, inspectors may comment on the contribution of assemblies and teaching (in any subject with the exception of RE) to pupils’ personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their behaviour and safety.”

It states that inspectors may not comment on the **content of religious worship** because they are entitled to satisfy themselves that a daily act of collective worship is held in schools with a religious character as they are in other schools. Nonetheless, using the term ‘assemblies’ as they do elsewhere in the handbook, inspectors may comment on their contribution to pupils’ personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their behaviour and safety. It also states that inspectors **may not comment ... on denominational religious education.**

Para 14 correctly states that denominational religious education and the content of religious worship are inspected under provisions of section 48 of the Act. Para 15 notes that there is a protocol that governs the relationship between section 5 and section 48 inspectors should both be inspecting the school at the same time, as happened recently in another diocese as a result of the de-coupling of and independent scheduling of inspections, but the protocol is longstanding and the CES is seeking to update it to meet current requirements. Para 16 provides guidance to Ofsted inspectors about section 48 inspections but the CES is pointing out to Ofsted that bullet 3 fails to recognise the independent scheduling of section 48 inspections. Should any lead inspector invoke para 17 bullet 3 as evidence that governors have failed to meet a key expectation, please advise the Diocesan Education Service (Ann Baldwin) immediately.

### **Ofsted, British Values and the school website**

Since September 2014 the Ofsted Handbook has made reference to fundamental British values and preparing young people for life in modern Britain. In the January 2015 handbook seven paras make reference to ‘life in modern Britain’, two of which also refer to fundamental British values. The paragraphs are 4, 133, 134, 150, 152, 165 and 211.

Among the expectations for preparing young people for life in modern Britain is the expectation that pupils will learn about religions and beliefs widely held in Britain. Catholic schools cover this area in many ways but particularly in religious education and assemblies, two areas from which Ofsted section 5 inspectors are specifically not allowed to comment on content, although, as mentioned above, they are able to comment on the contribution from assemblies.

In order to demonstrate that a Catholic school includes teaching on religions other than Catholic Christianity, it is suggested that the Religious Education curriculum on the school website specifies the religions that are taught in each year in addition to Catholic Christianity.

Further it is suggested that the school satisfy themselves that the school curriculum, and the Religious Education curriculum as the core of the curriculum, is clearly accessible on the school website. This should be undertaken from outside the school website by someone relatively unfamiliar with the website in order to ensure that it is accessible to the general public and to Ofsted. There are instances of Ofsted choosing to inspect a school because the curriculum was not displayed on the website and anecdotal accounts of the curriculum only being visible when accessed from within the school and behind a login password.

## Senior Leadership Recruitment

Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Head of RE (in a secondary school) and Lay Chaplain are all reserved posts and therefore the recruitment process involves the diocese. The Education Service should be involved at all stages of the process and represented on the interview day. (The Education Service is also delighted to be included in Assistant Headteacher recruitment wherever possible).

Gill Sajnog co-ordinates the diary regarding reserved posts and recruitment. The process is as follows:

- School contacts Diocese to notify Education Service of vacancy for a reserved post.
- Gill will find some possible dates for a diocesan representative to lead a Governor briefing and will send them on to you.
- It will be for the Clerk/Governing Body to liaise with the LA regarding dates Gill sends, in order to find a mutually convenient date for the Governor Briefing.
- Once the clerk or a Governing Body representative has liaised with the LA and has found a mutually convenient date, he/she will need to notify Gill of the approved date.
- Gill will then fix the date in the Education Service recruitment diary (and will be able to release the alternative dates originally offered).
- The Diocesan representative will meet with the Governing Body and an LA Representative on the date agreed to lead the Governing Body through the recruitment process.
- Dates for advert, shortlisting and interviews will be agreed with the Local Authority and Diocesan representative at this meeting.

## Mandates for Schools Governors Accounts

It has come to the attention of the Diocesan Finance Office that some schools holding a Diocesan Bank Account go directly to the bank when they need to make some changes. No information regarding the procedures is given in the School Administration Manual.

The Diocesan Finance Office has asked us to include the following message for the attention of Governors and school Business Managers of all Catholic schools in the Diocese:

*All Catholic Schools holding a Diocesan Governors' Account are required to send a request in writing from the Chair of Governors to the Finance Team in Bishop's House to make any changes to their account.*

*The School Mandate has to be updated every time signatories are changed. Please send a written request from the Chair of Governor's with the new signatories' names to the Finance Team at Bishop's House who will send a new mandate to the school. This request can be made via e-mail to [finance@dabnet.org](mailto:finance@dabnet.org).*

*The new signatories should sign the new mandate appropriately and return the original form without dating it to the Finance Team in Bishop's House. Please be aware that any mistake on the form will result in the mandate being rejected by the bank unless mistakes are initialled. The form will then be countersigned by the Financial Secretary and sent to the HSBC Bank in London. From the date the bank receives the mandate, it takes about 15 working days to be processed.*

*For further queries, please e-mail the Finance Team at [finance@dabnet.org](mailto:finance@dabnet.org).*

## DfE Guidance on Exclusions

In January 2015, the DfE published new Guidance on Exclusions. However, the DfE has now withdrawn that Guidance to address some issues with process. The DfE will issue updated guidance in due course. In the interim, the 2012 Guidance therefore remains effective until new updated guidance is issued.

## Childcare Disqualification Requirements in Schools

On October 2014 the DfE published “*Keeping children safe in education: Childcare disqualification requirements – supplementary advice*” which can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>. This advice is a supplement to the ‘*Keeping Children Safe in Education*’ statutory guidance, which can also be accessed through the link.

The advice highlights the requirements for schools which arise from the Childcare Act 2006 and the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009. Whilst these requirements have been in place for some time it would seem that it has been largely overlooked in the school context.

The Act and Regulations set out the circumstances in which a person is disqualified from registration. It applies to the following members of staff:

- Staff who work in early years provision. This includes provision of childcare, including education for all children up to the 1<sup>st</sup> September following the date on which they attain the age of 5;
- Staff working in later years provision. This does not include education, or any other supervised activity provided by a school during school hours for registered pupils. It does include provision of childcare for children between the ages of 5-8. This would therefore include provision for children below the age of 8 in school settings such as breakfast clubs and after school provision;
- Staff who are directly concerned in the management of this early or later years provision.

This is likely to include all primary schools and junior schools where any provision is made for children outside school hours. The Catholic Education Service says that the main concern that has been flagged, and which appears to be causing a great deal of consternation on the ground, is that disqualification also applies to any person who lives in the same household as another person who is disqualified from registration, or in a household in which any such person is employed (‘disqualification by association’).

Since the fact that the requirements apply to school staff has been highlighted, local authorities, which are of course responsible for safeguarding, are requiring schools to take action to ensure compliance. The CES understands that local authorities are interpreting the requirements in very different ways, with some local authorities requiring schools to insist that all members of staff complete disqualification declarations.

The CES also understands that the DfE has received a great deal of feedback highlighting levels of concern about how the requirements are impacting on schools. The DfE has therefore hosted several meetings with ‘stakeholders’ (including the CES) to discuss the matter. Following those meetings, the CES intends to clarify the requirements and how the DfE is interpreting its guidance, in particular with regard to the level of checks that schools will need to make. In the interim we would advise schools that they should not act precipitously. When further clarification is received, it will be passed on.

## Surrey Schools Forum

Are you a Surrey Headteacher?

Would you be interested in representing diocesan schools at the Surrey Schools Forum? The Government requires Local Authorities to maintain a Schools Forum to represent schools' views on matters relating to the total Schools' Budget. In addition to its role as a consultative body, the forum has decision-making powers in specific areas.

Being the diocesan representative on the Schools Forum is not an onerous commitment, but it is an interesting role that has the potential to be influential. The Schools Forum meets termly and affords the opportunity to feed into decisions at local level, as well as to feed back to diocesan schools and the Education Service on key issues and concerns.

Julianne Birch, headteacher of St Dunstan's in Woking, is kindly acting as the Diocese's interim representative; going forward we need a permanent rep to ensure Catholic interests are represented.

If you would like to represent diocesan schools in Surrey on the Schools Forum, please notify Gill Sajnog on 01293 511130 or through [gill.sajnog@dabnet.org](mailto:gill.sajnog@dabnet.org)

## Wintershall Plays

Charlotte de Klee has recently taken over from her father, Peter Hutley, as the new producer of the Wintershall plays. She has alerted us to the three productions programmed for this year:

- **The Passion of Christ** which takes place on Good Friday (3 April 2015) in Trafalgar Square, London. Performances, which are at 12 noon and 3.15 pm, are free.
- **The Life of Christ** (23 June – 28 June 2015 at the Wintershall Estate in Surrey). This epic Life of Christ experience takes place around the estate and features Jesus preaching from a boat on the lake, feeding the 5,000 (bread for all) and a charge on horseback in the massacre of the innocent. The production is excellent for all and especially schools doing GCSE RE or comparative religions. If tickets are booked before 31 March 2015, Wintershall are offering a 20% discount for The Nativity production in December (see below).
- **The Nativity** (16 – 20 December 2015 at the Wintershall Estate in Surrey). A perfect way to reflect on the real meaning of Christmas.

Further information is available at and tickets can be booked through [www.wintershall-estate.com](http://www.wintershall-estate.com).

## Conferences

We have several conferences coming up, including the Academies Assembly Day on 11 March 2015 to be held at the Amex stadium in Brighton (for details, please see earlier item on page 2), closely followed by our Cross-phase Headteachers' Conference on 23 March 2015, which is on the theme of developing the school as a faith community.

Going forward, we very much want to make our conferences interactive days which are jointly planned and delivered by the Education Service and Headteachers. Your thoughts and suggestions on this would be most welcome. The Primary Steering Group has been asked to liaise with primary colleagues regarding suggestions for next year's CPD. The same will shortly be asked of secondary colleagues.

At the cross-phase Headteachers' Conference on 23 March, Lat Blaylock, Editor of *REToday*, will be leading the morning session which promises to be interactive, engaging and cross-phase. The afternoon will comprise four workshops around the theme of community and collaboration, and participants will have the opportunity to attend two of the four workshops. Three of these will be led by Primary Headteachers but all will be cross-phase in terms of their subject matter and their intended audience:

- Gill Askham will lead a workshop on the innovative cross-phase Chaplaincy model used across the Worthing deanery, exploring how this enriches the community at school and deanery level in a climate of relentless challenge;
- Neil Lewin will lead a workshop on the theme of cross-phase support and challenge in moving from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good';
- Theresa Kenefick's workshop will concentrate on the development of a school community through deanery innovation and collaboration.
- Lat Blaylock will lead a workshop around the role of inspiration for pupils and teachers in order to develop a school community.

Conferences are genuinely cross-phase when the subject matter is of relevance, interest and benefit to primary and secondary colleagues alike AND when the conference is supported and attended by primary AND secondary colleagues!

We look forward to welcoming colleagues from primary and secondary phases at what we are sure will be a stimulating and enriching day (for which further details can be seen below).

## Upcoming Courses & Events

<b>Support for Newly Qualified Teachers (Day 2 of 2) Thursday, 19 March 2015</b>	
<b>Outline:</b> The day affords the chance to welcome new teachers and to introduce them to the mission in education of our Catholic schools. Sessions will involve presentations, interactive discussion and workshops to address professional development needs. (Day 2 of 2 of a two day training programme)	
<b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Catholic Distinctiveness</li> <li>• Catholic life, prayer &amp; worship, religious education</li> </ul>	
<b>Session times:</b>	09.30 – 15.15
<b>Venue:</b>	Christian Education Centre, Crawley (DABCEC)
<b>Target Audience:</b>	Newly Qualified Teachers
<b>Course leader:</b>	Bernadette Connor, Primary RE Adviser Plus key note speakers TBC
<b>Cost:</b>	£60

<b>Cross-Phase Conference for Headteachers: Developing a Community of Faith Monday, 23 March 2015</b>	
<b>Outline:</b> The second of three thematically linked Headteachers' Professional Development Days this year. As we celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Diocese, the focus is on the spiritual awakening of the individual, the school community and the wider community.  The first day was rooted in the development of the Headteacher's identity. This term's conference led by Lat Blaylock, Editor of <i>RE today</i> , develops this and considers the identity not only of the individual but also of the school as a community of faith learners; how what teachers teach and the way they teach is heavily coloured by who they are and what they understand as being of value.  Next term's conference will develop this theme further, looking outwards to the wider community and our call to evangelisation.  The afternoon will be given over to headteacher-led workshops, as outlined above, all of which will be centred on the themes of community and collaboration	
<b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection on school as a community of faith learners.</li> </ul>	
<b>Session times:</b>	09.30 – 15.15
<b>Venue:</b>	Christian Education Centre, Crawley (DABCEC)
<b>Target Audience:</b>	Primary and Secondary Headteachers
<b>Course leader:</b>	Lat Blaylock, Editor <i>REtoday</i> Magazine Schools Team
<b>Cost:</b>	£60

## Succession Planning

With reference to succession planning and career development, please do get in touch with us if you are a middle or senior leader and are open to a possible secondment at Senior Leadership level, either at AHT, DHT or HT level in order to broaden your experience, develop new skills, update your CV and support others in the process!

## Vacancies

HEADTEACHER VACANCIES	
Post	School
	<b>Primary</b>
Headteacher	St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, Crawley
Headteacher	St Anne's Catholic Primary School, Chertsey
Headteacher	Annecy Catholic Primary School, Seaford

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

## Appointments

HEADTEACHER APPOINTMENTS		
Name	School	Effective from
	<b>Primary</b>	
Neil Lewin	St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School, Guildford	September 2015

DEPUTY HEADTEACHER APPOINTMENTS		
Name	School	Effective from
	<b>Primary</b>	
Rachel Kershaw	Cottesmore St Mary Catholic Primary School, Hove	10 February 2015
Ursula Hargrave	St Clement's Catholic Primary School, Ewell	12 February 2015
Simon Murphy	St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School, Brighton	September 2015
	<b>Secondary</b>	
Martin Twist	St Peter's Catholic School, Guildford	September 2015

## 'The Reluctant Disciple' – a new book by David Wells

David Wells has been a speaker at a number of Diocesan conferences and always gets a good response. He has now written his first book, *The Reluctant Disciple*, and the publisher (Redemptorist Publications) has asked us to alert teachers to it as they see the book as being a useful daily companion for those who work in Catholic schools. David uses a Bible text as his starting point and interweaves it with his own story to bring the reader a fresh new angle on scripture. Further information and the facility to purchase is available from [www.rpbbooks.co.uk](http://www.rpbbooks.co.uk).

## And finally ... Thank You to

Mrs Cornford: a valuable and very highly regarded TA at St Pancras Catholic Primary School in Lewes, Mrs Cornford is retiring on 26 March 2015 after over 27 years' service at the school. The school and the Diocese would like to acknowledge, give thanks for, and pay tribute to, Mrs Cornford's great contribution to Catholic education. We hope Mrs Cornford has a very happy and fulfilling retirement!

If anyone from your school is retiring or leaving the school after significant service at the school, please let Ann Baldwin ([ann.baldwin@dabnet.org](mailto:ann.baldwin@dabnet.org)) or Kirsty Howell ([kirsty.howell@dabnet.org](mailto:kirsty.howell@dabnet.org)) know, so it can be acknowledged in the next edition of the Alpha Beta.