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Core Services for Schools



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

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Our Core Offer to Our Schools

The Education Department aims to offer a diverse range of services, activities, courses, advice and guidance to the equally diverse range of schools, MATs, colleges, universities, chaplaincies, and youth groups that exist within the Diocese of Bath & Wells.

Our department is staffed by a committed and experienced team, for whom no question is too large or too small. We strive to work in partnership with those we serve, listening to their needs and responding appropriately.

We offer the following core services free of charge to schools:

- Visits to each school by a Diocesan School Adviser. This could be in the form of a general visit of support, a mid-way SIAMS focussed visit, or a more specific visit of support.
- Working alongside governors on headteacher appointments.
- School effectiveness support and resources in relation to all aspects of church school distinctiveness.
- School effectiveness support in conjunction with LA and MAT colleagues.
- School organisation services and advice on a range of issues including academy conversion, admissions, asset management, change of status, buildings issues.
- Advice for ex-officio and foundation representatives (members, directors and governors) in their unique roles.
- Administration of foundation and academy trust member appointments.
- A termly schools newsletter incorporating a newsletter for RE subject leaders.
- Termly briefings for headteachers and chairs of governors.
- Local diocesan support via clergy, readers, parishioners, children and youth workers, chaplains, to promote church school partnerships.
- Telephone, email and web-based advice and support on a range of issues.
- Advice for individual schools or groups of schools in looking at academy conversion or other reorganisation models.
- One free staff meeting training session if your school Ofsted or SIAMS inspection is not good or above.

School Effectiveness

Led by David Williams – Acting Assistant Director School Effectiveness

The school effectiveness team is passionate about supporting schools, academies and trusts in all aspects of Christian distinctiveness, through interpreting and sharing the Church of England Vision for Education and its four key pillars; Wisdom, Hope, Community and Dignity. The outworking of this vision is seen in our core offer below:

Vision, Values, Ethos, Spirituality and Worship

We can provide advice and training on the distinctively Christian elements of leading and teaching in a church school or academy. This might include a school's vision and values, prayer and spirituality or collective worship. We also facilitate school to school support in all these areas.

Church School Partnership

We can work with you in developing an effective partnership between your school and local church community and there are some useful resources on our website.

We can also offer links into deaneries which provide support to churches, schools and families in a wider local area.

Governance

We offer support and training for governors, members and directors in how to carry out their (increased) statutory role; how to prepare for inspection, how to support and challenge effectively, how to ensure that they are an effective governing body.

Both bespoke and standard training packages and advice are available including specific advice and support for foundation governors.

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

We can support schools to develop a 'curriculum in all its fullness'. This means developing a curriculum in the context of the Church of England Vision and ensuring that values are at the heart of the curriculum. We provide a number of exemplars and models, such as through 'Character Education'.

SIAMS – Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

We offer support to schools preparing for SIAMS inspections, particularly in view of the 2018 Schedule. We also advise on models of self-evaluation and addressing points for development. We offer mid-term SIAMS reviews and post-SIAMS visits.

School to School Support

We are able to facilitate school to school support in all school effectiveness and SIAMS matters.

School Effectiveness

Leadership Support and Development

Support and training for headteachers, subject leaders and middle leaders is available, as well as development of aspiring leaders. We organise an annual headteacher conferences. The team is linked in to all aspects of the new Foundation for Educational Leadership at national level and can facilitate opportunities such as the CofEPQH, networking and research.

RE

Support for RE subject leaders and all teachers of RE is available through training, resources, advice, the website and a regular newsletter. We offer assistance with planning, outstanding teaching and learning, assessment and the use of 'Understanding Christianity' within the RE curriculum. We can signpost teachers to their nearest Learn, Teach, Lead RE support hub.

Standards and Outcomes

The Education Department recognises its responsibility to know its schools well in order to ensure that appropriate preparation and follow-up is in place both before and after Ofsted inspections, and equally so that good practice can be shared. Through our data analysis of schools and trusts we can work with you and offer bespoke support.

Pupil Voice

We recognise that children and young people are our key stakeholders. As such we are currently developing a set of resources which enables schools to really listen to and act upon the input of their pupils through a series of structured support materials.

Headteacher Appointments

A Diocesan Adviser will attend any essential meetings to look at succession leadership options. Once an appointment process is in place the adviser will support planning prior to the interview days (e.g. short listing and interview days), and offer advice on aspects of the appointment process particular to church schools, whether VA, VC or Academy. They will then support governors on the interview days and feed back to candidates if required. If there is a failure to appoint for whatever reason, the diocese will continue to provide support.

Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Package

We aim to support all our schools by offering a range of wellbeing and pastoral support. This includes training on stress awareness, signposting to coaching and mediation and also specific bespoke support such as bereavement counselling, and support during transition and change. For more information please see the wellbeing section on our website. There is also an opportunity for church school leaders / headteachers to benefit from a residential retreat, hosted in the summer term.

School Organisation

Led by Suzanne McDonald - Assistant Director & School Organisation Team Leader

In an increasingly changing education landscape, particularly with regard to school organisation, the team aims to help schools and their governors make the right decision for their setting. It is helpful if we are involved as early as possible. Please contact any of the team if your school is considering any school organisation change.

Academy Conversion

Diocesan consent is a prerequisite for academy conversion, and the DofE will require a letter of conditional consent to be submitted with an application.

The diocese has its own non-negotiables for church schools, depending upon which model is being proposed, to ensure the church school distinctiveness is maintained and able to flourish within any new partnership arrangement. The initial conditional consent at the start of the process is only finalised when the legal documentation is completed.

Bespoke training is offered for your governing body whilst you are considering academy conversion through to actual conversion.

The diocese charges £1,500 for each school converting to academy status, to cover some of the internal costs incurred. We have a dedicated Academy Adviser to help with this process and ensure ongoing support and audit.

Admissions

Own admission authority schools, including academies, will continue to receive free guidance on core admission arrangements and appeal statements but will increasingly need to either undertake detailed work for themselves or to commission professional support.

It is vital for any VC schools considering a change of status to consider admissions as they will not have experience of being their own admissions authority.

Amalgamation

The diocese will support the statutory process by attendance at all mandatory meetings, and in addition will attend additional meetings, where appropriate, at each of the schools in relation to the process.

School Organisation

Asset Management

We encourage all schools to ensure their buildings are reviewed by a professional surveyor every two years and that they have an up to date condition survey produced. VC schools should discuss this with the LA; Academies & MATs are responsible for their own. VA schools can either work with The Hookway Partnership, or a provider of their own choice, to ensure their condition survey is up to date; they should discuss their options with Claire Hudson. VA schools should note that capital funding will not be allocated without a condition survey.

Compliance

Please note that all VA and academies are responsible for their own compliance checks. These will include Fire Alarms and safety checks, Security Alarms if installed, Radon testing, Legionella testing, Asbestos, Fixed Electrical testing including earthing and emergency lighting, PAT testing & IT system checks. It is essential that you either carry these out within the school or employ someone to do it. The School Organisation team can provide contact with companies who can help you with this.

Capital Funding For VA Schools

In 2020 the way the diocese receives capital funding for VA schools is changing. It is not expected this will have any direct impact on schools although full details will be provided to you as they are available. It is intended that the diocese will continue to prioritise projects strategically based on the condition surveys.

Change of Status

There is a statutory duty for any school considering a change of status e.g. from VC to VA, or from Community to VC or VA, to consult with the diocese.

The statutory process involved requires a set number of governing body meetings, as well as wider consultation. The diocese will support the statutory process and will, in addition, attend an initial discussion.

In the case of a school that is changing to VA status, additional support will be required in relation to the development of an admissions policy and an appropriate AMP (Asset Management Plan).

Closure

The diocese will support the statutory process by attendance at all mandatory meetings and, where appropriate, any additional meetings at the school in relation to the process.

School Organisation

External Capital Investment

Where a significant capital investment is being made in a church school, we expect to be involved in the planning stages. Attendance of officers at meetings will be dependent on the complexity of the project.

Please note that in most cases, the diocese's permission is needed for significant changes and extensions.

Federation

When a school expresses an interest in federation, the diocese will undertake to offer one session of initial training for the relevant schools (possibly in partnership with the Local Authority) to include a contextual overview of relevant school organisation.

We can attend relevant meeting(s) with the federation working group, to draw up the consultation document, including the proposed instrument of government. Support is available via telephone or email.

Governor Support Services - Including Clerks

Support for the appointment of foundation governors is provided free of charge and advice and guidance on all matters relating to school governance is available by phone and e-mail.

We also offer a biennial Clerks conference and Governor Conference which allows sharing of best practice, as well as useful briefings.

Legal & Premises Issues

The School Organisation team are responsible for dealing with any legal and premises issues that relate to church school trusts or trustees.

Please contact us if you have an issue and we will do our best to help you.

New Schools

The Education Department is actively looking to increase church school place provision across the diocese and have had success in bidding with MATs for new church schools.

We would welcome a conversation with any sponsor who would be interested in opening a new free school. We are able to financially support bid writing and have access to significant experience both within the team and in the wider field.

Go Team - Youth and Children's Ministry

Led by Tony Cook - Assistant Director & Go Team Leader

Our diocesan Go Team aims to support, encourage, resource, love and equip all those who work with children and young people: this includes teachers, clergy, readers, paid workers and volunteers, trainee students, school chaplains, and others.

- **Support:**
Offering advice, information and guidance on a range of topics relating to ministry with children and young people.
- **Encourage:**
Drawing alongside what exists and assist in the development of new initiatives for mission amongst children, young people and families.
- **Resource:**
Making available a range of resources, ideas and events to enrich the Christian faith development of children and young people.
- **loVe:**
Offering pastoral support and network gatherings for all those working with children and young people.
- **Equip:**
Providing high quality training, conferences and professional development for all those working with children and young people.

There is a Go Team Adviser assigned to each of the three archdeaconries.

The team run Inspire events in each of the three archdeaconries during the year.

They aim to offer lots of opportunities to try new things and resources, share your ideas and to network with others.

For more information:

<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/supporting-children/youth-children/inspire/>



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Chaplaincy

Led by Revd Mike Haslam – Chaplaincy Development Advisor

There are currently over 300 chaplains, serving in 126 chaplaincies across the Diocese of Bath and Wells. Schools and other organizations across Somerset, North Somerset and BANES are continuing to join the fast growing network.

Chaplains offer spiritual and pastoral care for all and bring good news, hope and aspiration to school communities.

Some of the questions I often hear about chaplaincy are:

- ‘How does chaplaincy work in a school or college?’
- ‘Can community schools have chaplains?’
(brief answer, ‘Yes.’)
- ‘How can we develop a new chaplaincy?’
- ‘How do I become a chaplain?’
- ‘Can a lay person be a chaplain?’
(Yes, chaplains are lay or ordained and members of any Christian denomination or church.)



All of these are answered in our toolkit which is available at:

<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Chaplaincy-Toolkit-2019.pdf>

As Chaplaincy Advisor, Mike is very happy to visit your school or MAT and discuss with you the vision and job description, the funding and the training support and line management for chaplaincy.

The Education Department

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Chaplaincy

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‘That they may have life,
life in all it’s fullness’

John 10:10



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