

“When doubts filled my mind, your comfort gave me renewed hope and cheer.” - Psalm 94:19

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I hope you have had a lovely summer break. I hope you were able to relax and enjoy time with family and friends. I found it was really refreshing to do something totally different to help my brain switch off from school business. I decorated the hall, stairs and landing this summer and although I generally dislike decorating, I found the task somewhat therapeutic. Most importantly I gave my brain a rest from education. I hope you were able to find a more enjoyable activity to recharge the batteries for another new school year ahead. (Note: I did go on holiday as well which was lovely and so you don't have to feel too sorry for me!)



September is here now and it is that time when we put our

'school brains' in gear again. For some, the school and routines will be familiar, for others, it may be a new chapter with many unknowns ahead. We warmly welcome all new members of the church school family including 3400 children starting school in their Reception year; new support staff, new teachers, new governors and new headteachers.

The new church school headteachers and executive headteachers starting this September are:

Gail Baker	Headteacher at Westwoodside Church of England Primary Academy
Daniel Callaghan	Executive Headteacher at the Trentside Federation
Rachael Cotton	Executive Headteacher at Stickney CE Primary School (fed. with New Leake)
Abbie Muir	Executive Headteacher at Whaplode and Weston St Mary's CE Primary Schools
Tracy Bowman	Interim Headteacher at Gainsborough Parish CE Primary School
Gareth Smith	Interim Executive Headteacher at the National and Harrowby Academies
Charlotte Hickerton	Interim Executive Headteacher at Fiskerton CE Primary School
Martyn Wells	Interim Executive Headteacher at Baston CE Primary School
Hayley Twidale	Interim Executive Headteacher at New Holland CE Primary School

I think it is pretty normal for us all to experience a range of feelings at the start of the new academic year. We may feel a sense of excitement about the new opportunities ahead of us and we may feel anxiety because of unknowns that lie around the corner.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” - Philipians 4:6



You are not alone if you have feelings of nervousness and self-doubt. These feelings usually stem from the high expectations we place upon ourselves and wanting to be the best we can be. You may feel comfort from the two Bible verses above to know that we can share our feelings with God and we can rely on Him to guide us through. There is something very powerful about praying to God “Please help me be efficient and confident today”.

It is also reassuring to know that we have the support of each other within the church school family. The past two and half years have been extremely challenging in schools and we cannot underestimate how supportive the church school family has been in helping us navigate significant complexities. I’ve witnessed great professional generosity between school leaders – e.g. sharing policies and plans with each other. I continue to see the great support academies receive from the church multi-academy trusts. I am also proud of the way the DBE team continues to provide excellent support, care and guidance for all church schools and academies.

We must not be shy of asking each other for support. School leaders sometimes feel they should know everything. We can’t be gifted in everything. My wife said that when she inspected my decorating of the hall, stairs and landing. There will be days in school when we give our best and the results will not be what we had hoped for. The important thing is that we work together as a church school family and we do our best. I believe God rewards effort, not success.

We know that schools and families will face more huge challenges in the winter ahead. The cost of living crisis and the huge price increases in energy bills and food will affect everyone, especially the most vulnerable in our society. We know that families will struggle to buy the essentials and they will face some difficult choices in the coming months. We know that school leaders are grappling with school budgets wondering how they will cover the increasing operating costs for schools. There are no easy answers to this crisis. I know schools are engaged in a range of initiatives to support families such as setting up pre-loved uniform stalls. Please let us know the initiatives you have in place to help struggling families and we will share with other schools. The Church of England Education Office is in talks with the government to try and secure more support for schools and families. Further guidance and ideas to help schools with the cost of living crisis will follow.

An essential tool to navigate the challenges we face is the Church of England’s Vision for Education. We know this is being lived out in school communities throughout the diocese. You will know how well the four key elements of Wisdom, Hope, Community and Dignity has enabled your school teams and families to achieve a sense of security and warmth in difficult times.



We must remember that we are here for each other and God is with us. The diocesan education team will continue to support schools with pastoral issues, providing training on a range of topics for staff and governors, recruiting leaders and governors, providing guidance on SIAMs and helping you to develop the Christian character of your schools. The list goes on. We will ensure that there are ongoing opportunities for sharing updates and listening to each other through networks, briefings, the weekly bulletin, the diocesan website, e-mail and phone. We are always at the end of a phone to help. Please don't hesitate to use us!

Dear Lord,

As we step into a new academic year
Restore our spirit
Renew our passion for sharing your wisdom
And nurture our compassion
for those You put in our charge.
Transform us as we seek to transform
Guide us as we seek to guide
Open our minds and heart
As we seek to open minds and hearts
To the Good News of justice and peace.
Help us listen more deeply
To the world and to your Word
So we can walk with our pupils and colleagues
Attentive to the Wisdom that
Calls us all to the Kingdom of God.

Amen

From all of the diocesan education team, we wish you a very happy and successful new school year.

Kindest regards

Paul Thompson
Diocesan Director of Education

Courses and Conferences

We have many courses, events and support services this year to aid you in your work at school. We have listened to feedback and suggestions and developed a professional development programme to meet your needs. We have a variety of ways you can connect with us this year:

- ⇒ Central Courses – run either online or face to face this gives the opportunity for a member of staff to attend a session relevant to them and your school. You can see all of our courses and the details on our website, you can also book straight from there <https://www.lincolndioCESaneducation.com/page/?title=Diary+of+Central+Events&pid=53> . There is also attached a diary of the courses. Please look out for emails throughout the year that will give more details and links to book
- ⇒ School Based Training – members of the education team can come to your school (virtually or in person) to train your whole staff team on a particular topic. Details of the sessions we can run are in the SLA and MPA booklets
- ⇒ MAT and School Improvement Services – a member of the education team can conduct reviews and audits in your school. For more details go to <https://www.lincolndioCESaneducation.com/improvementservices>
- ⇒ School Improvement Partner Service - We offer a school improvement programme, bespoke to your church school, it supports leaders and governors to monitor and further develop areas in school, for more details go to <https://www.lincolndioCESaneducation.com/page/?title=School+Improvement+Partner+Service&pid=116>
- ⇒ Headteacher Performance Management - Governors are required to carry out the Headteacher performance process which must be supported by an external adviser. For more details go to <https://www.lincolndioCESaneducation.com/page/?title=Headteacher+Performance+Management&pid=81>

Important Updates and Messages

New Academy Trust Handbook

The above has recently been published—

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6305f8278fa8f5536009bb1b/Academy_trust_handbook_2022.pdf

Important Updates and Messages

SIAMs – The Published List

Last week, I informed all schools that the National SIAMs team has published the list of schools likely (but not guaranteed) to have a SIAMs inspection this academic year 2022-23. The published list is attached and can also be found with all the SIAMs documentation you need on the Church of England and diocesan websites.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/siams-inspections#siams-documents--resources>

<https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/siams>

The diocesan education team is providing a breadth of training and support to help schools prepare for inspection. Please see the training courses listed [here](#). If you need bespoke training and support, please contact the Assistant Director of Education, Lynsey Norris at lynsey.norris@lincoln.anglican.org

Service Level Agreement

Thank you to all schools that have subscribed to the diocesan service level agreement for this academic year. This enables to the diocesan education team to continue providing a broad range of high-quality support services, support and training for schools. There are only a handful of schools that have not yet subscribed but it is not too late to do so. For more details about the Service Level Agreement, please click [here](#). To subscribe to the SLA, please e-mail Tracy Smith (DBE Administrator) at tracy.smith@lincoln.anglican.org

Thank you to all church MATs and the academies for subscribing to the MAT Partnership Agreement this year. We look forward to working closely with the MATs over the course of the year.

Shaping policy and practice through a distinctive Christian vision

You will know that it is our distinctive Christian vision that informs our decisions, policy and provision in schools.

I know schools have an ongoing cycle of review of policies. It is important to reflect upon how your Christian vision shapes each policy. The team provides lots of training on 'Vision'. Recently, June Richardson (Diocesan School Effectiveness Adviser) has been considering the updated DfE [behaviour guidance](#) and how a church school may implement this guidance through its policy. If you are in the process of reviewing your behaviour policy, you may find the questions on the attached document helps you to shape a distinctively Christian behaviour policy in accordance to your school vision.

June intends to produce more of these documents for other key policy areas during the year.

Important Updates and Messages

Picture News – September Trial

We're very excited to launch a free-of-charge 4-week trial for new teachers and schools who would like to give Picture News a try for the new academic year ahead!

For 4-weeks, each Friday our successful schools will receive:

- A poster with our famous 'big question' exploring a current story;
- A ready-to-go whole school news assembly plan;
- KS1 and KS2 class-based resources;
- Classroom discussion/debate club and display materials.

Register here: <https://bit.ly/3QSm0eB>

Signposting—Community Resources

Please let Ellen know of any community based organisations etc that you think can help the wider church school family, eg food banks, uniform exchanges etc—

ellen.cross@lincoln.anglican.org