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## The Diocesan Board of Education

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

### A welcoming embrace

Last week Lynsey wrote about invitations. When I invite friends to my home I always look forward to welcoming them. I wonder if you are like me? In my excited anticipation I dust, polish, vac and tidy to make sure everything is 'just right'. On arrival, I embrace my visitors, welcome them. I want them to be at their ease, to feel they belong, that they matter and that they can be themselves.

In 1 Peter 4 v 8-10, the author encourages Christians to welcome one another,

*'above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms'*

I know that all our church schools offer very warm welcomes and that these are extended to all in your community - pupils, parents, governors, visitors and one another. I know how you welcome the most needy and vulnerable and I especially hear about how you welcome those who are newly arrived including those who are refugees.

One of the priorities in our diocese is racial justice. Building on the concept of 'welcome', the theologian, Miroslav Volf uses a metaphor of 'embrace' to describe a vision for true racial diversity. You can read more about it in, 'Beyond Tokenism' by Anjali Kanagaratnam (Grove education eD56, 2023)

Volf describes an embrace as having 4 parts.

1. Opening the arms - an invitation and welcome, a gesture of reaching for others and a desire to learn from them.
2. Waiting – an embrace is reciprocal. There is a need to wait to see if the other person will participate.
3. Closing the arms – people here are both active in 'holding' and passive in 'being held' - each enters the space of the other.
4. Opening the arms again – having entered the space of the other person, we do not lose our own uniqueness. This is as much true of the one being welcomed as the one doing the welcoming.

Volf compare this to 'true racial diversity'.



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I know that all our schools offer sincere welcomes but there is a need to consider the culture people are welcomed into. Our British education system has been developed over many years and has been shaped by white, Eurocentric thinking. As a result, a 'welcome' can unintentionally result in an expectation of 'assimilation' into a white, Eurocentric norm. We know that many of you, inspired by the Church of England's theological underpinning for racial justice, are intentionally working to make your schools more diverse. Reviews of curricula, resources, policies, representation and more are taking place. We know that schools are reflecting on their recruitment processes and engaging with the [Leaders Like Us](#) programme. Volf would describe this as the period of waiting where repentance for the past, reconciliation, adaptation and forgiveness occur.

When 'embrace' finally occurs it is important that *all* are changed by it - this is about reciprocity and equality. True racial diversity is about everyone being able to be their genuine selves and being open to change through relationship and encounter. As a result, when the embrace ends and arms are opened, culture and shared space should be changed not homogenised – we see this where our schools celebrate, learn and change as a result of the richness and diversity of culture, knowledge and perspective that each unique person brings. Perhaps this week you can think what 'welcome' means to you or consider the description of embrace that Volf provides. Perhaps reflect as a staff team on what this means for racial diversity in your school. Consider what it might mean to be changed when someone new enters your community, rather than unconsciously trying to change the newcomer so that they fit the 'us' that is already there.

*from* June Richardson, **School Effectiveness Advisor**

### Racial Justice Sunday at the Cathedral

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February there will be a special evensong at Lincoln Cathedral to mark Racial Justice Sunday. Lynsey Norris is working with some of our schools to ensure our school communities are represented in this service and members of our central team will be attending. The service begins at 3.45pm but attendees may arrive from 3pm onwards. After the service you are invited to experience generous hospitality in the Chapter House. If you would like to attend (and to inform numbers for catering) please book your place here [A service of Choral Evening Prayer for Racial Justice Sunday \(office.com\)](#)

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## The Diocesan Board of Education

### Racial Justice Sunday collective worship resources

Also, in preparation for Racial Justice Sunday (which falls at the start of half term) we are developing a recorded collective worship for primary and secondary schools to use on the 9<sup>th</sup> February. This will include children and young people leading prayers, songs and much more. The secondary worship will be premiered on our YouTube tube channel at 8:30am and the primary worship will be premiered at 9am however, you will be able to watch these at any time. The theme for the worship will be the welcome of refugees, based on the national Church of England resources. While there will be nothing of a sensitive nature in the worship we are aware many schools have welcomed refugees to their school family and may want to watch the service first before using it in school. The link for the services will be sent to schools the day before.

We hope you will find it a helpful resource.



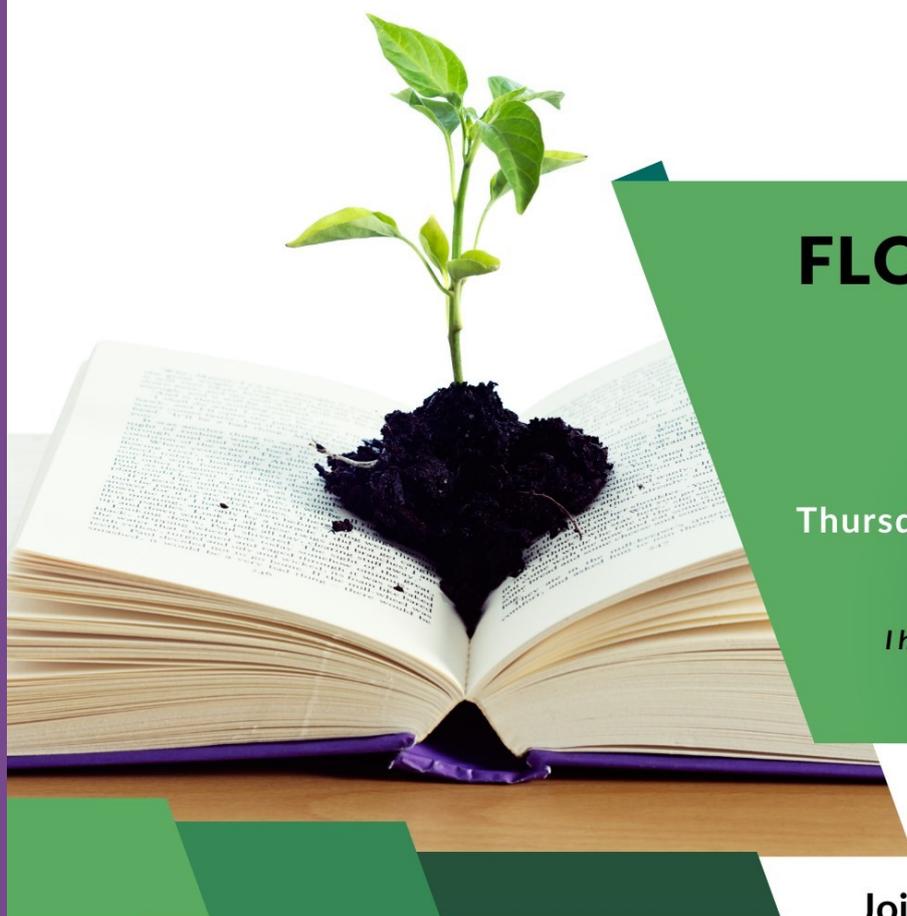
The Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education (LDBE) is seeking to appoint an outstanding individual to join our dedicated and talented team which inspires our family of church schools and academies across the Diocese of Lincoln. This is an exciting and rewarding role, in the context of an organisation which places Christian vision and values at the centre of all that we do.

More information can be found on our website at—

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



The Diocesan  
Board of  
Education



# FLOURISHING FOR ALL

LEADERSHIP  
CONFERENCE

Thursday 21st March 2024  
10am-3:45pm

*I have come that they may have life,  
and have it to the full.*  
John 10:10



**The Rt Revd Stephen Conway**  
Bishop of Lincoln



**Andy Wolfe**  
Executive Director of Education, Church  
of England



**Vic Goddard**  
Principal of Passmores Academy and star  
of the Bafta nominated Channel 4  
documentary 'Educating Essex'

Join us for our Annual  
Headteacher, Senior  
Leader, Chair of Governor  
& Clergy Conference

The Showroom, Tritton Rd,  
Lincoln, LN6 7QY

£185 school staff (non SLA £290)  
£145 Governors (non SLA £225)  
£75 Clergy

More speakers still be be announced...

To book use the link below or the QR code  
[www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/leadershipconference](http://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/leadershipconference)



## The Diocesan Board of Education

We would love to invite you to our Leadership conference on the 21st March. This day is designed for senior leaders in school, Chair of Governors and clergy, to inspire and equip you in the role you do.

### Keynote Speakers announced so far...

The **Rt Revd Stephen Conway**, Bishop of Lincoln will be with us, Bishop Stephen has a passion to see the church schools of the dioceses to flourish

**Andy Wolfe**, Executive Director of Education for the Church of England come to share with us 'Our Hope for a Flourishing Schools System' - the recent publication from the Church of England that is once-in-a-generation re-imagination of our school system

**Vic Goddard** Principal of Passmores Academy and star of the Bafta nominated Channel 4 documentary 'Educating Essex' will be with us speaking on 'How we ensure that our leadership is about what matters?'

### Keep an eye on your emails as we announce more speakers

Held at The Showroom in Lincoln it is a great time of bringing the church school family from across the dioceses, along with the education team together.

For more details and to book use the link below

<https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/calendar/?calid=1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11&pid=9&viewid=1&event=383>

## The Diocesan Board of Education

### NPQ update – especially for schools with fewer than 150 on roll

We are encouraging all our schools to take up the offer of NPQ courses as we see the benefits they bring in enabling staff and pupils to flourish.

In a communication this week, Andy Wolfe (Executive director of education, Church of England Education Office) has told us that based on a conversation with the DfE, it is unlikely that the funding to support small schools to access these NPQ courses will continue next academic year. Currently small schools can access an £800 bursary (per person, per NPQ) if they had less than 150 pupils at the last census. Funding for the new Leading Primary Maths will be available. Information about the SEND NPQ is due in preparation for its launch in September.

Please be aware that the closing date for this round of applications is approaching - all applications should be made by the 9<sup>th</sup> February.

Please remember that there are a number of providers for NPQ programmes but that the Church of England offers a unique version of the NPQ programme designed for small schools (NPQ Small). The sessions are designed to support the capacity of leaders and teachers in smaller schools. They reduce the need for travel but there is no difference to the qualification that you will receive.

Information about application, funding and all providers can be found here [National professional qualification \(NPQ\) courses - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-professional-qualification-npq-courses)

If you would like to speak to Andy Wolfe about the CofE NPQ small programmes please feel able to share your details with me and I will pass them on.

*June Richardson*