
The Diocesan Board of Education

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

“And may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace by your faith in him, until by the power of the Holy Spirit, you overflow with hope” (Romans 15:13)

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I hope you had a restful half term and were able to spend some quality time with your family and friends. It is difficult to believe that we are over the half way line of another academic year. I know January seemed a very long month but generally I think there are not enough days in the week to achieve what we set out to do.



As school leaders, you will be used to unexpected events taking up the precious time you had planned for tasks on your ‘to do’ list. You probably get to the end of the day and your ‘to do’ list is longer than it was at the start of the day. Please be reassured this happens to us all – you are not the alone in this.

We also have to realise that there are things that are much more challenging for us to achieve than others. It is tempting to just focus on the quick wins and it is satisfying to see these jobs being ticked off. However, as strategic leaders of complex organisations such as schools, we have to have the strength, courage and determination to tackle the more complex issues.

You may ask, ‘Where do I start?’ with some of the major issues facing our schools at the moment? For example, we are perplexed with issues around meeting the increasing number of pupils with special educational needs in a climate where there is simply not enough funding to provide the high level of support some pupils need. As leaders we are concerned about the external accountability systems in education. How do we ensure our schools are able to meet the expectations placed on schools whilst managing the workload and wellbeing of staff? How do we support families with increasing expectations of schools? These are BIG and complex issues we all face in education.

The first thing to realise is that these are issues that we can not solve as individuals. We have to work together and most importantly we must have HOPE to create a flourishing schools’ system.

Hope is not wishful thinking. Hope needs to be planned and active. We have to take deliberate action.

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Just before half term, I had the great privilege of working with a group of recently appointed church school head teachers. Together we discussed some of the big challenges they were facing as school leaders. They identified issues such as budget pressures, parental complaints, SEN services etc. As I listened to them, I sensed some frustration and even some anger but I also felt the passion and determination to face the challenges head on to ensure all children and adults are able to flourish.

As a group, we connected our conversations and thinking to the Church of England publication,

'Our Hope for a Flourishing Schools System: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good.'

You will be aware that this is strategic document to reaffirm the 2016 Church of England vision for education so that may 'live life in all its fullness.'



This document really helped us to think about how we must work collaboratively with all key systems leaders to achieve systemic change and the future we want for our school communities.

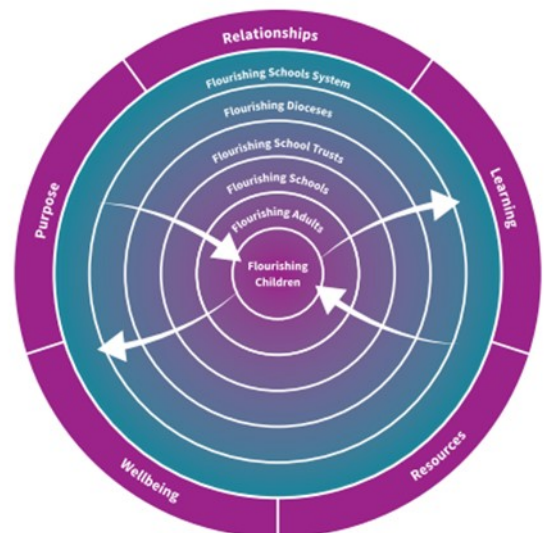
An African proverb used to illustrate this is:

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

We are reminded in the document that 'flourishing' is not an individual pursuit, but a collective endeavour, released in relationship and communities that live well together. A word from the Zulu language 'UNBUNTU' helps us to understand this. It is best translated as 'I am because we are'.

As a group of headteachers, they used the concentric circles (below) to help them think strategically about some of the big issues we face.

For example, for all children to flourish, especially SEND and vulnerable groups, they need to be at the centre of attention – just like they are the centre of the circular diagram. For the children to flourish, they need to be in a system where there are flourishing adults, schools, Trusts, LAs and Dioceses wrapped around them.



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We must all have a shared purpose, respectful relationships, a space we can learn together and from each other, a willingness to share resources and a genuine care for the well-being of our community.

This booklet does not promise any quick fixes to our complex issues but as a group of key school leaders, we realised how it enabled us to talk, to think, to share ideas, to plan and to evaluate. It gave us hope for a flourishing school system.

Of course, we need to build on our conversations by engaging with other key system leaders including Government leaders. The LDBE is a key partner of the Lincolnshire Education Group (LEG) and works with the Local Authorities, Church of England Education Office, OfSTED and the Department for Education to actively seek a future where we can achieve a flourishing school system.

It was great to see that the new headteachers I met with before half term valued the new partnerships and connections they had made with each other and with the DBE team. They said these partnerships gave them the hope and strength to face the challenges with more courage and confidence.

Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves.

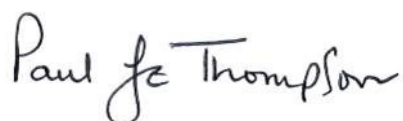
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:12).

If you have not yet had the opportunity to explore the questions and consider the recommendations in the publication [‘Our Hope for a Flourishing System, Deeply Christian and Serving the Common Good’](#) with your governors, staff and key partners in education, I would encourage that you add this to your ‘to do’ list. Sorry that’s one more thing for you to do!

Please remember the DBE team is always for you.

I wish you every success for this new half term.

Best wishes—



from Paul Thompson, Diocesan Director of Education



The Rt Revd Stephen Conway
Bishop of Lincoln



Andy Wolfe
Executive Director of Education, Church
of England



Alison Kriel
Executive Director of Education, Church
of England



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

To book use the link below
www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/leadershipconference

Join us for our Annual
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The Showroom, Tritton Rd,
Lincoln, LN6 7QY

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



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

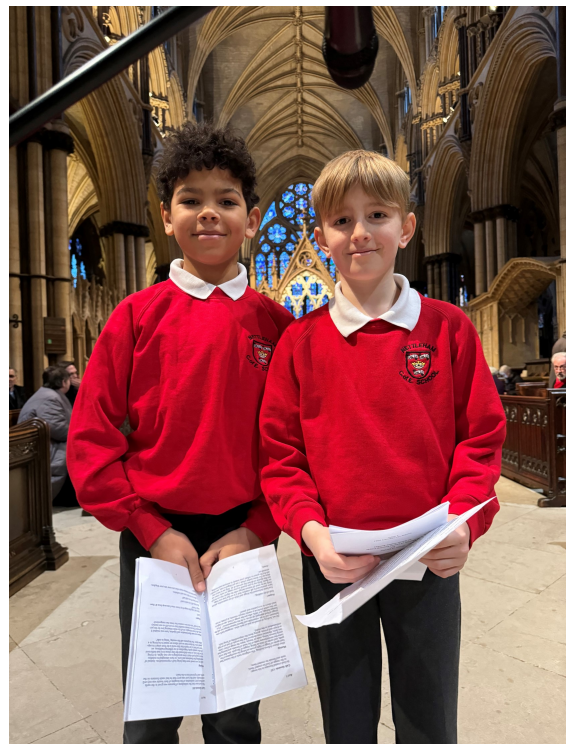
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Racial Justice Sunday

As previously shared with schools, Racial Justice Sunday was marked at Lincoln Cathedral on 11th February.

Schools were represented throughout the service. Beautifully haunting lyrics of 'Go down Moses' were sung by students from St Lawrence's academy Scunthorpe and two pupils from Nettleham Junior school read the act of commitment to racial justice supported by Bishop Stephen. It was a time for all to reflect on the work we lead.

The commitment to racial justice was reflected recently in discussions with school leaders who recognise the need to be proactive in all our diversity, justice, equity and inclusion work and to reflect the context within which we work in Lincolnshire.



Please remember that the prepared Racial Justice collective worship materials are available for school to use in the coming week. If you haven't already found them the links are as follows.

https://youtu.be/Y0_JiYOeLGo

<https://youtu.be/irjruzuBbPc>

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Upcoming LDBE Courses—

Date	Time	Course	
<u>20/02/2024</u>	<u>16:00-17:30</u>	<u>Bible Course: Schools Edition</u>	<u>online</u>
<u>28/02/2024</u>	<u>16:00-18:00</u>	<u>Collective Worship: Enabling pupils and adults to flourish</u>	<u>online</u>
<u>29/02/2024</u>	<u>16:00-18:00</u>	<u>Evaluating the Impact of your Theologically Rooted Vision on the Curriculum</u>	<u>online</u>
<u>01/03/2024</u>	<u>10:00-15:30</u>	<u>Bishop Visitors Conference</u>	<u>In person</u>
<u>05/03/2024</u>	<u>10:00-15:30</u>	<u>Developing Inclusion Through the Vision for Education</u>	<u>in person</u>

Big Help Out 2024

A series of specialised assets for teachers to get involved with the Big Help Out 2024 have been created, intended to make sure that The Big Help Out gives teachers the chance to lend a hand and shape a new generation of volunteers, and give their students a chance to create a meaningful impact on their school/local area.

[Link to the Big Help Out website for all BHO resources](#)

[Link to Vote for Schools for all education based resources](#)

Educate with the Vote For School resources: March 11th - 22nd

Plan for the day using suggested activities: April - May

Get involved with students on the Day: June 7th

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Green Schools Project

Green Schools Project empowers schools and young people to respond positively to climate change. Through our Zero Carbon Schools programme we enable young people to gain a greater understanding of climate change whilst designing projects to reduce their schools' carbon footprint. Since 2015 we've worked with over 300 schools and 6,000 young people nationwide across years 4 to 8. Our year-round, teacher-led approach works: 96% of teachers and 94% of young people would recommend the programme to their peers.

We're always looking to partner with new schools who are interested in supporting their pupils to access high-quality climate education whilst aiming to make their schools more sustainable. We work with Councils, Academy Trusts and corporate partners to make our programmes happen, and next school year we're hoping to work with 160 schools across the UK. Our programme can be fully remote or supported by our staff depending on a school's needs.

If you'd like to be part of Zero Carbon Schools and bring award-winning climate education and action into your school or community, please contact Tom Hague, Development Lead, at tom@greenschoolsproject.org.uk

www.greenschoolsproject.org.uk



Green Schools Project C.I.C., Company Number 9928552

Read about us in the Guardian: [Pupil power: how students are turning schools green](#)

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