

The Diocesan Board of Education

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Tomorrow is our annual New Headteacher Commissioning service at the Cathedral, where we have invited Headteachers new to working in church schools or who have moved to another church school to be commissioned in their role. They will be asked if they will commit themselves to the work, faithfully serving the school and its community. They will also be asked if they will seek to perform their duties as Headteacher with a spirit of mutual respect and collaboration, and with respect for all God's children. As well as this, they will be asked if they seek to make their school a place where the love of God is shown in action and attitude. I know this is something we see daily from Headteachers across church schools and the commissioning service is a powerful reminder of that. However, I often think the most powerful question that is asked is not to the headteacher, but to the congregation;



People of God, will you welcome and support these Headteachers in their ministry in the schools which they lead?

This is not just a question that is asked in a service and then forgotten about. I know from my work with the Diocese and the Cathedral that church schools in the Diocese of Lincoln are regularly asked about, prayed for and championed wider than the team from the Board of Education. Schools are included within the schedule of daily prayers throughout the year; these are shared on the Diocesan Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) accounts. I think it's important to know that schools are not on this journey alone and that Headteachers are welcomed and supported in their role.

I think there is something very powerful about travelling together, for the fun times and the hard times. When Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, he did not leave us alone. He promised the Holy Spirit would be with us, to walk with us, give us strength and peace even if at times life is hard. There is a very old poem that has been a favourite of mine since I was a child:

One night I dreamed a dream.
As I was walking along the beach with my Lord.
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,
One belonging to me and one to my Lord.

The Diocesan Board of Education

After the last scene of my life flashed before me,
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,
especially at the very lowest and saddest times,
there was only one set of footprints.

This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.
"Lord, you said once I decided to follow you,
You'd walk with me all the way.
But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life,
there was only one set of footprints.
I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me.

He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you
Never, ever, during your trials and testings.
When you saw only one set of footprints,
It was then that I carried you.

My hope is, as Headteacher, staff, and friends of the Board of Education, that on your journey with your school you know that you do not walk it alone. For the highs and the lows, the celebrations and the commiserations, there is always someone there with you. Whether you believe it is Jesus walking alongside you and the Holy Spirit guiding you or people praying for you or knowing that there is someone you can pick the phone up to, I hope you feel encouraged during your week that we don't walk this journey alone.

from Lynsey Norris, Assistant Diocesan Director of Education

The Diocesan Board of Education

Upcoming LDBE Courses—

Date	Time	Course	
23/04/2024	13:30-15:00	RE Cluster	online
24/04/2024	10:00-12:00	Bishop Visitors Meeting	In person
25/04/2024	10:00-12:00	Bishop Visitors Meeting	In person
25/04/2024	16:00-18:00	Church School Governor Induction	online
02/05/2024	10:00-15:30	Developing Inclusion Through the Vision for Education	In person

Local School Nature Grants

What do bird boxes, bee hotels, and nature experts all have in common? They're all available for free as part of our Local School Nature Grants programme, supported by players of the People's Postcode Lottery.

Open to schools and early years settings in England, Scotland, and Wales, this outdoor learning grant fund has two elements – £500 of outdoor equipment chosen from a catalogue of over 100 items, and an outdoor learning training course for your staff.

<https://ltl.org.uk/projects/local-school-nature-grants/>

The Diocesan Board of Education

Inclusion through the vision for education

This training is aimed at Executive Heads, Heads and senior leaders e.g. SENCOs, Pupil Premium Leaders and any governors who hold portfolios in these areas.

Currently many schools tell us they face challenges in their aim to be fully inclusive. These challenges include the increasing number of pupils with complex SEND needs; finances and the capacity and skills of their staff teams.

The Church of England's vision for education is one which is 'scandalously inclusive' (4.10 Called Connected, Committed 24 leadership practices for educational leaders.) As such it is important that leaders have time to reflect on how their theologically rooted vision inspires and drives a culture of inclusion for all. It is also important that we remain solution focused and work together to overcome barriers.

This training will complement workforce training provided by other organisations but provides a specific opportunity for Church school leaders to reflect on the theological imperative for this work. This will in turn support schools to articulate their work for SIAMS inspection.

The Church of England's new publication 'Our Hope for a flourishing school system' places inclusion at its heart. Other national developments outlined in the SEND and AP Green paper are beginning to be piloted and we anticipate that many of these will begin to be brought into action by 2025. We also know that there is an ever increasing focus through inspection (both Ofsted and SIAMS) on how schools support pupils who are vulnerable and especially those with special educational needs.

This day will support school leaders to be ready for some of these changes. It will provide an opportunity for school leaders to focus on how the school's theologically rooted Christian vision drives principles and the culture of inclusion. It will provide opportunity to consider practical solutions and ideas to support staff teams. There will be specific consideration of Special Educational Needs, Pupil Premium and our local diocesan priority of Racial Justice.

Opportunity will be provided to reflect on good practice; to consider new ideas and ways of working as well as reflect on how you can evaluate your work for SIAMS in this area.

We aim that you leave with ideas and tools to implement in school.

To book, please click [here](#).

Schools News

The Diocesan Board of Education

Welton St Mary's CofE Primary Academy—Mural

At Welton St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy, communicating our school vision to our whole community continues to be really important to us so that everyone knows what we are striving to achieve. To help us do this, we have created a large, bright piece of artwork at the front of our school that represents our school vision and values. You can see a picture of this below.

We wanted the children to be the driving force behind this and so the whole school shared their initial design ideas in their house meetings in term 3. Each house came up with their own interpretation of the vision and there were some wonderful ideas (so many that we ended up having to combine many of the different designs!). The key designers for each house (a group of children in Year 4, 5 and 6) then took their designs to the nearby William Farr secondary school and worked with a group of Year 12 art students to combine their ideas and further develop the design.

Finally, this piece of artwork was sent to an illustrator, Rowan the designer, who developed this even further and put his own spin on it. The aim was to create a bright, creative and inspiring piece of artwork that encapsulates our school vision. We are delighted with the finished piece!

At the heart of creating this artwork was community – school community and the wider community. The school community and wider community (William Farr students) have been the driving force behind the creation of the artwork and due to the location of the artwork, this will reach every visitor to our school: contractors, members of the public (who use our recycling bins just metres away), parents, children, supply staff, delivery drivers, trainee students who have training in our hall etc.

We are hoping that the artwork will provide some joy and hope and be a regular reminder of what we are about and what we are striving to achieve at Welton St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy. We will be doing further work with our community to unpick the artwork and reflect on what it means to each of us. After all, much of it is open to interpretation, which is exactly what we wanted.

We want to say a big thank you to the Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education for their grant which has helped to fund this project. If you are nearby, please do come and have a closer look and see what you can identify!

James Durkan

Assistant Headteacher

Schools News

The Diocesan Board of Education

