

Dear Friends and Colleagues -

“Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2)

Paul’s words to the Romans speak powerfully into the work of school leaders and governors. The call to lead wisely is also a call to remain open—genuinely open—to challenge and change. Leadership is often associated with clarity, conviction and vision. Yet there is a deeper strength in the willingness to reconsider, to listen, and to allow our thinking to evolve.

Recently, I have found my own view of the world shifting in unexpected ways. Exposure to new ideas, books, films, voices and experiences has prompted me to reconsider my perspectives and biases. This does not always sit easily, but it has broadened my understanding. It also raised an important question: are we truly open to change, or do we become settled and comfortable in our routines—only receptive to ideas that affirm what we already believe?

In governance and leadership, openness is more than a professional virtue; it is a moral one. When we invite challenge—whether from colleagues, communities or the young people we serve—we create space for growth and better decision-making.

Consider the example of curriculum design. Leaders may feel confident that their provision is broad and balanced. However, when parents, staff or pupils raise questions about representation or relevance, a defensive stance can close down learning. By contrast, leaders who lean into these conversations—exploring unfamiliar viewpoints and interrogating their own assumptions—may reshape the curriculum in ways that better reflect and serve their community. The result is not a loss of authority, but a deeper, more credible form of leadership.

To be “transformed” is not a passive process. It requires humility, courage and intentional listening. It also calls us, as leaders, to seek wider experiences and to broaden our own knowledge. Our greatest impact may come not from how firmly we hold our views, but from how faithfully we remain open to their renewal.

As this summer term enters its final half, may we pause to listen deeply to those in our communities, remaining open to challenge and ready to embrace new ways of thinking as we continue to shape and grow our schools together

June Richardson
Schools Effectiveness Advisor



Upcoming LDBE Courses & Events

Date	Time	Course		Book Here
16/06/2026	16:00-18:00	How is collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?	Online	BOOK
23/06/2026	10:00 - 12:00	Bishop Visitor Training	Face to face	BOOK
24/06/2026	10:00 - 12:00	Bishop Visitor Training	Face to face	BOOK
25/06/2026	16:00-18:00	Monitoring and Evaluating the Spiritual Life of the School	Online	BOOK
10/07/2026	9:30-12:30	SEF writing Workshop	Face to face	BOOK

Governance Glossary

We understand that governors often encounter acronyms and abbreviations at governors' meetings. To help with this, we are pleased to share a link to the Governance Glossary, which is a free resource produced by the NGA and available on their website. Access the glossary at <https://www.nga.org.uk/knowledge-centre/governance-glossary/>

Alternatively, it is attached as a downloadable file.

RE & Dance Workshops for Primary Schools

Are you looking for ways to boost engagement with RE and bring biblical stories to life? Book our creative and inclusive RE through dance workshops for your school!

Now booking for Autumn Term 2026:

- Creation
- A Christmas Story: Refugee
- The Nativity Project

For a limited time, also available in Autumn 2026 is PARABLE – an interactive performance answering the question: Who is Jesus and what did he teach in his parables?

Book your Autumn 2026 workshop today!

“Our children loved this experience! The instructors were enthusiastic, supportive and really skilled at bringing out the best in every child”

— Class teacher, St Margaret's CE Primary School Oldham

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Archbishops' Young Leaders Award

AYLA continues to grow across schools and dioceses nationwide, equipping children and young people to become courageous, compassionate leaders who are empowered to make a difference within their communities and beyond. Rooted in the Church of England Vision for Education, the programme develops leadership, character, pupil voice, and meaningful social action through engaging and accessible resources for pupils from KS1 through to Post-16.

Schools delivering AYLA consistently report increased confidence, deeper pupil engagement, stronger opportunities for student leadership, and meaningful links to Personal Development, SIAMS, SMSC, and collective worship. At its heart, AYLA encourages young people to recognise that leadership is not reserved for a select few but is something that can be lived out through service, courage, hope, and action. Whether schools are already delivering the programme or are simply curious to find out more, our upcoming webinars provide a fantastic opportunity to explore the resources, hear about the impact in schools, and ask any questions about implementation.

Upcoming webinars:

Primary Webinars:

17th June 2026 - 3:45pm

1st July 2026 - 3:45pm

13th August - 1:15pm

Secondary Webinars:

24th June 2026 - 3:45pm

2nd July 2026 - 3:45pm

12th August - 1:15pm

We would love to welcome colleagues from across the diocese to join us and discover how AYLA can support schools in nurturing young leaders who are ready to “be the change they want to see.”

For further information about AYLA, please contact Victoria Jones: victoriajones@churchofengland.org

Further details and booking information and online booking can be found here:

www.nse.org.uk/ayla/whats-on