

# School Newsletter

*Putting our faith in Education*

Spring Term 2008 Vol 4 Issue 1

## From Maurice Smith

**Christmas Day** was the six-month anniversary of my starting date as Director of Education with the Diocese and I have enjoyed every (almost) minute. I am fortunate to start from the advantageous position of always having enjoyed 'work', never having a day in my career when I have not looked forward to the working day (and night) ahead, and now feeling immensely privileged to be overtly serving God's purposes in my daily labours.

New Year always brings the opportunity to look both backwards and forwards. I started 2007 as the retiring HMCI with thoughts of golf and gardening to come. But this was not to be. Three months working for Lord Adonis and six months for the Diocese has seen both garden and golf handicap neglected. These activities have been replaced by, amongst other things, a biennial visiting commitment to our Church schools and critical strategic development work in terms of academies and the primary capital strategy programme.

## Supporting schools

My visiting programme is up to speed, and I managed to visit all voluntary aided secondary schools and designated academies last term, as well as a selection of primaries by invitation. I intend to focus on primary schools in the Salford deanery/local authority in the second half of this term. We now have an academy strategy articulated through the Board. We are pursuing new, yet challenging, interests in Bolton and Oldham, whilst supporting Salford City and St Anne's, Middleton, in their development. We have a seat at the table of each local authority as they plan their new primary capital programmes

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## Follow the Star to Bamford



**St. Michael's CE Primary School** in Bamford, Rochdale held their Carol and Nativity Service with a difference on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December.

It was an outdoor service in the school grounds. All 140 Key Stage 2 children took part as readers, singers, actors, brass band, choir and almost 300 parents and grandparents joined the school outside on a chilly but fine evening. A stable structure was built in the grounds and lighting and sound system set up. Mary arrived at the stable riding on a donkey, the shepherds brought a sheep with them to worship the baby Jesus and the Three Kings arrived to present their gifts on ponies. Revd Paul Gully from St. Michael's Church led the blessing and closing prayers.

The atmosphere was electric and many people have commented that it was a very moving event which reminded them of the true meaning of Christmas.

The original idea and much of the organisation came from the Deputy Headteacher, Aidan Gumbley, but all staff and pupils deserve recognition for their parts in this wonderful experience.

## Ready, Steady, Hush

**Plan for your lessons** to be silent on 25 January and raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. There is also a free 'Cancertalk teaching pack'. Details are available on [www.macmillan.org.uk/bighush](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/bighush)

and strategies for the next fifteen years; demographic changes will inevitably lead to some closures and new beginnings. We have a consistency of approach approved by the Board that we will implement over the coming important planning months.

As well as the 'big ticket' issues for schools, we continue to serve our Lord by supporting our children's and youth work in parishes and elsewhere, and our chaplaincy work in further and higher education. I have been fortunate to inherit a skilled and motivated workforce, small but beautifully formed, who carry out this multiplicity of tasks for comparatively modest reward and with rudimentary equipment for modern, non-office-based functions. Internal modernisation is a medium term aim.

Over the term we were sorry to say goodbye to our Board Chairman, Bishop Michael, and our Diocesan Secretary, Nigel Spraggins. I am looking forward to working with our new Secretary, re-badged as Chief Executive, John Beck, who starts in February.

In this brief note, it remains for me to wish all who serve God through the ministry of education, in all its forms, a very Happy New Year and I look forward to meeting many of you at our annual conference in April. For my part, I shall be spending a bracing month in January seconded back to Lord Adonis's office to fulfil a long-standing commitment regarding the Academy programme in County Durham; please pray for me to come to sound and secure judgement and for all my colleagues in their work with you in the coming year.

## Christians in School Leadership

**The national conference** for Christians in school leadership takes place from Thursday 7 to Saturday 9 February at Coton House, Rugby, Warwickshire. It focuses on 'engaging the iPod generation' and the question of how Christians in primary and secondary school leadership can create a learning environment where all young people can flourish. Speakers include: Estelle Morris, now Baroness Morris of Yardley and President of the National Children's Bureau; Joel Edwards, Director of the Evangelical Alliance; and David Moore, HMI with oversight for behaviour, discipline and exclusions. Costs are £285 for a single en-suite room or £470 for a double room and details and bookings are through the Stapleford Centre: 0115 939 6270 or [www.stapleford-centre.org](http://www.stapleford-centre.org)

## Sabbatical for teachers of RE

**Each year** the Farmington Institute awards fellowships to teachers of religious education in both primary and secondary schools and to headteachers. Fellows are free to study any aspect of RE or values education but preference is given to those whose work is directly valuable to schools. Fellowships may be based at a university or at the applicant's school. Those at a university (14 universities take part in the scheme, including Liverpool Hope, Lancaster and Leeds) are tenable for a half or a full term; those at school may be for a half term or less or be for day release over a longer period of time. The Fellowship covers the cost of tuition, board and lodging where appropriate, essential travel and the salary of a replacement teacher up to point 6 of the main pay scale. Fellows should produce an outline plan, give a presentation and produce a written report on the work they have undertaken. Application forms and details are available on the website: [www.farmington.ac.uk](http://www.farmington.ac.uk) and must be returned by 4 February 2008 for the 2008/9 academic year.

## Christian bands for schools

**The Message** is a Christian charitable organisation which communicates the Christian faith in a relevant and lively way to young people in the Greater Manchester area, primarily in schools and educational contexts.

Two bands, Blush and LZ7, work in secondary schools. Their work involves putting on informal lunchtime concerts and contributing to RE lessons and assemblies over a week and culminates on the Friday evening with a much larger and professional concert.

There is also a band, TBC, which specialises in visits to primary schools.

For further details please contact Nathan Milnes on 0161 946 2300 or 07976 219351 or e-mail: [nathan.milnes@message.org.uk](mailto:nathan.milnes@message.org.uk)

## New to the Job

**We wish** the following new headteachers and deputy headteachers well as they take up their new posts in the January and the coming year..

Pam Heywood	H St Goerge's Charlestown	January 08
Shelley Birchinough	H St Mary's Balderstone	January 08
Richard Wathall	H Stansfield Hall	January 08
Kathryn Kieran	H St Margaret's Oldham	January 08
Simon Bramwell	H St Simon & St Jude	April 08
Stephen Bentham	H St Luke's Heywood	September 08
Elizabeth Traviss	H Holy Trinity Dobcross	September 08

Anne Washington	DH Horwich Parish	January 08
Bernadette Bradley	DH St Stephen's Audenshaw	April 08

## Service Level Agreement 2008/2009

### Advance notice:

The service level agreement booklet for the family of church schools will be sent out in the second half of the spring term 2008. This outlines what MDDBE offers and the cost of buying into the package.

The vast majority of schools buy in, which in turn helps us to extend what we can offer. I am pleased to report that this year we have been able to appoint a consultant, Barbara Kinch, to support all our new headteachers. Barbara is a former church school head teacher. She will visit all new appointees and offer a free ethos health check in order to give a kick start to the self evaluation process on the distinctive ethos of the church school.

**If you are a new headteacher and have not had a visit, please let the Board of Education know by ringing Jane Phillips on 0161 828 1406**

## Be challenged and inspired.

13<sup>th</sup> Annual Schools' Conference.

11 April 2008.

Village Hotel, Bury

**It's time** to book your place at the conference for 2008. Please see the flyer and booking form enclosed in the newsletter. This year we are pleased to have as our main speaker, Sue Palmer, author of "Toxic Childhood" and "Detoxing Childhood".

Gervase Finn, author and former school inspector, gave the following review of her second book: "Sue Palmer in "Toxic Childhood" explored the pressures and demands which affect children's and young people's emotional, social and physical development. In this text, the sequel, she offers a range of insights, ideas and practical advice showing how negative influences on children's development can be defused. Every parent and every teacher should have this clear-sighted and immensely readable and accessible book to hand."

The day will also provide an opportunity to meet and discuss some of the major issues facing all of our schools such as academy provision, managing workload and succession planning.

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## Moving inspection ever closer

**Up to the end of last term**, 139 of our 192 church schools had been inspected by Ofsted. This is very nearly three quarters, which would indicate that Ofsted are on target to inspect all schools by the end of the 2007/2008 academic year.

At the present time the church school inspection (SIAS or Section 48) aims to follow within eight working weeks. When the new Ofsted inspection framework is implemented, which would appear to be from September 2008, we will be moving to SIAS inspection taking place within a day or two of the Section 5. This has several advantages:

- all the inspection will be completed at the same time;
- SIAS and Ofsted will inspect the same school rather than one which has moved on in only a few weeks time;
- schools will not feel they need to make any special arrangements and will be inspected 'as they are';

In order to meet the legal requirement that the inspector is appointed by the governing body in consultation with the DBE we will send out a list of qualified inspectors. Schools will then indicate anyone they deem not to be a suitable inspector for their school; they will not have to state a reason for this. An inspector will then contact the school at about the same time as the Ofsted inspector, arrange the precise date of inspection and request a copy of the SEF and any self-evaluation toolkit the school may have completed.

We will not normally appoint an inspector who is a headteacher in the same local authority and we will not appoint a secondary specialist to inspect a primary school or vice versa. A couple of secondary schools have requested concurrent inspections. This could work well in large secondary schools where responsibilities can be delegated but perhaps not so well in most primary schools where the headteacher will probably prefer to concentrate on one inspection at a time. However, if a school asks for the inspections to take place on exactly the same day we are willing to try them out.

The short notice will inevitably mean that there will be instances when the inspector cannot meet with the vicar, chair of governors, RE or worship co-ordinator or may not be able to observe an RE lesson in an aided school. These are regrettable but inspectors have been trained to gather a variety of evidence from a range of sources. It is all the more important for inspection to be a joint activity in which the inspector samples, monitors and evaluates rather than tries to uncover every shred of evidence in all areas.

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## Festivals this term:

18-25 January	Week of prayer for unity	Christianity	02 March	Mothering Sunday	Christianity
19 January	Ashura	Islam	16 March	Palm Sunday	Christianity
02 February	Candlemas	Christianity	20 March	Prophet Muhammad's birthday	Islam
03 February	Tu B'Shevat	Judiasm	21 March	Good Friday	Christianity
05 February	Shrove Tuesday	Christianity	23 March	Easter Sunday	Christianity
06 February	Ash Wednesday	Christianity			
07-09 February	Chinese New Year	Chinese			

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# Primary Heads and Governors Cluster Meetings

These meetings are growing in popularity as shown by attendance figures and are beginning to be driven by the needs of the schools. We have a focus for each meeting, chosen by the particular cluster group. Visiting speakers have made a significant input.

Topics featured in the last round were:

- Meeting the new DDE—Maurice Smith
- Liaison with church secondary schools
- Children's spirituality
- Leadership in church schools
- High quality acts of worship

The next round of meetings is in the summer term'08. Please put the dates in your diary.

Local Authority	Date	Time	Place	Focus (as requested by schools)
Bolton	29.04.08	13:30-15:30	St. George's, Westhoughton	Ideas for class worship. Guidance on admissions.
Bury	11.06.08	10:00-12:00	St. John's, Radcliffe	Primary Strategy. Building issues.
Lancashire	30.04.08	13:30-15:30	St. Paul's Constable Lee	TBA
Manchester	12.06.08	10:00-12:00	Holy Innocents Church, Fallowfield	Building issues, diocesan support
Oldham	07.05.08	10:00-12:00	East Crompton St. George	TBA
Rochdale	07.05.08	13:30-15:30	Middleton Parish	Meet the head teacher of Rochdale academy – Eric Jackson.
Salford	11.06.08	13:30-15:30	St. Augustine's, Salford	What makes an effective act of worship?
Stockport	09.07.08	10:00-12:00	St. Thomas, Heaton Chapel	Meet Maurice Smith, DDE.
Tameside	12.06.08	13:30-15:30	Holy Trinity, A-u-L	Capital strategy. Building update.
Trafford	TBA	13:30-15:30	St Hilda's, Firwood	TBA
Wigan	29.04.08	10:00-12:00	St George's Central, Tyldesley	SIPs in church schools. Assessment in RE.

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# Training & development

*Developing you and your staff*

## All the best

Training event