

School Newsletter

Putting our faith in Education

Spring Term 2009 Vol 5 Issue 1

Message from the Director

As the latest school inspection programme draws to a close, and a new one cranks up, we are looking to publish a report to our Board this term on the outcomes of the three years of the Section 48 programme. We are also looking to publish a refreshed strategy on Church/school relationships in this 30th anniversary of the Year of the Child with highlights of 'Experience Easter' and the special Cathedral event on 26 September 2009; this all builds on our recent Child Friendly Church Awards. Both reports will be circulated to schools.

Highlights of last term include the final go-ahead for the new co-sponsored Academy in Brightmet, Bolton. This will replace Withins secondary school and Top o' th' Brow primary, creating another new CE designated academy in an area of socio-economic deprivation. This is in line with the Dearing recommendations of expanding our secondary footprint in areas where the Church of England should be grounded.

In a couple of changes to personnel on the non-school front (areas of work where you may not know we are involved), we welcome Susie Mapledoram as our new Youth Officer and Duncan Myers for one year as Chaplain to Salford University.

The autumn term started and ended for me with some personal involvement with government. Within 24 hours I was stood-up, and stood-down, from chairing the enquiry into the failure of Key Stage 2 and 3 testing arrangements (during that 24 hours there was thought to be a need for two enquiries – the second as to why the QCA hadn't kept the DCSF informed). Another former HMCI, Lord Sutherland of Houndswood, ultimately carried out the full task and his findings, published at the end of term, claimed the head of the QCA, Sir Eric Boston. This coincided with my attendance at the first meeting of the so-called 'expert group' looking at the future of assessment at

Continued page 2

Flying High: Annual Schools Conference 2009 Friday 24 April

Conference 2009

This year's conference for headteachers, clergy and governors will be held at the Reebok Stadium in Bolton. We have secured inspiring and challenging speakers. The focuses for the conference are the celebration of our schools' achievements in the 2005-2008 cycle of denominational inspections and setting out ways to further improvements. The flyer is included in the newsletter. Make sure you book your places and "fly high" with us.

Rhema Theatre for FREE!

As part of The Year of The Child, the popular Rhema Theatre are providing free workshops followed by a production of 'Bigger than Giants' at Manchester Cathedral between 10am and 12.30pm on Saturday 7 February.



'Bigger than Giants' explores the issue of self-esteem through the story of a boy called David. Although the youngest member of a large family, he stood up for himself, faced a giant and even became king! Through his self-confidence and determination, he was able to defeat anything that came against him. Based on the well-known story of David and Goliath, this promises to be a fun-filled and thought-provoking experience.

Workshops run from 10 to 11, followed by refreshments (also free) and the performance is from 11.30 to 12.30. It is suitable for children in Key Stages 1 and 2. Children, schools, church groups or families are welcome for all the activities or just for the performance. Please contact Jane Kearns-Phillips on 0161 828 1406 or e-mail: janePhillips@manchester.anglican.org to let us know approximately how many children you are bringing.

Helping us to help you

The new Service Level Agreement for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled Church schools will be sent to all schools and chairs of governors by the end of March 2009.

In 2008:

99% of VA schools bought in - 1% increase on 2007

55% of VC schools bought in - 19% increase on 2007

54% of secondary schools (including academies) bought in

These are encouraging figures. Every additional school helps the Board to expand and improve the services we provide.

KS3 and the accountability of schools to the public following the abolition of KS3 tests. The group's remit is broad and includes the concept of 'school report cards' and 'single level tests' and I have specific responsibility for drafting issues relating to middle schools and 'functional skills'! I have written to headteachers separately to provide feedback loops.

These responsibilities have knocked back my 'Pilgrimage' aim of visiting each of the 192 schools in the Diocese within two years. All the secondaries are complete, and more than once. We held our first (to be annual) secondary head teachers' meeting with Sir Philip Hunter, the Schools Adjudicator, as 'guest'; the issue of 'admissions' to Church schools continues to be controversial and changeable – we aim to keep schools fully informed and briefed. I am about to complete my programme of visits to all primaries in Salford and Wigan and I'm heading East to those schools in Bolton, Bury and Trafford I haven't visited yet. Please keep the invitations 'rolling-in', particularly if they coincide with a special event or presentation. I really enjoyed all the nativity plays and carol services I attended. I look forward, therefore, to meeting many of you, in school, in 2009 and wish you a very Happy New Year.

Maurice Smith

LCVAP Bids 2009

If you have submitted an LCVAP bid you should have received an e-mail saying that your bid is being taken to your Local Authority's next meeting of. If not, please contact Jean McClenaghan on 0161 828 1408 or e-mail JMcClenaghan@manchester.anglican.org

Congratulations

Ninety percent of Manchester's church schools are good or outstanding in their SIAS inspections. The review of three years of inspection judgements also shows that no church school in Manchester Diocese is inadequate. The strongest aspect of church schools is usually the impact made by their Christian character on children's spiritual, moral, personal and academic development. The effectiveness of religious education tends to be the weakest area inspected, usually because of a lack of assessment and variety in learning activities.

Is it lovelier the second time around?

The three to four year cycle of Section 5 (Ofsted) inspections is now almost complete. At the time of writing there are still two schools waiting for the call whilst eleven schools have now had their second inspection. Where it is possible, the SIAS inspections in primary schools are following within a few days of the Ofsted and those in secondary schools at the same time. Ofsted inspectors have an increasing amount of numerical data available to support their inspections whereas SIAS inspectors focus mainly on children's experiences of church schools. Consequently it is very difficult reducing the section 48 inspection to less than one day. However, where a school has been outstanding or good with some outstanding features in their previous inspection and where they can present convincing pre-inspection evidence that their judgements as a church school are accurate, the SIAS inspection can usually be conducted smoothly and rapidly.

Self-evaluation is key

Frequently the difference between schools being designated 'outstanding' or 'good' is whether or not they are evaluating themselves as church schools. Those schools which can show inspectors that they know how well they are doing and what evidence they have to support this judgement are in a secure position. There are various toolkits to support self-evaluation but the one specifically aimed at the Section 48 inspection is available on The National Society's website: www.natsoc.org.uk The current version is about to be revised and should be available later this term. Whilst it will be similar to the current one in asking almost the same questions it will encourage schools to consider what evidence they have of their impact as church schools.

Leadership matters

Headship and deputy headship are the most crucial appointments a governing body makes and the Board does its utmost to support them throughout the process. Make sure you include the Diocese in the process.

During 2008, Diocesan officers have advised on 21 headships, one of which has been an executive headship over two primary schools. Eight were appointed on the first advertisement, nine on the second advert, two on the third advert and one on a fourth advert. The remaining school has a temporary fixed-term appointment. In terms of Deputy headships, all fifteen have been appointed on the first advertisement.

Manchester Diocesan Board of Education, in partnership with Liverpool and Chester Dioceses, has produced a detailed programme of training for identified leaders, linked to the replies from questionnaires sent out in the Autumn Term. Schools that identified potential leaders will be contacted by the end of January 2009.

New to the job

Congratulations to the following new headteachers and deputy headteachers who will take up their new posts in 2009:

Karen Leyland	H	St Andrew's, Eccles	Pauline Greenhalgh	JH	St George's, Tyldesley
Diane Rycroft	H	St Barnabus, OPenshaw	Stuart Madden	H	St Matthew's, Stretford
Steve Callaghan	H	Leigh CE Juniors	Cheryl Haigh	DH	Christ Church, Chadderton
Elsie Tough	H	Crompton House	Ann Jackson	DH	St Chrysostom's, Manchester
Jane Tyres	H	St Paul's, Kersal	Helena Crosssthaite	DH	St Wilfrid's, Northenden
Katie Charlton	H	All Saints, Hamer	Joanna Riley	DH	St John's Kearsley
Diane Blomely	H	Oldham Parish/St Stephens	Karl Newell	DH	Crompton House
Adele Gaunt	H	St Hilda's, Prestwich	Tracy Bevan	DH	St Anne's Royton
Lynn Livesey	H	St Philip's, Hulme			

Lessons from Auschwitz – beyond imagination (Sarah Hall (Head of RS), Nick Salisbury, Devon Drews)

On 25 September Devon Drews and Nick Salisbury, two 6th form pupils from The Blue Coat School, Oldham, joined 200 other 16-18 year olds from the North-West on a one day educational visit to the former Nazi extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Since 1999, nearly 5,000 sixth-form students have taken part in the Government-funded Holocaust Educational Trust's groundbreaking Lessons from Auschwitz Project.

Before visiting Poland, the pupils from the North-West met at an orientation seminar to listen to the emotional, gripping and moving testimony of Ibi and Waldimir Ginsburg, Holocaust survivors who now live in the North of England. Their parents, brothers and sisters were all killed in the concentration camps.

In Poland the pupils visited the Jewish cemetery in the Polish town of Oswiecim (Auschwitz) and then the authentic Holocaust site of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Seeing the barracks at Auschwitz I and the piles of hair, shoes, clothes and other items seized from the prisoners as they entered the camps, which now lay lifeless behind glass, was deeply moving. These items are now the only living witness to the lives of their murdered owners. Pupils were taken to the 'sauna', the place where those who were not murdered directly upon entrance to the camp were stripped naked, shaved and humiliated. The dehumanization, the horror, the sheer brutality of what occurred within this building can only be imagined as you walk through the 'sauna', following the footsteps of victims, the majority of whom perished within the camp.

Nick sums up some of his reflections from the visit. *"Like many people who return from this experience there is at the same time, much, and nothing that you want to share about this deeply moving personal experience."* At the end of the visit the pupils took part in a reflective ceremony of readings, reflection and the lighting of memorial candles, held next to the destroyed crematoria and led by Rabbi Barry Marcus of the Central Synagogue. Back in school Devon and Nick will discuss their experiences with the year 9 Religious Studies classes who are completing a unit on the Holocaust, take part in assemblies, produce a reflective display and spread the message against racism, prejudice and discrimination to the wider community. They have also spoken at the Kick Out Racism Event in Oldham alongside footballer players and managers about racism in sport and communities today.

There is no doubt that this experience will have a lasting effect on the lives of those who took part: *"I don't believe that anyone could quite possibly imagine what those people went through but I do believe that I can share my experience with others, to help people to gain a better understanding and appreciation for all those that suffered. Whilst at Birkenau, Rabbi Marcus proposed to us a reflective thought: that if we were to remain silent for one minute for every victim of the holocaust we would be silent for over 12 years."*

Cluster group meetings for Headteachers and Chairs of Governors.

These meetings are an important interface between the Board of Education and its schools. The menu for the two-hour meeting is a mixture of information sharing; discussion and presentation on the distinctive nature of our schools.

Some of the recent meetings have focused on succession planning; church/school links through Celebrating Easter; Christian leadership; making worship have impact, SIAS developments; and the Total Property Management Scheme.

Over the past four years we have seen attendance at these meetings increase and once schools attend they keep on attending. Below is a record of attendance at the latest meetings (Autumn Term 2008.)

Local Authority	No. VA schools	No. VC schools	Total	VA heads attending	VC heads attending	% of schools represented
Bolton	23	8	32	9	1	32%
Bury	11	9	20	6	3	45%
Lancashire	2	6	8	0	3	37.5%
Manchester	10	16	26	4	3	27%
Oldham	23	7	30	11	1	40%
Salford	8	10	18	3	1	22%
Stockport	1	4	5	1	1	40%
Tameside	7	4	11	6	1	64%
Trafford	3	1	4	2	0	50%
Wigan	14	2	16	6	0	37.5%
Total	102	67	169	48	14	37%

As can be seen we need to encourage some of our Controlled and Aided Church of England schools, particularly in Salford and Manchester, to see the value of these meetings and become more active partners in the Family of Church schools. We believe we are a vibrant diocese with much good practice to celebrate and share – so be part of it and make every effort in your busy schedules to put a date in your diary for Summer Term 2009. We look forward to meeting you.

Release from school

The Farmington Institute offers fellowships each year to teachers of religious education and to headteachers working on values. The fellowships can last for a term or half a term or take the form of day release over a period of time up to a year. They can be based in either a university department or the participant's school. Farmington covers the cost of any tuition, board and lodging, essential travel and a replacement teacher up to point 6 of the main pay scale. Fellows can study any aspect of RE but preference will be given to those whose work is of direct value to the teaching of RE in schools. They will have to produce a written report, a presentation at the end of their work and attend the Farmington Conference from 7pm on Friday 26 June to 2pm on Sunday 28 June 2009.

The closing date is 9 February 2009. Further details and application forms are available on the website: www.farmington.ac.uk

Primary School Heads' and Chairs' Cluster Group Meetings, Summer Term 2009

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. The next round of meetings is in the summer term '09. Please put the dates in your diary

Local Authority	Date	Time	Place	Focus (one or more of these subjects will be discussed at the meetings, as requested by schools and MDBE)
Bolton	09.06.09	13:30-15:30	St. George's, Westhoughton	Building issues Pop Connection New SIAS framework School self-evaluation—new format
Bury	18.06.09	10:00-12:00	St. John's, Radcliffe	
Lancashire	17.06.09	13:30-15:30	St. Paul's Constable Lee	
Manchester	10.06.09	10:00-12:00	St Clement's Openshaw	
Oldham	23.06.09	10:00-12:00	East Crompton St. George	
Rochdale	To be arranged with the Rochdale Church of England schools group			
Salford	10.06.09	13:30-15:30	St. Augustine's, Pendlebury	
Stockport	11.06.09	10:00-12:00	St. Mary's Reddish	
Tameside	11.06.09	13:30-15:30	St. George's Mossley	
Trafford	17.06.09	10:00-12:00	St. Mary's Davyhulme	
Wigan	09.06.09	10:00-12:00	St George's Central, Tyldesley	

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