

# School Newsletter

*Putting our faith in Education*

Autumn Term 2008 Vol 4 Issue 3

## Message from the Director

At the beginning of the last academic year I took the opportunity of attending as many as possible of the useful, bi-annual meetings with headteachers and chairs of governors of our 181 primary schools (I have now visited 75 of them). I was asked what I thought would be the three main issues for education in our schools in 2007/8 and I cited four 'A's: admissions; assessment (tests); and attainment – and in the secondary sector, academies. How true this has turned out to be in both the primary and secondary sector.

I did not know at the time that the DCSF would pull a surprise and secret analysis of admission arrangements in Barnet, Northamptonshire and Manchester this spring. Despite the CE Diocese's 'clean bill of health' in Manchester, this has prompted a national examination of admission arrangements in every school in England and the publication of yet another draft Code of Practice. Feedback over the summer holidays suggests that this story will run and run. Sir Philip Hunter, the Schools Adjudicator, has been on the phone with disturbing regularity and his feedback to the Secretary of State later this month is likely to make uncomfortable reading for the Church of England as a whole, and some individual governing bodies. Chris Shelley, our governor services officer, will be pleased to advise all schools on this matter; he needed his retreat in Iona this summer to recharge his amazing forensic mind for this task ahead.

Nor did I predict, although in the end I anticipated, the debacle over the publication of the KS2 and 3 assessment/test results. Anybody close to a colleague who marks or sets these tests would have known, anecdotally, that trouble was brewing, and so the Permanent Secretary's call to me at 9 30pm on the Thursday before the results were due to be published came as no surprise. It was quiz night, so it had to go on hold, but the testing 'industry' has become the gargantuan monster that risks consuming itself.

Pupil attainment remains at the top of the government's agenda and the Diocese has a distinctive role to play in supporting schools in improving attainment. We are neither the local authority nor your school improvement partner (SIP), and make no claims or pretence to be. However, we do have a complementary role in supporting our Church schools in improving attainment, especially those that are causing concern, and Janet Cowley and

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## Toxic Childhood

One of the highlights of the year in the Board of Education is our Schools' Annual Conference for headteachers, governors and clergy.

This event has been running successfully now for thirteen years. During this time we have been pleased to explore, from a distinctive perspective, many areas of interest and concern.

One of the joys of the conference continues to be the opportunity to share worship and Communion together as well as to network and refresh old acquaintances. This has been very much valued by delegates

This year, our 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference was entitled, "How do we sing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land?" Our keynote speaker, Sue Palmer, author of the best selling education books, "Toxic Childhood" and its sequel, "Taking the "Toxic" out of Childhood", was extremely well received by delegates as were the "Values for Life" materials.



John Wilson lead much of the work in this area. This work, along with Section 5 and 48 inspection outcomes, is reported to our Schools Committee, which has headteacher and governor representation to guide us and scrutinise our work. We have established a special Scrutiny Board to keep a close watching brief on the Brightmet CE Academy project this year.

Implementing an **academy** programme can become a full-time job in itself, and I am grateful to a range of colleagues, both officer and clergy, for supporting me in the Brightmet project (Bolton). The current state of play is that the Academy will be all-age, open in 2009, and be rebuilt in 2011/12 when a secondary special school will also be co-located on the site; exciting and challenging stuff.

And finally, as I wish you well in God's name in the new academic year, may I continue to thank schools who also continue to support the Diocese in buying in to our service level agreement (SLA). DBE Services, which provides some of our income, now has a very efficient and effective 'total property management' service on offer and you will be receiving a brochure this term setting out the details of the scheme. May I encourage you to look on it positively.

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## Festivals this Term

### September

01	Ramadan (1 <sup>st</sup> day)	<i>Islam</i>
30	Rosh Hashanah (New Year)	<i>Judaism</i>
29	Navratri	<i>Hinduism</i>

### October

01	Eid-ul-Fitr (end of Ramadan)	<i>Islam</i>
09	Yom Kippur	<i>Judaism</i>
14	Sukkot	<i>Judaism</i>
22	Simchat Torah	<i>Judaism</i>
28	Divali	<i>Hinduism / Sikhism</i>

### November

01	All Saints Day	<i>Christianity</i>
02	All Souls Day	<i>Christianity</i>
12	Birth of Baha'u'llah	<i>Baha'i</i>
13	Birthday of Guru Nanak	<i>Sikhism</i>
30	Advent Sunday	<i>Christianity</i>

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## Have you seen ...

### our new website:

[www.manchester.anglican.org](http://www.manchester.anglican.org)? It has a special **Resources for Schools** section so that you can find information more easily. The content is helpful for headteachers, senior leaders, RE and collective worship co-ordinators, governors and clergy involved with Church schools. All the new RE schemes of work are on the website, as are news items, newsletters, lists of church schools, building issues, training and other details.

# Brief Encounters of the Section 48 Kind

Seven schools have not yet had their Section 5 inspection and have been waiting for a phone call now for several terms. They will obviously be inspected this year, along with the schools which were inspected on the Section 5 regulations in 2005/2006.

These are the schools where the SIAS or Section 48 inspection will follow within two or three working days. Consequently the governors cannot be consulted on whom they might appoint as their inspector. As a result schools have received a brief questionnaire to find out who is deemed to be inappropriate, perhaps because the inspector once worked at the school or is too well known to ensure impartiality. The Diocese will not appoint the previous inspector nor anyone who works in the same local authority.

The form also asks whether the school would prefer SIAS and Ofsted inspections to occur concurrently. The presumption on this is that most secondary schools would, but that most primary schools would not. If you have not yet returned the form and expect you might be inspected in 2008/9 please return it to John Wilson: [johnwilson@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:johnwilson@manchester.anglican.org) If you need a replacement form please ask for one.

## The process

**When** the Regional Inspection Service Provider notifies the school of their Section 5 inspection the Diocese will also be told. This will allow us to inform the inspector which school they will be inspecting on the date previously agreed. The inspector will then contact the headteacher to make the necessary arrangements. These will include receiving the school's summaries of their self-evaluation, both in the SEF and, where it exists separately, of the aspects relating to being a Church school.

## The importance of self-evaluation

**We strongly** advise schools to evaluate how distinctive and effective they are as Church schools, whatever toolkit is chosen. This provides the inspector with a broader impression before the inspection and indicates that the school is more likely to be a stronger Church school than one which fails to indicate it has thought about its Christian foundation.

**Remember that MDBE can support you with the self evaluation process through our ethos health checks.**

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## Holman Hunt and Religious Art

**Manchester Cathedral** and Manchester Art Gallery are running a course on Holman Hunt and Religious Art on Thursday 13th November. At the Cathedral, you will explore art and architecture to discover meanings of religious symbols in stone, woodwork and 20<sup>th</sup> century stained glass. This will be followed by a visit to the Holman Hunt exhibition at Manchester Art Gallery to learn about his involvement in the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the legacy of his work. The final session will examine how to engage with and interpret paintings.

The course, led by Pam Elliott and Jas Sohel, education officers at the Cathedral and Art Gallery is open to all interested primary and secondary teachers, particularly those who specialise in Religious Education or Art.

For costs, further details and booking, please telephone Jas Sohel on 0161 235 8854.

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## Fairtrade Schools

**Manchester Diocese** is entitled to call itself a 'Fairtrade Diocese' because over half the churches have been awarded 'Fairtrade status'. We now want to encourage Church schools to have similar aspirations, especially where their parish has met the requirements. A small group will meet this term to draw up criteria by which schools can be accredited. If your school is already a 'Fairtrade school' or you have views on this initiative please contact John Wilson. [johnwilson@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:johnwilson@manchester.anglican.org) or 0161 828 1438.

# Brightmet Academy

Although there are already three successful Church secondary schools in Bolton, the Diocese is also joint sponsor of a potential new academy in Brightmet, an area of considerable social and economic deprivation, north-east of the town centre. Importantly, the Academy will be at the heart of the community and open to all. Christian values of hope, valuing self and others, responsibility, truth, forgiveness and justice will pervade all aspects of Academy life and children of all faiths and none will be welcomed.

The Academy will be innovatory in that it will provide all-age education from 4 to 19 and be co-located, and work very closely with, an 11-19 special school for students who have severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties and students with autistic spectrum disorder. It will replace the present Withins High School and Top o' th' Brow Primary School and eventually be based on the Withins school site.

The Academy, which will specialise in Business and Enterprise and in Mathematics and Computing, will open in 2009. There will be 210 children from Reception to Year 6 and 750 from Year 7 to Year 11. It also aims to cater for up to 200 post-sixteen students, probably on vocational courses, and to be a focus for community regeneration.

## John Dalby OBE

**Congratulations** to John Dalby, who has been headteacher at St Philip's CE Primary School, Hulme, for the past 27 years and was awarded the OBE for services to education in Manchester. Characteristically, John was modest in accepting the award: "I am absolutely thrilled and overjoyed. It is not just credit for me, but also to all the staff, pupils and governors at the school. It is a wonderful achievement for what we have done at the school." John retired at the end of the summer term with the satisfaction of having led the school through outstanding Ofsted and SIAS inspections earlier in the year.

## What do the last round of SIAS inspections tell us?

The last round of SIAS inspections 2005-2008 is almost complete with just seven schools still waiting for their SIAS inspections.

We are in the process of completing an analysis of those reports. For the first time we will have some quantitative data to inform our school support, training and development and identify good practice.

The results of the analysis will form a major part of our Heads' and Chairs' cluster group meetings this term. Already, some interesting results are emerging in all four SIAS categories.

## New to the job

*Congratulations to the following new headteachers and deputy headteachers who will take up their new posts in September this year:*

Karen Graham	H	St Catherine's, Horwich
Gareth Robertshaw	H	Westhoughton Parochial
Jenny Clancy	H	Godfrey Ermen, Salford
Elizabeth Traviss	H	Holy Trinity, Dobcross
Stephen Bentham	H	St Lukes, Heywood
Debra Payton	H	Christ Church, Chadderton
Clare Campbell	H	St Augustine, Pendlebury
Rob Dean	H	St Thomas, Chequerbent
Peter Wright	H	St Peter's, Swinton
Razia Shah	DH	St Augustine's, Monsall
Mark Johns	DH	Westhoughton Parochial
Vicky Barnes	DH	St George's Westhoughton
Caroline Woolfe	DH	Blue Coat High
Des Howlett	DH	Holy Trinity, Ashton
Jane Norburn	DH	Canon Johnson
Fiona Shewman	DH	St James', Wardle
Wendy Cathie	DH	St Peter's Infants. Leigh

## Conference 2009

14th Annual Schools' Conference  
24 April 2009  
Venue: Reebok Stadium, Bolton

## Spirited Poetry

## Competition

**The National Association** of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) is organising a poetry competition for 2008 with 20 £20 tokens as prizes. Schools may enter up to 8 poems on themes as diverse as: I am ...; mystery of life; windows on the soul; looking for God and questions, questions. National Poetry Day on 9 October 2008 could provide a timely stimulus to the initiative. Poems should be sent by 1 December to: NATRE Spirited Poetry, 1020 Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6LB. Further details can be found on the website: [www.natre.org.uk](http://www.natre.org.uk)

## Year of the Child 2009

2009 is the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations' Year of the Child. On Saturday 17 October 2009 there will be a special day at the Cathedral to promote and celebrate the contribution of children to the life of the Church and to recognise the ministry of those who work with them. As one organisation primarily concerned with children, schools may wish to support and work with their parishes in events to celebrate this anniversary.

## Halloween Choice

**Your school** could celebrate the saint instead of the serial killer; the hero in place of the horrific monster. The Church of England and the Children's Society have joined forces to produce resources for schools and churches to ensure that light rather than dark and joy rather than fear triumph this October. Visit the website: [www.halloweenchoice.org](http://www.halloweenchoice.org) for details and find out what you can do in school and how you might work with your local church. The diocese is looking for schools which would be willing to trial ideas and materials. Please contact John Wilson for further information.

## Church Schools' Examination Excellence

Most of the Dioceses' secondary schools have continued their upward trend in GCSE achievement. Several of these show large increases in their percentages of pupils achieving five A\* to C grades: Canon Slade, Bolton, and Blue Coat, Oldham, both up from 84% in 2007 to 90%; Bury Church from 71% to 80%; St James, Farnworth, from 64% to 73%; Rivington and Blackrod from 60% to 65% and St Anne's Academy, Middleton, from 52% to 62%. In addition to these, Crompton House, continues to hover around 90% at 89.5%, whilst Holy Family, Heywood, has nearly equalled last years' highest ever results, moving from 48% in 2005, 53% in 2006 to 68% last year and 66% this year.

Eight Year 11 pupils from Hesketh Fletcher achieved 100% pass rate at AS level. The school has achieved a unique record; for three successive years a pupil has achieved full marks on the Buddhism paper.

A level results have also been very good with Blue Coat recording 99.1% passes, Canon Slade 98% and Crompton House 95.8%.

## Primary School Heads' and Chairs' Cluster Group Meetings, Autumn Term 2008

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 Autumn term '08. 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	11.11.08	13:30-15:30	St. George's, Westhoughton	SIAS inspection report analysis to be discussed at all cluster group meetings  Total property management.  Drama and art with a spiritual dimension  The role of the business manager
Bury	13.11.08	10:00-12:00	St. John's, Radcliffe	
Lancashire	12.11.08	13:30-15:30	St. Bartholomew's, Whitworth	
Manchester	05.11.08	10:00-12:00	St Paul's, Withington	
Oldham	19.11.08	10:00-12:00	East Crompton St. George	
Rochdale	To be arranged with the Rochdale Church of England schools group			
Salford	05.11.08	13:30-15:30	St. Augustine's, Salford	
Stockport	19.11.08	13:30-15:30	St. Thomas, Heaton Chapel	
Tameside	13.11.08	13:30-15:30	St Mary's Droylsden	
Trafford	12.11.08	10:30-12:15	St Hilda's, Firwood	
Wigan	11.11.08	10:00-12:00	St George's Central, Tyldesley	

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