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From the Director of Education

Dear Colleague

Welcome to the family of church school leaders in the Diocese of Oxford. Whether you are taking on headship for the first time or are a more experienced headteacher joining a Church of England school in our diocese, you will be getting to know your new school and identifying your early priorities for action. This booklet is intended to assist you, by letting you know who we are and what support we can offer you, as well as providing an overview of some of the technical aspects of leading a Church of England school.

The Diocesan Board of Education has a team of experienced advisers (one of whom will be allocated to your school) whose services are available to all church school leaders and governors. In addition, we have a skilled premises team who support church schools and academies with building needs. We can also provide you with support on admissions and appeals. All of our schools can make use of our RE and Collective Worship resources alongside advice and support for chaplaincy and engagement with your local church. As a team we are well aware of the amazing opportunities and challenges of headship and we also offer a unique programme to support you pastorally in your new post.

We hope you will find this a helpful summary of the role of the diocese and its team in your school and we look forward to working in partnership with you in the coming months and years.

With every blessing,

Fiona Craig
Diocesan Director of Education
The Diocesan Education Team

The Oxford Diocesan Board of Education values each of its schools and offers the services of a professional and supportive team which includes:

- Director and Deputy Director
- Academy Development Officers
- Principal Advisers and School Link Advisers
- RE Adviser and Chaplaincy Adviser
- Premises Officer and Building Surveyor
- Admissions/Appeals Officer
- Schools Support Officer and Training & Events Administrator

Each school has a named School Link Adviser. Support offered to schools is governed by the Service Level Agreement (SLA). Please check which level of support your school currently buys into. Additional support can be purchased to meet your school’s needs – ask your School Link Adviser for more details.

As part of this agreement, new headteachers are offered visits from their named Adviser during their first weeks. The diocesan team also offers regular training and visits for headteachers, governors and staff. The team provides and facilitates a range of courses over the year and supports schools both in preparation for, and follow up to, SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspections. The work of the team is supported by a strong administrative group, the members of which also act as advisers to schools on some matters such as the appointment of foundation governors.

The work of the ODBE team centres on the following tasks:

- improving and developing the distinctiveness and effectiveness of church schools;
- supporting schools in developing and confidently communicating their distinctive vision;
- offering an excellent school improvement service, working in partnership with local authorities and their external agencies as appropriate;
- providing SIAMS training for headteachers and governors to equip them to monitor and evaluate their school as a distinctive church school;
- fulfilling a strategic plan for succession and leadership within the diocese;
- supporting governors in their nurture of the Christian foundation of their schools;
- offering pastoral support for headteachers and staff;
- advising on religious education and its contribution to a school’s distinctive vision and character;
- advising on acts and patterns of worship;
- supporting governors in the appointment of headteachers;
- supporting the headteacher appraisal process;
- assisting with maintenance and improvement of Aided school buildings;
- representing the interests of church schools and liaising with local authorities;
- ensuring the continuing development, status and position of RE through engagement in SACREs throughout the diocese and involvement in national initiatives;
- administration of the statutory inspection of church schools (SIAMS);
- HR advice; and
- supporting and advising on academy conversion and working with academies and multi-academy trusts post conversion.

The significance of the spiritual centre is vital and integral to all aspects of our work. Training and support will always draw from and return to this in order to sustain and develop distinctive leadership in church schools.
# Contact details

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*NB – these staff are not office based and should be contacted via their mobile*
Biographies

**Fiona Craig (Director)**
Fiona was a successful primary school headteacher for many years, both in Scotland and in Oxfordshire. She previously served the Oxford Diocese for a number of years as a headteacher member of the Diocesan Board of Education and also worked with the diocese on a commissioned basis, coaching and mentoring headteachers in church schools. Her specific areas of interest and expertise are in school improvement and equipping and empowering school leaders and teams. Having personal experience of the journey in taking schools from ‘Special Measures’ to ‘Outstanding’, she has led and supported large numbers of schools in raising standards, supporting leaders and significantly improving pupil outcomes and experience.

**Gordon Joyner (Deputy Director)**
Gordon has worked in the education sector all of his career, initially with Oxfordshire County Council and for the last 25 years with the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education. Currently Deputy Director of Education, his work includes project managing the construction of new school buildings (of which there have been many), school place planning, trust/legal issues and property management; he oversees the admissions/appeals and premises teams; he has been heavily involved in the development of academies including governance development.

**Frances Bartlett (Principal Adviser)**
Frances completed her BEd Hons at Homerton College, Cambridge followed by a Masters in English Literature at Exeter University. She began her teaching career in a CE primary school in Stockport before spending three years in Botswana as a secondary English teacher and teacher trainer in government schools. Following her return and a period of deputy headship in Staffordshire, Frances moved to Oxfordshire to take up her first headship of a small CE primary school. She has led two schools through successful Ofsted inspections as the head and is keen to support school leaders and staff in school improvement in a rapidly changing educational landscape. Frances is a trained Ofsted Inspector and has carried out inspections since 2014.

**Robin Sharples (Principal Adviser)**
Robin trained as a teacher in Birmingham following a degree in theology from London Bible College. He led music, science, IT and RE in primary and first schools and was both deputy and headteacher in church VA schools. Robin has, in recent years, been an independent adviser and SIAMS inspector in diocesan schools. His writing credits include the ‘Worship Workshop’ website and ‘Pathways to Prayer’; and when not working can be found writing music and playing Jazz/Blues on his bass guitar.

**Sarah Thomas (Principal Adviser)**
Sarah is an experienced primary school headteacher who has led both church and local authority primary schools successfully in a range of environments, including leading and managing failing schools to raise standards of achievement for all pupils. Subsequent work as an independent consultant focused upon the role of the subject leader and refining systems for effective whole school development. A longstanding commitment to Initial Teacher Training, underpins her continuing role as a Link Tutor at Brunel University, monitoring and mentoring student progression and standards of performance. Sarah has a keen interest in school improvement, enhancing school effectiveness and in creating a quality first learning environment whereby leadership and management has impact and is a driving force of the whole school community.
Anne Andrews (RE Adviser)
After completing a BA in French & German at Lincoln College, Oxford, Anne went on to do a PGCE in Languages at the University of York. Her first job brought her back to the south east, as the only German teacher in a Surrey secondary school, where she helped run the Christian Union. A second post in a secondary school was followed by ten years of maternity leave – spent running church home groups, crèche/mother & toddler groups. A return to teaching course brought her to the joys of primary education, and finally to RE subject leader. When not working, Anne can be found reading, hiking or playing the flute.

Ruth Bennie (School Link Adviser – Primary)
Ruth studied for her joint honours degree in music and literature at Chester where she also completed her primary PGCE specialising in expressive arts. She taught in a variety of schools in Northampton, Tower Hamlets, Leicester, Wokingham and Oxfordshire before taking up headship of a community primary school in Oxfordshire. Ruth has continued to enjoy learning, completing an MSc in educational leadership and an MPhil taking particular interest in creativity; assessment; transformative leadership; and policy and practice when working with vulnerable learners. Outside of work, Ruth enjoys spending time with her family, reading, dog walking and singing.

Jackie Cousins (School Link Adviser – Secondary)
Jackie started teaching in greater London in a social priority area. Her teaching in primary and middle schools was regularly evaluated as outstanding by senior leaders and Ofsted. She was appointed a school inspector while working in Buckinghamshire and was soon asked to work for Ofsted as a Senior Managing Inspector. She worked in this role full-time for ten years, leading over 250 secondary and primary school inspections. She was qualified to also lead inspections of independent schools and child care settings, special schools and pupil referral units. She was a lead trainer for a range of inspection skills including badging new school inspectors, developing lead inspectors and leading on early years for the Midlands region. She is particularly effective in supporting schools requiring improvement to become good and understands the criteria to be outstanding.

Charlie Kerr (Chaplaincy Adviser)
Charlie Kerr studied Theology and Religious Studies as an undergraduate at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, before going straight into teaching RS and Philosophy at King’s College School Wimbledon in 1996. Charlie entered Ordination training in the Church of England in 1999, attending Ripon College Cuddesdon and studying a two-year Masters in Applied Theology at the University of Oxford, specialising in Music and Theology. His curacy was served in St Peter Mancroft church Norwich, where he focused on youth ministry, and was followed by 14 years of chaplaincy in schools, with 3 years in Glenalmond College Perthshire, and a further 11 years at St Edward’s School Oxford. He has always been passionate about ministry with young people, youth welfare and the Christian faith and he is delighted to adopt this new and exciting role in the Diocese of Oxford.

Karen Metcalfe (School Link Adviser – Primary)
Karen completed her Cert Ed at Maria Grey College, Twickenham. She began her teaching career in London. Following a move to Oxford, Karen taught in CE city primary schools, initially working part time whilst completing a MEd at Oxford University. She has led two schools through successful Ofsted inspections as the head and is keen to support school leaders in school improvement in a changing educational landscape. Karen is also a serving Ofsted inspector.

Christine Price-Smith (School Link Adviser – Primary)
Following a joint honours degree in Theology & Sociology from the University of Bristol, Christine completed her PGCE at Westminster College, Oxford. She has been in education for over 25 years having spent ten years as a primary school headteacher in three schools and supporting other headteacher colleagues in an advisory capacity. She has also previously held the post of advisory teacher for RE for Oxfordshire having achieved a Farmington Fellowship Award for research into effective assessment in RE. She is also a director of a multi-academy trust in Oxfordshire.
Tim Barnett (Senior HR Adviser)
- Provides the HR advice and guidance service to schools, an additional service under the SLA
- The service includes Recruitment processes; Equality; Attendance; Performance; Change; TUPE; Redundancy; Policy development and individual employee issues
- It also includes regular newsletters, toolkits and model policies
- Training and consultancy services are also available

Penny Bingham (Executive Assistant)
- Supports the work of the Senior Leadership Team
- Manages the Director of Education’s diary
- Marketing & communications

Tom Fry (Buildings Surveyor)
- Management of SCA & LCVAP capital maintenance and improvement projects
- Provides full architectural, surveying and project management services for the maintenance, extension and improvement of school buildings
- Provides premises support to ODST academy schools on projects and development of Asset Management Plans and School Development Plan

Donna Finlay (Training & Events Administrator)
- Administers training courses for governors, headteachers and other teaching staff including:
  - The ‘Excellence in Governance’ and ‘Excellence in Leadership’ and ‘Excellence in Schools’ training packages

Christine Jones (Admission & Appeals Officer)
- Formally reviews admission arrangements for all VA schools and academies within ODBE and ODST
- Provides admissions advice and support to headteachers
- Manages and leads training on admissions and admission appeals procedures
- Manages the diocesan appeals service for ODBE and ODST, providing advice to headteachers, governors and parents
- Manages the team of 30 volunteer panel members and independent clerks, ensuring a high-quality service is provided to all our schools
Jane Maharry (Premises Officer)
- Management of LCVAP capital maintenance and improvement projects
- Supporting DBE on delegated DFC projects
- Financial management of capital projects and problem solving
- Premises support for academies
- Services to schools for developing Asset Management Plans and School Development Plans

Helen Mitchell (Administration Co-ordinator)
- Leads the co-ordination of administration within the team
- Supports the work of the School Link Advisers
- Clerk to the Diocesan Board of Education
- Development and resourcing of the schools’ section of the diocesan website

Susie Morrissey (Head of Academy Projects)
- Project managing the establishment of new Multi-Academy Trusts
- Project Manager for schools converting to Academy Status
- Supporting the establishment of new schools

Tracy Richardson (School Support Officer)
- Manages the Service Level Agreement with Schools
- SIAMS Co-ordinator
- Supports the work of the School Link Advisers with regard to school effectiveness
- Manages the database system

Kirsteen Roberts (Assistant Director – Free Schools & Academies)
- Manages and co-ordinates the Free School Programme
- Academies team member working on academy conversion
- Academies team member establishing new Multi-Academy Trusts
The Oxford Diocesan Board of Education (ODBE)

The Diocese of Oxford is the largest in England and covers the nine local authorities (LAs): Bracknell, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire, Reading, Slough, West Berkshire, Windsor and Maidenhead, and Wokingham. There are 271 schools educating the primary phase; 8 schools the secondary phase; 2 are all through; and a further 2 are middle schools serving some 60,000 pupils. There are 815 churches grouped into deaneries for administration purposes, the deaneries are grouped into four archdeaconries.

The ODBE, like other diocesan boards of education in England, has the following main responsibilities:

- to promote education which is consistent with the faith and practice of the Church of England;
- to promote the development of religious education and collective worship in schools of the diocese;
- to support church schools and to advise the governors, trustees of church educational endowments and others concerned with matters affecting these church schools; and
- to promote co-operation and partnership between the Board and bodies or persons concerned in any respect with education in the diocese.
The ODBE is committed to the education of the whole person to their fullest potential, to the
development of moral and spiritual understanding, to the uniqueness of the individual and to the
education of all within the maintained system. It works within statutory education on behalf of the
Diocese of Oxford in developing a Christian vision of education. It fulfils this commitment to all schools
through the provision of a range of advice and support.

Through its advisory services ODBE promotes RE, Collective Worship and the spiritual development of
pupils. The work of the advisory team also focuses on school improvement to support schools in dealing
with the requirements of Ofsted inspection and (where appropriate) relationships with HMI. It ensures
that church schools are provided with specialist support for building development and legal matters.
Among the churches of the diocese, the Board promotes church related education and provides advice
for clergy, governors and parishes in support of their schools.

The vision and priorities of the diocese and the pastoral role of the church underpin all the work of the
ODBE. More about this vision can be found on the Diocese of Oxford website.

Introduction to Church Schools

Most diocesan church schools were established under trusts to provide education for the ‘poor of the
parish’ with teaching according to the Church of England. This was before Parliament allowed, in 1870,
the establishment of board, and later county, schools to provide free education. The school managers or
governors were responsible for all costs relating to the school buildings. From 1833 the state provided
an increasing amount of financial assistance, mainly for the payment of teachers.

From 1811 the ‘National Society for Promoting Religious Education’ was established to support Church
of England Schools. The society’s provision of extensive resources and support for schools, dioceses and
parishes continues, the place of the National Society has been taken by the Church of England Education
Office’s and more details can be found on their own website1.

Church schools were established under a Trust Deed. We would encourage new headteachers with
governors to reflect on the original aims of the school as expressed in the Trust Deed and how this has
been translated into the current ethos statement as exhibited in the school’s Instrument of Government
and any aims, mission, values or ethos statement of the school. A copy of the Trust Deed should be in
school or at Church House Oxford.

The national need for the expansion of education beyond the means of many governing bodies was met
in the Education Act 1944, which enabled voluntary schools to become either:

- **Controlled** by the local authority (LA), which meets all the costs of the school, with a minority of
  church foundation governors and church trustees holding the school site and buildings under
  educational trusts, or

- **Aided**, for which the local authority meets most of the running costs, including teachers’ pay, but
  the governors, of whom a majority are church foundation governors, have responsibility for
  improvements to the school buildings and maintenance of the exterior fabric.

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1 Church of England Education Office  
https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools
The Education Reform Act 1988 considerably increased the responsibilities of governors and headteachers, particularly regarding the introduction of local management of schools and the requirement that collective worship and the curriculum, including religious education, (a) ‘promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society’, and (b) ‘prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life’. There have, of course, been further developments.

In recent years, the National Society (now the Church of England Education Office) has taken an increasingly leading role in church school development. The introduction of church school inspections (Section 13 and 23) in the 1990s was led by the National Society. A very significant landmark in the Anglican Church’s involvement in education took place in 2000 with the publication of The Way Ahead which explored a great deal of the motivation and mission of church school education. This was followed by further reports; The Church School of the Future and The DBE of the Future both of which relate specifically to schools and Going for Growth which focuses more broadly on the needs of young people and children and the mission of the church in this area. Most recently the Church of England Education Office has produced the Church of England Vision for Education which, in its own words...

“... is not just a vision for Church of England schools, but a Church of England vision for education. At a time when many are looking for a vision of education to enthuse and inspire them, this deeply Christian vision of education is one that is generous and that seeks to allow the riches of Christian life to overflow to those of other faiths or no faith, but who share the bigger vision of what we think education is for. This vision will be worked out explicitly within the Christian character of thousands of Church schools, but ... is also about shaping wider educational policy and embracing others who are drawn to it as they recognise something deep and rich for the common good.”

The academy agenda has been responded to very positively by the Church of England, which has become the single largest provider of sponsored academies. Since 2010, ODBE has worked hard to provide support for the growing number of academy conversions and sponsorships through advice and especially through the establishment of the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust. There are two diocesan multi-academy trusts and 14 school led multi-academy trusts set up across the diocese catering for a mixture of church and community schools.

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3 The Church School of the Future  https://tinyurl.com/c-of-e-church-school-future
4 DBE of Future  https://tinyurl.com/dbe-future
5 Going for Growth  http://www.going4growth.com/home
The Distinctiveness of the Church School

In recent years, the Church of England has increasingly recognised the especially significant role of the headteacher in the development of the distinctive character of church schools. The Way Ahead report noted that:

‘Church school headteachers are spiritual and academic leaders of the school. Excellence in headship requires visionary, inspired leadership and management centred on the school as a worshipping community, where educational and academic excellence for all pupils is pursued in a Christian context.’ (8.1)

So ... what is a distinctively Christian vision for a church school? The Vision for Education (page 2) has this to say:

‘The vision is deeply Christian, with the promise by Jesus of ‘life in all its fullness’ at its heart ... Our vision embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. We offer a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, but sets them in a wider framework. This is worked out theologically and educationally through four basic elements which permeate our vision for education:

- Wisdom
- Hope
- Community
- Dignity’

Headteachers, along with governors, drive the leadership and management of the school. This partnership is vital to the quality of distinctiveness which the school will demonstrate. Governors have vital roles to carry out: they hold the school to account and they play a major part in setting the strategic direction of the school. The church school is also recognised as a major contributor to social cohesion and should not be a cause of social division. The Right Revd Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of Chelmsford reminds us in ‘The Scandalous Inclusivity of God’ that:

‘...a [Church] school is able to be both particular (clear about its own Christian faith) and inclusive (welcoming of all because of the Christian understanding of God). It is not a problem for us that people do not share the specific beliefs of Christianity for one of the best ways that we will witness to the reality of our faith is by the way we love and honour God in our neighbour. Indeed, we believe we are better able to be inclusive than other schools because our inclusivity flows from our belief in God. This puts us in a better position to welcome, understand and include people of other faiths.’

It is the quality of distinctiveness created by the church school’s staff, leaders and community which enables this vision to be realised.

The following traits from The Church School of the Future summarise the distinctiveness anticipated in church schools:

- ‘the religious education curriculum will include other major world faiths but will ensure that the teaching of Christianity is given appropriate priority;
- the life of the school is developed around an explicit commitment to Christian values and ethos;
- the learning environment, including premises and grounds, will reflect the Church of England foundation and the centrality of spiritual development; and
- close working relationships with the church community, through parish or deanery, will be fostered. (3.6)
The Parish and the School - the majority of Church of England schools are set within the worshipping community of the parish family. The implications of this setting vary, especially between primary and secondary schools, but in all cases, there should be a commitment to partnership between parish and school which is built upon a common quest for the outworking of shared vision and values alongside spiritual growth. This partnership sees the church school working with the parish to engage parents (and indeed the whole community) in education and the broader life of the child.

Appointment of Staff - the appointment of members of staff is one of the most important roles of headteachers. Not only is quality of potential professionalism central to the success of such appointments but equally the commitment of these staff to the ethos and Christian foundation of the school.

These are important factors in deciding your new appointments. Local Authorities provide publications relating to the appointment of senior staff. These mainly centre on the mechanical process and professional skills governing bodies should consider in appointing staff. The following charts will help you identify differences in the appointment process between Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voluntary Controlled</th>
<th>Voluntary Aided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Local Authority (LA) is the employer</td>
<td>• The governing body is the employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• LA is entitled to attend all proceedings related to the appointment of staff</td>
<td>• The governing body may accord advisory rights to the LA (strongly recommended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appointment of deputy head:</td>
<td>• The diocesan authority should have the same advisory rights as the LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In VC schools ‘the governing body may take into account any candidate’s suitability and ability to preserve and develop the religious character of the school’</td>
<td>• Appointment of deputy head: ‘the governing body may give preference to any candidate whose religious opinions and worship are in accordance with the tenets of the religious denomination of the school’ (Also applies to other teaching appointments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The governing body may extend advisory rights to the diocesan authority (strongly recommended)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The governing body may appoint ‘reserved teachers’ (for the purpose of ‘religious instruction’)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some further important notes on appointments:

 emplement law in the appointment of staff selection processes and appointment procedures should comply with LA human resources advice. HR advice is also now available from the ODBE. Please contact Tim Barnett - Senior HR Adviser  tim.barnett@oxford.anglican.org  01865 208763

Some further important notes on appointments:

1. Detailed advice on appointments is available in the Governance Handbook (which has replaced the guide to the law) which can be downloaded from the Gov.uk website⁷.

2. To ensure that headteachers and governors meet the requirements of employment law in the appointment of staff selection processes and appointment procedures should comply with LA human resources advice. HR advice is also now available from the ODBE. Please contact Tim Barnett - Senior HR Adviser  tim.barnett@oxford.anglican.org  01865 208763

⁷ Governance Handbook  https://tinyurl.com/zxnxwxx
Headteachers and governors will probably use local authority application forms and contracts of employment. These have limited reference to the distinctiveness of Church school appointments. Appropriate reference can be made within the advert and person specification for such distinctiveness. Advice can be sought from your School Link Adviser on this. Colleagues working in Aided schools should consult the Church of England Education Office website where application forms and contracts for C of E schools may be found. Headteachers and governors of Controlled schools may also wish to look at these forms.

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8 Staff contracts for schools and academies
Church School Governance

‘In order to enable the continued development of successful schools, high quality governance is essential...The governance of our schools cannot be left to chance; schools need governors with the right skills and gifts to provide strategic oversight and direction.’
(The DBE of the Future9 para 32)

All the governors of a church school must work collectively to ensure the effectiveness of the school as a place of learning, where Christian values can flourish.

Maintained schools can have different categories of governor, these being:

- Foundation Governors
- Parent Governors
- Co-opted Governors
- Staff Governors
- Local Authority Governors

Governing Bodies can also choose to appoint associate governors (non-voting).

Your school’s Instrument of Government (IoG) will make it clear how your governing body is constituted. Academies have differing arrangements.

All Church of England schools must have foundation governors. In Voluntary Aided schools they should outnumber all other categories of governor put together by a majority of at least two. Voluntary Controlled schools have a minority of foundation governors, usually 25%. In the Diocese of Oxford, we have three types of foundation governor:

- those appointed by the Diocesan Board of Education often from the local church community;
- those appointed directly by the Parochial Church Council (PCC); and
- the ex-officio governor – normally the incumbent (local vicar) unless a substitute has been nominated and agreed by the Archdeacon.

The term of office for all diocesan foundation governors is usually four years. A diocesan foundation governor can resign at any time during those four years. The clerk to the governors should inform the Schools Support Officer, Tracy Richardson, of any changes to the governing body, including change to non-foundation governors, eg parent election. Nomination forms are available to download from our webpages10.

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9 The DBE of the Future
10 Becoming a Governor
https://tinyurl.com/dbe-future
https://tinyurl.com/ya4ywfv2
So why do we have Foundation Governors? - It is a requirement of the Trust under which Church of England Schools were established and endowed with a Church of England foundation. They are full governors just like any other and must be effective in supporting you in your strategic vision, financial management and in holding your leadership to account.

They also have a special responsibility to ensure:

- that the guiding principles of the founding church are incorporated into all aspects of the governance of the school; and
- that the terms of the trust deed governing the school are adhered to.

The Ethos of the School - While the whole governing body has agreed to uphold the Christian ethos of the school, it is the foundation governors who have the particular responsibility to ensure that the Christian foundation is reflected in all aspects of school governance and life.

Governor Training Course Programme - The diocese provides a programme of training for governors through EiG, Excellence in Governance\(^\text{11}\)\(^\text{11}\). Whole governing body training can also be provided within schools as a bespoke service, speak to your School Link Adviser for details. The RIGHT Oxford\(^\text{12}\)\(^\text{12}\) Programme provides a support network specifically designed for chairs of governors in church schools.

\(^{11}\) Excellence in Governance \(\text{https://tinyurl.com/yauk7vo3}\)
\(^{12}\) The RIGHT Oxford Programme \(\text{https://www.oxford.anglican.org/schools/governance/governortraining/right-programme/}\)
Governance in Academies

Church academies are always set up as charitable companies with the Diocesan Board of Education as a member. We therefore appoint directors to our academy companies. In stand-alone academies those directors are also the governors; in a multi-academy trust, the school will have a local governing body in addition to the Board of Directors which will have governors appointed by the church.

Admission and Appeals – VA Schools and Academies

In accordance with the legal framework of school admissions we formally review and advise on VA schools and academies admissions policies. Admission policies must go out to full consultation, as a minimum (if there are no changes) every seven years; however, if there are changes, these remain subject to the usual full consultation. However, regardless of whether there are any changes there is still a requirement for policies to be determined annually. We provide advice and support to governing bodies and headteachers on all aspects of admissions and offer regular admission briefings to keep schools up to date with any changes to the code. A great deal of helpful material is held on the ODBE webpages. The ‘for governors’ section requires a password which can be obtained from your Link Adviser.

We respond to the Schools’ Adjudicator and will assist schools where necessary.

We maintain an overview for VA schools and academies on LA admission committees, school place planning forums and other relevant bodies, both locally and nationally, including attendance and membership of the National Diocesan Admission Group and South West Admissions and Appeals Group.

The diocese has run a successful appeals service for over 35 years and we have a team of 30 panel members and experienced independent clerks. We provide support to headteachers and governors and provide updates on the law in relation to appeals. We send regular reminders to ensure admission authorities are adhering to the timeframes given in the Appeals Code. As with admissions, we run training sessions for headteachers, governors and admission staff to ensure schools are able to process appeals in an uncomplicated and timely manner.

We will of course respond to the Local Government Ombudsman and the Education & Skills Funding Agency as necessary. We offer training on both admissions and appeals.

Updates and changes to both the admissions code and appeals code will be circulated widely.

Enquiries concerning admissions and appeals should be directed to Christine Jones - Admissions & Appeals Officer christine.jones@oxford.anglican.org 01865 208279

Admissions & Admissions Appeals https://tinyurl.com/y7zby35z
Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

In addition to Ofsted inspections, church schools also have SIAMS inspections (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodists Schools) to determine their distinctiveness and effectiveness. The inspection itself, usually lasting one day in primary schools and two days in secondary schools, verifies the school's self-evaluation as a church school, so schools have to take responsibility for evaluating themselves and sharing their evidence with inspectors.

SIAMS inspections lead to a headline judgement in answer to the question, ‘How effective is the school’s distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?’

To do this the inspection looks at seven strands:

1. Vision and Leadership
2. Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills
3. Character Development: Hope, Aspiration and Courageous Advocacy
4. Community and Living Well Together
5. Dignity and Respect
6. The impact of collective worship
7. The effectiveness of religious education

Schools must evaluate the impact of their distinctiveness and effectiveness as church schools and be able to provide evidence to substantiate their judgements. In order to support schools with these elements of their self-evaluation, the Church of England Education Office (CEEO) has created a Self-Evaluation Schedule and form to facilitate this process. It is important for schools to use these tools to explore thoroughly the full implications of each of the inspection strands. Schools should not be constrained by the form if they have other evidence they want to include. Evidence provided for an inspector does not have to be in the CEEO format, another form of presentation can be chosen.

The Report - the SIAMS inspection report will contain clear judgement statements, using the four terms, excellent, good, requires improvement or ineffective as a church school, in response to each of the above questions.

Timing - the SIAMS inspection schedule is based on the date and overall judgement of a school’s last section 48 inspection. Schools will usually be inspected five years after their last inspection. As far as is possible, inspections are arranged to take place in the same term (working on a three-term year) as the last one.
Outline of the SIAMS process

In the Oxford Diocese schools are contacted by the diocese on a Monday for inspection the following week

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Contracts and letters are sent to school
Contracts should be signed by the chair of governors and inspector prior to the inspection

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Inspector and school liaise on most suitable date for inspection,
documents sent from school to inspector
The inspector will request a limited range of information – SIAMS self-evaluation, Ofsted self-evaluation and report, and attainment/progress data. The inspector will scrutinise the school’s website before the inspection day. Based on this information, the inspector will write a pre-inspection plan which will identify areas of focus for the inspection.

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ODBE informed of agreed inspection date

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Pre-inspection plan sent to school from inspector
This ensures that everyone involved will be aware of and understand the lines of inquiry the inspector wants to follow, the people the inspector wants to meet, lessons and acts of worship to observe and documents to read.

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Inspection
Verbal feedback will be given at the end of the day. The inspectors will give judgements according to the inspection handbook. Note that these must be kept confidential as they are subject to possible amendment as a result of the critical read process undertaken by the diocesan report reader.

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Draft report sent to diocese for quality assurance (critical read process) within five working days of the inspection

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Draft report returned to inspector with any comments within three working days. This process may then be repeated if amendments are made

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Draft report sent to school for factual accuracy check and returned within two working days

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Final report sent to school within 15 working days of completion of the inspection

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Inspection report published by the Church of England Education Office

If you have any questions or concerns about SIAMS please speak to your Link Adviser in the first instance.
The process itself is administered by Tracy Richardson, School Support Officer tracy.richardson@oxford.anglican.org 01865 208242
Religious Education

If our society is to nurture fuller and wiser understanding of religions and beliefs in the contemporary world, it is vital that the available academically-informed understanding be drawn upon.


We understand church schools to be places in which faith is taken seriously, therefore special importance is given to religious education. The Church of England Vision for Education (2016) bears this out, ‘In Church schools the deeply Christian foundation for this vision will be seen explicitly in teaching and learning both in RE and across the curriculum...’ (p3)

Whilst a greater emphasis will be placed upon the Christian faith in RE, it is important for young people to learn about other faiths as well. As noted previously the vision document points out that education should be ‘hospitable to diversity, respects freedom of religion and belief, and encourages others to contribute from the depths of their own traditions and understandings.’ (p3)

The Church School of the Future (2012) sets out an even more ambitious and clear vision ...

’in the long term, there needs to be an explicit expectation that religious education is a priority and must be made a focus of both initial teacher education and professional development. The Church should not be satisfied until every Church school is outstanding in this subject.’ (3.10)

The ODBE is concerned to support schools in planning, teaching, monitoring and assessment of RE. For this reason, a specialist RE Adviser, Anne Andrews, is retained. Her role is to organise courses, produce support materials and be available to individual schools and clusters of schools for training and support. The ODBE has also produced a scheme of work for RE, which meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabi and those of the more recent Statement of Entitlement produced by the Church of England Education Office. A wide range of support materials are available on the RE pages of the diocesan website14.

RE in different schools

RE in Voluntary Controlled schools must be planned in accordance with the requirements of the local authority’s agreed syllabus for RE (LAS) – as in community schools
RE in Voluntary Aided schools and academies is the responsibility of the governors in accordance with the school’s trust deed or funding agreement. It is the strong recommendation of the Diocesan Board of Education that VA schools plan RE courses based upon their local authority’s RE syllabus. A diocesan scheme of work is available free of charge to all schools in the service level agreement.

The agreed syllabi in our diocese are the responsibility of Local Authority Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACREs). The diocese has played a significant role in the development of Locally Agreed Syllabi through the RE Adviser who works closely with the SACREs in the diocese.

The following are some of the positive dimensions of learning which are directly promoted by RE.

RE provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

14 RE in Schools  https://www.oxford.anglican.org/schools/religious-education
RE develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views. This enables them to understand the ways in which faiths and life-stances have answered these challenging questions.

RE enhances pupils’ awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, as well as the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

RE offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.

RE encourages pupils to explore their own beliefs and questions of meaning.

RE challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

RE encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging.

RE enables pupils to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community.

RE has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning.

RE enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, especially those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own.

RE promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.

The key recommendations of the ODBE with respect to RE include the following:

- that governors in Voluntary Aided schools adopt their local agreed syllabus for RE;
- that the standards of teaching, learning and achievement in RE in Church of England schools are at the highest level;
- that at least 5% of curriculum time is devoted to RE; this is in addition to the requirement for collective worship.
- that Christianity occupies two-thirds of the RE curriculum;
- that appropriate teaching about other faiths and world views is given in all church schools;
- RE should be taught using an enquiry based model and it should aim to promote religious and theological literacy;
- that all pupils are entered for an accredited qualification in Religious Studies at the end of Key Stage 4;
- that all students in the 16 – 19 age groups follow a suitable course in RE and A Level Religious Studies is offered to all; and
- that staff are supported and given access to high quality CPD.
Collective Worship

All schools must provide an act of worship for pupils every day. Arrangements for the act of collective worship in both VA and VC schools are made by the governors after consulting the headteacher, taking account of the Trust Deed.

As before The Way Ahead has something to offer about this worship:

‘In a Church school, the offer of a Christian understanding of the world and the place of humanity in it will be reflected in worship. In particular, it will be reflected in the everyday life of the school, quietly respectful of the beliefs of others and of other faiths, but confident in its own faith.’ (3.28)

The Vision for Education adds:

The Church of England is (along with many others) a liturgical tradition, and encountering its worship is essential to understanding it and the God in whom we believe. The seasons of the church year rehearse the drama of Jesus Christ in the context of the larger biblical narrative, and they offer a means through which that narrative can be grasped and inhabited. Collective worship in schools, including prayer, reading and reflecting on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity, provide a vital opportunity for this. (p10)

Collective worship should be central to the life of the school and thus needs:

- to be coherent with the school’s vision and mission statement;
- to be well organised and planned;
- opportunities for everyone (including staff) to participate as well as just attend; and
- an environment conducive to worship.

As an educational experience worship should:

- take account of the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of pupils;
- extend the learning opportunities offered to pupils;
- reflect what goes on across the curriculum – not just RE; and
- be inclusive, open to everyone.

Worship in church schools, is collective worship as distinct from corporate worship. The school community is engaged in an activity which, no matter how valuable, is a legal obligation. It is not a faith community - people sharing one faith who have chosen to gather together for worship. The organisation and language of this collective worship should allow for different levels of response. Church school worship should invite not coerce. All schools have pupils with widely differing experiences of worship, some will go to church regularly, others will have no such experiences beyond school and still others will belong to and worship according to the precepts of another faith. It is our task to provide pupils with a secure context in which to experience Christian worship and reflect upon the impact of worship in their own lives and the lives of the people around them.

Collective worship can include material from faiths other than Christianity; for instance, many schools mark the major festivals of other faiths. Recognising them is part of the general religious and cultural education of pupils and is important in recognising and valuing members of other faiths in the school. The inclusion of such experiences does not mean the worship itself becomes, for example, Muslim or Hindu worship.
Collective worship is a powerful opportunity to provide for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For this to be successful worship should:

- be concerned with the worship of God;
- have a sense of occasion;
- invite participation and leadership from pupils;
- provide an opportunity for participants to explore their inner feelings;
- provide opportunities for individuals and the community to share matters of importance;
- celebrate beliefs, values and ideals;
- respect the integrity of all individuals, valuing everyone as a child of God;
- enable participants to engage in a range of experiences;
- promote the values of the school and explore the rationale for them;
- foster a sense of community and belonging;
- be varied in style and include different forms of expression eg art, music, story, dance;
- celebrate pupils’ talents; and
- make use of symbols and imagery.

Worship should also give opportunities to explore the traditions of the church, especially the Anglican heritage - all Anglican schools should reflect some of these essential features.

These features include:

- using the Bible as a source book;
- reflecting upon Christian symbols and their use in worship;
- observing the cycle of the Anglican year: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost;
- the centrality of prayer -
  - using collects and other formal varieties of prayer,
  - identifying a collection of prayers for regular use – including children’s own prayers,
  - learning traditional responses and prayers which express the essential beliefs of Christians throughout the ages;
- providing opportunities to discover the value of contemplation, meditation and silence within the context of Christian worship;
- experiencing the bond of community which encompasses gender, age, race and religious opinion, for example through the range of visitors invited to lead or attend school worship; and
- sharing in a commitment to dialogue with other faiths, shown in the welcome we offer to all pupils and the celebration of shared values and beliefs.
Premises Support

The diocese has a proven track record in delivering high quality support to schools and academies in respect of buildings.

VA schools should visit resources on managing premises and capital projects available via the ODBE website\[15\]. Main contact: Jane Maharry: jane.maharry@oxford.anglican.org or 01865 208276.

ODST and ODBST member schools should contact Tom Fry: tom.fry@oxford.anglican.org or 01865 208259. Other academy schools should contact their MAT and follow appropriate guidance.

VC Schools should contact their relevant local authority as they have responsibility for premises and capital matters.

HR Support and Advice

The Board of Education has its own HR service for schools, offered as an additional service at very competitive prices under the SLA as an alternative to your local authority.

We reflect your values to find solutions that are right for your school and work closely with your School Link Adviser so we know your school needs really well.

We offer:
- a prompt, personal, bespoke and comprehensive advice service;
- help with restructures, recruitment and policies;
- visits to your school and attendance at hearings and meetings;
- assistance with consultation with staff, unions and professional associations;
- production of new contracts and contractual changes reflecting your local terms and conditions;

and
- newsletters, updates and free places on our HR training courses.

Please see the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for more details or contact Tim Barnett on 01865 208763, email tim.barnett@oxford.anglican.org.

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\[15\] Premises [https://www.oxford.anglican.org/schools/premises/](https://www.oxford.anglican.org/schools/premises/)
Academies

It is our key aim that the values of Christian collaboration, co-operation and respect be embodied in any prospective academy and that these principles should govern both policy and process right from the start.

We want to work alongside schools to find a structure to enable you to move forward, given the continued stance of the Government to use academies as the basis for all future school provision. We are committed to the sustaining of a clear Christian ethos in our schools and endeavour to work collaboratively to ensure that any move to academy status retains that ethos.

We are aware of the need for schools to work increasingly collaboratively with other local schools regardless of status or category and seek to enable appropriate mechanisms for this. There are now 16 multi-academy trusts (MATs) across the diocese with the ability to accommodate church schools, each with their own characteristics. The MATs are made up of range of schools secondary and primary, church and community and there are also regional MATs which have adapted their governance model to accommodate church schools.

There are two diocesan multi-academy trusts: the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST) and the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST). Both are open to schools across the diocese (ODST for schools in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, and ODBST for schools across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes).

We expect the number of MATs to rise in the future and we are always in discussion with local groups who wish to move forward in this way. Any school considering establishing a MAT as an option should speak to a member of the diocesan team at the earliest opportunity for guidance on diocesan requirements as well as to explore support services for your group on this journey.
The Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust

The Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST) is the largest Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) in Oxfordshire and is in the top 1% for size, based on number of schools, of MATs in England. ODST is a MAT in the family of the Oxford Diocese, founded to serve the needs of both church and community schools. As the maintaining authority, we are responsible for ensuring our schools are safe, effective, welcoming places of learning where standards are high, and all can thrive and work towards fulfilling their potential.

ODST is open to schools in the Oxfordshire and historic Berkshire and currently consists of more than 30 schools across Oxfordshire and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. We have significant primary expertise, with all our schools covering at least some part of the primary phase; we have one middle school. 88% of our schools are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted (based on Oct 2018 data.)

ODST is organised into five geographical hubs to support collaboration, promote professional development at school level, and supporting our vision for a community of schools working together for the common good. The central team, currently based at Church House Oxford, deals with finance, HR, a school improvement and administration. We work closely with ODBE staff who provide capital bid and project management services and with the ODBE school link advisers to deliver the best possible support to schools.

ODST is committed to delivering an excellent education which meets the needs of all learners. We are proud of our track record of delivering improvements in schools experiencing challenge, and in supporting our strong schools to continue to develop and to share their expertise with others. The Trust’s key values are identified as:

- Inclusivity
- Empowerment
- Community
- Abundant living
- Service

Our Inclusive approach ensures that ODST schools meet the needs of all pupils; some highlights include:

- Our caring, child-centred ethos with a focus on mental health and wellbeing supports especially vulnerable learners; and
- Excellent Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision led by an experienced ODST SEN Co-ordinator ensures timely provision of EHCPs where appropriate and supports individual class teachers;

Our belief in Empowerment encourages local decision making; for example, our curriculum policy, which devolves responsibility for curriculum planning to individual schools.

Our established links with the local church Community give us an outstanding starting point for local community engagement which encourages children to think about others and serve.

Central to the ODST offer to pupils is our vision for Abundant Living. We are committed to a curriculum which engenders life-long curiosity and love of learning, in a culture of openness and creativity.

Our emphasis on Service enables each of our pupils to consider their place as a global citizen, and our curricula include elements which encourage responsible stewardship of the environment, empathy and care for others and help all pupils play an appropriate part in their local community and its activities.

For more information please contact Terri Royds: Executive Assistant - Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust terri.royds@oxford.anglican.org 01865 208286
The Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST) was established in September 2017 to provide an option for any school across the Buckingham Episcopal area (which covers Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes) seeking a MAT solution, this includes primary and secondary; VA, VC or community schools.

ODBST is a charitable company limited by guarantee. No one can make any money from the company, it does not pay dividends and makes no profit. The company is linked to the Diocese of Oxford through the appointment of its Members, who are all volunteers, acting as the ‘owners’ of the company.

The Trust operates, with a small central team delivering services, such as school improvement, HR, finance, health and safety, premises, admissions and governor support. In addition to this, schools in the Trust continue to benefit from all the support and training available from the ODBE through the SLA.

ODBST is rooted in Christian values; it is committed to educational excellence and celebrates the calling to serve pupils, staff, parents and the local community. Each school within the Trust is understood to have its own unique qualities, which it is supported to continue to deliver.

In ODBST, decisions about schools are made by the local governing body, who are accountable to the Board of Trustees. Schools are supported through a combination of high quality school improvement support and partnership working across the Trust.

At present there are six schools in ODBST. The trust is also working with more schools who would like to make an application to join. Schools wishing to be considered for the next wave of conversions are encouraged to contact us at the earliest opportunity.

For more information please contact Susie Morrissey, Chief Operating Officer ODBST
susie.morrissey@oxford.anglican.org
Tel: 01865 208755

September 2018
Excellence in Schools

Excellence in Schools is the new Oxford Diocesan Board of Education’s training and support programme.

As our schools continue to provide the very best for our children, it is vital that we support and develop staff to enable them to grow in skill and increase their understanding of school effectiveness and the role they can play within it.

Excellence in Schools

- Enables individuals to develop their knowledge and understanding of key areas and responsibilities.
- Enables staff to network and share with others across the Diocese.
- Allows schools to train as a team to improve effectiveness and meet whole school priorities.
- Supports and develops all staff, from experienced leaders to those who are newly entering the profession.

cost

Excellence in Schools courses are individually priced and details can be found in the brochure.

Schools in the SLA normally pay a reduced rate.

To book a place please click on the hyperlink attached to each course information box throughout this programme. You can request to be invoiced in the payment method page.

contact

If you have any queries, please email training@oxford.anglican.org or call Donna Finlay on 01865 208272.