



Birmingham Diocesan Education Service Newsletter

January 2017

Important Update from Fr Jonathan

Dear Colleagues in Catholic education

Welcome to the first DES newsletter of 2017.

This provides me with an opportunity to offer an update for you on the Diocesan Academy Strategy. The Strategy has been established on the grounds of reasonableness. The Trustees of the Archdiocese have requested that all schools under the Diocesan Trust Deed work towards becoming “academy ready.” This means that the Archdiocese sees the long term future of its schools as forming and being part of a multi academy company with other Catholic schools in their local area. To support this, the DES has requested that the governing bodies of our schools in their local areas begin to work together in dialogue and collaboration. The task that is required of them is to bring together some local proposals which enable schools to create, or join a multi academy company. I can confirm that this expectation still stands.

Unlike the forced academy conversions which are supported by the DfE, the Archdiocese has not imposed a strict time line on schools to bring this about. The DES has asked that by 31st May 2017 they receive an update on the work being undertaken at local level which would include proposals on potential groupings of schools. The approach that is being undertaken is one which gives appropriate local consultation and an opportunity to bring local and reasonable proposals for future multi academy companies. I confirm that this expectation still holds good.

Across the Archdiocese there has been a high levels of consultation and dialogue taking place. The DES has been very happy to support this by attending meetings of governing bodies and taking this opportunity to provide additional information and guidance to schools. Schools have also found support from many of the multi academy companies already in existence in the Archdiocese.

At the Headteacher briefings held at Coleshill before Christmas, I was conscious of the need to address some of the anxieties and concerns that have been raised by some of the primary headteachers. The DES recognises that change can indeed be difficult and some colleagues may have reservations about their school becoming an academy. I am confident that building constructive dialogue and working patterns at a local level will help us all to move forward. As headteachers you have an important part to play in this work as you support your local governing body and work closely with the wider Catholic community and the Archdiocese.

Finally, the Archdiocese is proud of the great work of Catholic education being undertaken in its schools. On behalf of the DES I thank you for the contribution that you make and I ask for your cooperation and support as a family of schools as we move forward to secure, protect and improve Catholic education for the future.

With prayers and best wishes

Fr. Jonathan Veasey
Director
Diocesan Education Service

Message from The Director of Education – Adam Hardy

Welcome back to school and I hope you have had a restful and enjoyable time over Christmas.

As always we start back to another busy term with a lot going on in schools and education generally. Although we can give you the basic information in our newsletter we rely on schools to visit our website. We are now circulating our newsletter to headteachers, chairs and clerks (to circulate to all governors) and hopefully soon to all parish priests.

Further to Father Jonathan's message above, and in accordance with the wishes of the Trustees, governors and directors have been asked to submit a simple plan of their actions thus far in moving their schools towards being 'academy ready'. They are also requested to identify what their next steps will be.

In order to assist with this the DES will make available a simple template for completion by governors indicating what actions have been taken, what is planned and a provisional time line for this to happen. This will be available later this term.

By this time schools will hopefully have identified their preferred groupings and entered into a constructive dialogue with their local schools at headteacher level and governor/director level.

The Trustees have selected two legal partners to support schools through the academy conversion process. These firms have a proven track record in this work, they have extensive experience of working with Catholic schools and are very competitive with their costings. These firms have agreed that they will attend meetings of schools within the proposed groupings, to deliver presentations to assist schools in improving their knowledge and understanding of academies within the context of the DES strategy, as well as explaining the details of the conversion process. Details will be provided at the headteacher briefings.

More detailed information will also be available at our headteacher briefings at the end of February.

Following the successful launch of the headteacher briefings last term we have, and the very positive feedback we have received, we have taken on board your suggestions and will be seeking to deliver specific sessions on: school finances, HR updates, and school leadership in addition to the usual DFE, RSC and Ofsted updates. Following your feedback we aim to continue to use a variety of external providers, and allow more time for headteacher colleagues to discuss the content of the presentations. Further information and booking form below.

As more details begin to surface about the National funding formula it is becoming clear that schools will be facing increasing challenges in terms of finances. This looming funding crisis is being scrutinised at both diocesan level and national level with a view to establish how we can best advise and support schools in order to secure continued provision of Catholic education in all of our schools.

In the meantime the DES is having to deal with an increasing number of LAs that have expressed grave concerns around the current and future financial position of some of our schools, which may result in LA intervention. It is imperative that under these circumstances schools keep us informed of their situation, especially if they are having to implement deficit recovery plans.

During the course of this term we will be providing more information on the development of diocesan proposals to provide professional services to all of our schools including a bespoke HR service and possibly a financial monitoring and advisory service, as well as legal support. More information will be available at the headteacher briefings and through the Strategic partners section on the website.

Over the next few weeks all schools should be aiming to complete and return their CES census. If you have any queries the helpline is available from 6/2/17 (as instructed on the letter from the CES) or you can contact Rebecca Tonks at the DES on 01675 464755 extn.110 or email r.tonks@bdes.org.uk.

Wishing you all every success for 2017.

Adam Hardy
Director of Education

RE and Catholic Life

Primary Update

Catholic Schools Pupil Profile

This half-term we return to **Grateful & Generous**.

This can be linked to the Church's Cycle of Prayer which includes prayers for the sick and those who care for them <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Cycle/WinterCP.shtml> especially around the Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes (February 11). Our prayers for carers should include many of our children and young people who are carers for family members.

On Feb 2 we celebrate the Presentation and remember how Mary & Joseph gave thanks to God for the birth of their son and Simeon's declaration of Jesus as 'a light for all nations.'

Christian Unity Week 18-25 Jan.

Day 2 of the three day NQT Course

Starting to teach in a Catholic School and Learning more about the Catholic Faith

Monday 23 January 2017 (Moat House, Acton Trussell Stafford),

Tuesday 24 January 2017 (Edgbaston Cricket Ground, Birmingham – partnership schools),

Please note change of venue

Wednesday 25 January 2017 (DBH – non-partnership schools),

Thursday 26 January 2017 (St. Gregory the Great, Oxford)

Please contact BCPP if you are not already booked on this <http://www.bcpp.org.uk/contact-the-birmingham-catholic-primary-partnership.php>

Rainbows

What does Rainbows training offer?

- High quality training in bereavement and loss for members of staff where Rainbows programmes are to be introduced.
- Practical, realistic and sensitive guidance for schools to review or develop their own bereavement policy.
- Specific training for facilitators and coordinators of the Rainbows age-related programmes and on-going support to affirm and advise colleagues in their important work with those who grieve.

At BDES, there are **two trained Rainbows Registered Directors** for delivering the programme to staff.

Please contact us for further information.

Rebecca Brolly: Rainbows- 6 years + (the **primary** school programme) r.brolly@bdes.org.uk

Becca Roseman: Spectrum – the **secondary** school programme b.roseman@bdes.org.uk

The Life of Christ

A unique experience for staff and pupils to witness a spectacular performance of the Life of Christ:

<http://www.wintershall-education.com/>

Secondary Update

RE Partnership Meetings

The second RE partnership meetings will take place in the spring term. These are extremely important meetings for Heads of RE as we work through the new A level and GCSE specifications. Please ensure a member of staff from your school attends. The meetings start at 1pm for a 3pm finish. The dates are as follows:

11 January 2017 – Coventry and Area RE Partnership, St Peter's, Solihull

17 January 2017 – South Diocese RE Partnership, St Bede's, Redditch

19 January 2017 – Birmingham RE Partnership at Don Bosco House

26 January 2017 – Black Country RE Partnership, Our Lady & St Chad's, Wolverhampton

31 January 2017 – Stafford RE Partnership, St Margaret Ward, Stoke on Trent

2 February 2017 – Oxfordshire RE Partnership, St Gregory the Great, Oxford

PICCLS Partnerships

Building on the success of the PICCLS conference the DES will be holding PICCLS partnership meetings at Don Bosco House in the spring term. These are crucial meetings as we continue to develop the Catholic life of our schools. Please ensure your school's PICCLS attends this meeting. The meetings will begin at 8:30am with a 12:00pm finish. The dates are as follows:

01 March 2017 - PICCLS Partnership at DBH, Coleshill (Black Country & Coventry)

07 March 2017 - PICCLS Partnership at DBH, Coleshill (Oxford & Birmingham)

14 March 2017 - PICCLS Partnership at DBH, Coleshill (Stafford & South Diocese)

Catholic life INSET

The Secondary DES team have been delighted over the Autumn term to deliver a number of INSET days for schools on Catholic life and ethos. These days have been extremely positive with excellent feedback from all staff. We have run them for both individual schools as well as across MACs. If you are planning to hold a Catholic life INSET day please do contact the Daniel Vince, Secondary school adviser, at the DES and we would be delighted to support, plan and/or deliver the INSET in your school.

All INSET is part of your annual charge for services and therefore there will be no additional cost.

Kenelm Youth Trust

The Kenelm Youth Trust has a few exciting initiatives to enrich the spiritual lives of your students, connecting them to the wider community of the Church:

- Flame 2017 - 11th March - A national gathering of 10,000 young Catholics (Year 10+) at Wembley arena. Inspiring talks, music led by Matt Redman. A really unique experience of being Church. To book tickets and coach travel (£35 all inclusive) email maria.bracken@kenelmyouthtrust.org.uk
- Hidden treasure - 28th April - 1st May - Taize comes to Birmingham. An exciting ecumenical gathering in the heart of our diocese. To join in visit http://www.taize.fr/en_article20918.html or email erin.doughty@kenelmyouthtrust.org.uk to keep up to date.

Kenelm would also like to invite school staff, parents and governors to join us in exploring youth ministry in our diocese at the following two initiatives:

- Kenelm on the road - discover more about the work of Kenelm in your area, find out about exciting employment opportunities and ways to volunteer and support this vital ministry.
- Holy Daring - 25th March - Youth Ministry Conference. Join Archbishop Bernard Longley, David Wells and a dynamic line up of workshop leaders from across the country as we explore a vision of youth ministry. This is going to be an EPIC day! 2 free places per school (£25 per additional place) email kristi.doughty@kenelmyouthtrust.org.uk to book. Full details on our website for both of these initiatives www.bcys.co.uk

Vocations

Following on from the successful national events for both men and young women, under the banner of Invocation, the diocesan vocations office is offering a free event just for young men, aged 14-18, next April, to be soon followed by a similar event just for young women.

Face2Face is a one-day, Christ-centred, prayer fuelled immersion in Catholic teachings on leadership, evangelisation and discipleship inspired by the life and witness of some awesome and inspiring real men of faith.

This encounter will seek to provide a place where young men can come and have their faith strengthened, and be encouraged and equipped to live as disciples by responding to the call of vocation in their life.

This impactful event will feature talks and workshops that address head-on the challenges of the young adult world in an environment where participants not only encounter Jesus in the sacraments and in music and prayer

but in one another in community.

We have a great line up, including local and world class speakers from overseas. They'll be talks, workshops, praise and worship, peer to peer engagement, prayer and encounter.

Please as school leaders can we promote this fantastic event and encourage members of our school communities to attend. "I am sure that this conference will bring inspiration and renewed confidence to the young men who attend, helping them to discern the call of Christ in their lives" Archbishop Bernard Longley

For more information please click on the following link: <http://www.vocations.org.uk/face2face-event.html>

Leadership and School Improvement

Leadership

We were delighted with the number of delegates who attended our Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher induction days in the Autumn term and we invite them to return to Don Bosco house on the following dates this half term.

1st February – Deputy Headteachers' Induction Day 3

8th February – New Headteachers' Induction Day 3

Executive Headship and Head of Schools

The DES is currently undertaking a pilot training programme for Executive Headteachers led by the Future Leaders Trust and delivered in conjunction with the CES and other dioceses across the country. This model of school leadership is growing across the diocese and the country and there is a need to prepare and train school leaders wanting to apply for these posts.

The aim will be to use this training to inform the future provision of suitable CPD for Executive Headteachers and Heads of School. More information will be available in our headteacher briefings.

Headteacher Briefings

Our next headteacher briefing days will be later this term, please choose one of the dates to attend:

27th February, 28th February, 2nd March and 3rd March

And complete the following booking form: <http://w.pfrms.co/20j7y>

Annual Leadership Conference

During the course of this half term Headteachers will also receive an invitation to the Annual Leadership Conference which will take place on:

Friday 30th June 2017 at the ICC in Birmingham

This year guest speakers include: The Rev Fathers Timothy Radcliffe, Adrian Porter and Dennis McBride. We will also be joined by Chris Lubbe former bodyguard of Nelson Mandela who shares with us his journey from Apartheid to Truth and Reconciliation.

Please note that the Headteachers of all schools who have signed up to the DES Annual Charge will be offered a place at the conference at no cost. Any additional places requested by schools are allocated on a first come first served basis, at a charge of £100 per delegate.

Annual Headteacher National Retreat – 15-16 June 2017

Further details available at <http://www.educarem.org.uk/headteachers-national-retreat/>

School Improvement

We are delighted to welcome Justine Lomas as School Improvement Advisor to the DES team. Justine was Headteacher, until 31st December 2016, at St Anne's Weeping Cross, an Outstanding Catholic Primary School in Staffordshire. Justine is also a current trained OFSTED Inspector. Justine will work with a wide range of partners, including Local Authorities and the RSC office, and other members of the DES team, to help school leaders needing support to improve educational outcomes for children in Diocesan schools. This includes undertaking reviews in schools where they are needed or requested.

Ofsted Inspections and 'Coasting Schools'

Justine is already arranging visits to schools that have requested support, or have been identified as needing support. Her help will typically involve supporting schools in preparation for Ofsted or with action plans after inspection. Following the issue of a number of letters to coasting schools in the diocese Justine is also now assisting with the drafting of responses to letters from the RSC and accompanying DFE officers on school visits when they take place,

Contact details: j.lomas@bdes.org.uk or telephone 01675464755 extn111

S48 Inspections

Please see the BDES website for the **S48 NEWSLETTER NO.10 January 2017** which includes key updates about:

FRAMEWORK FOR INSPECTION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS SECTION 48 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A summary of the grade descriptors available for schools to use for self-evaluation in conjunction with the full September 2016 Section 48 Framework.

OFSTED INSPECTION

Information about school's responsibility to arrange section 48 inspections.

AUTUMN 2016 MONITORING VISITS

Information about the key strengths and areas for development regarding Catholic life, collective worship and RE.

Admissions and Governance

Admissions

May we remind all schools that the 2018/2019 admissions policy must be determined by 28th February 2017. The final policy must then be sent to Rebecca Tonks here at the Diocese (r.tonks@bdes.org.uk), the local authority's admissions department and published on the school's website by 15th March 2017. Schools are also required by legislation to publish the annual appeals timetable on the school's website by 28th February. A template for this will be sent to all schools at the beginning of February.

Governance

The DFE have just released the newly updated Governance Handbook.

This revised handbook can be found at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/582868/Governance_Handbook_-_January_2017.pdf

This is an excellent source of guidance and information for schools, Governors, Academy Representatives, Directors and Clerks. You may find it helpful to print this off and have a copy for reference in school.

At the Headteacher's briefings last term, your attention was drawn to the Catholic Education Service's new annual Self-Evaluation of Governing Bodies. The template for this Self-Evaluation is now on the governance page of the BDES website at www.bdes.org.uk

Schools are strongly encouraged to complete this annual Self-Evaluation which will highlight strengths in your school's governance as well as areas for future development and provide sound evidence at future inspections on how governance effectively contributes to leadership and management.

Governance Training

The DES is continuing to develop its Governance support for all Schools in the Archdiocese. All newly appointed Foundation Governors are currently invited to attend a one day induction course at the DES. We are looking to extend this training to other Governors in the future and more detail will be available later this term.

Pilot of a Chairs Mentoring Programme

We are working closely with our two Catholic National Leaders of Governance John Pennington and Yvonne Salter Wright. National Leaders of Governance are designated by the National College for Teaching and Leadership to support the development of Governing Bodies and, in turn, the strategic leadership and improvement of our Schools. In conjunction with John and Yvonne, we are looking to pilot the offer of a 'Chairs Mentoring Programme'. Initially this programme would be offered to a maximum of 6 Chairs (this academic year) and we will then review this. Whilst further details are to be decided the programme would include:

- Discussion on key priorities for development
- Observation of meetings (if required)
- Strategic Leadership
- Understanding of roles/responsibilities
- Periodic meetings/telephone conversations to discuss progress

The above is an indicative list only and the key would be for the Chair to agree a 'tailored' programme to suits his/her needs with John and/or Yvonne. If you're Chair wishes to express an interest in this pilot programme please contact Rebecca Tonks (r.tonks@bdes.org.uk) in the first instance and by 17th February 2017.

Finance and Building

DES Annual Charge

We can inform you that there will be no change to the DES annual charge to schools for the foreseeable future. This should help all schools with their budget planning over the forthcoming year.

EFA e-Bulletin

We recently forwarded to you the latest EFA bulletin. You can also read it [here](#)

Insurance Update

We are currently exploring the possibility of VA schools being able to access a different insurance provider where it would be beneficial in terms of cover as well as being cost effective. Similarly, the Trustees are also considering building insurance options for academies, including the DfE's RPA scheme. Further details and information about insurance will be made available very soon and presented at the next headteacher briefings.

Strategic Partners

The DES is continuing to develop a list of strategic partners covering a wide range of services and educational resources for schools which we will be making available on our website in the near future and will update headteachers at the forthcoming briefing sessions.

Statutory Testing & Maintenance of School Buildings update

One of the key areas of Health & Safety in schools is statutory testing and maintenance checks - these are required by law. The Diocesan Education Service will on behalf of trustees be carrying out a monitoring audit of all schools within the diocese during this term. This process will be explained at the headteacher briefings.

Additional Funding

Please check the website at <http://www.bdes.org.uk/funding-updates.html>

Apprenticeship Levy

From April 2017, all employers with a pay bill of more than £3 million will be required to pay an apprenticeship levy of 0.5%. This may include some of our larger schools and MACs. For further details please click on the electronic link below:

<http://amazingapprenticeships.com/wp-content/uploads/Briefing-for-schools-Apprenticeship-Levy-and-Public-Sector-Duty-09-01-17....pdf>

Editor's Note:

This email has been sent to heads and principals, and to chairs and clerks of governing boards. Email addresses and personnel are continuously changing, so I would be grateful if heads and principals could check that their chair has received this and vice versa. Please contact me if you discover someone has not received this and give me their correct email address.

r.potter@bdes.org.uk