



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON
EDUCATION SERVICE

THE ALPHA BETA

The news and information bulletin
from the A&B Education Service



MARCH 2021

Director's Letter

Dear Colleagues,

Who could have believed it is already March 2021? As I write the sun is shining, birds are nesting, daffodils are coming out and Spring is in the air. What a welcome lift after a harsh Winter!

I hope you managed to make time to rest and relax over the February break after another unbelievably demanding half term in school. What you have contended with – and achieved – over the past twelve months is nothing short of remarkable. I know how much you were looking forward to the children returning to school on Monday 8th March and how excited the children would be to see their friends and teachers again. A return to some semblance of normality was much needed - what a journey we have all been on over the past year - and we have not yet arrived at our final destination!

Speaking of journeys, we are of course currently making our way through Lent, revisiting key moments in Jesus's public ministry. A few Sundays ago, John's Gospel told us that not long after the start of his public Ministry, a furious Jesus drove the merchants' sheep and oxen out of the Temple and angrily overturned the money changers' stalls, rebuking them for "turning my Father's house into a market."

Like the Catholic schools of today, the Temple was intended as a place of worship, of coming together and of learning. Mary and Joseph brought the child Jesus to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover each year. Jewish men were required to attend the religious celebrations surrounding Passover in Jerusalem, making the pilgrimage to worship at the Temple. At the age of twelve Jesus could take his place as an adult

male, coming together with the other men for the Passover feast at the Temple. Three days later, a distraught Mary and Joseph found the missing twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple courts, engrossed in intellectual debate with the teachers of the Law.

Jesus not only learnt in the Temple as a boy; he also taught there on occasions as a man. An ancient temple was not supposed to be like a quiet cathedral. It was loud and bustling - and meant to be so. Yet Jesus angrily lambasted the Temple's merchants and money-changers. In a ministry marked by gentleness, mercy and kindness, this incident stands out. Both the selling of animals for sacrifices and the payment of the temple tax were activities required by Jewish law and central to the temple's functions. Many travellers found it easier to purchase the required sacrifice once they had arrived at Jerusalem to keep the Passover instead of bringing it with them. There was always the chance the animal may become unclean on the journey, causing their sacrifice to be null and void. The money-changers were there to convert various currencies into one standard coinage, the Tyrian shekel, that was used for the payment of the annual temple tax.

When Jesus lost his temper, he was angered not by the noise around him but by the mistaken priorities of those inside the Temple. Overlooking its role as a place where people assembled to worship and study, the Temple's merchants and money-changers were treating it solely as a marketplace for their own advancement, not God's. They had lost all sense of reverence, purpose or perspective.

That Gospel reading is a helpful and timely reminder for us of the importance of balance. In Catholic education we pride ourselves on home, school and parish links; triangulating the relationship effectively helps the school-based community coalesce. I am

always struck by the fact that the most successful Catholic schools are those which are driven by a deep-seated desire to nurture children and staff alike in a Christ-centred community, where all members are encouraged to worship, learn and grow together. There is a healthy symbiosis between all three elements; each facet is interwoven with others and all three are highly valued. When priorities are appropriate, everything else falls into place. In this way, Catholic schools' efforts to come together, worship and learn reflect the function of the Temple in Jesus's time.

Jesus tells us that wherever two or more are gathered in His name, He is with us; we can be confident therefore that the Father makes his home in school. Even in these most challenging of times, as children return once again after a year of scarcely imaginable disruption, and schools face unremitting pressure to make up for lost time, we must not lose our sense of reverence, purpose or perspective. The unremitting pressures of Ofsted and league tables create a highly competitive market, and in Catholic education, every one of us wants every member of our community to succeed - but not at all costs! As a diocesan family of schools, we must remain steadfast and true to our guiding principles and values, regardless of external pressures, because the disastrous alternative is to turn "my Father's house into a market."

As ever, may I extend heartfelt thanks to you, all staff and governors for all you are doing for the children, young people and families in your care.

Warmest wishes to you all,



Marie Ryan



CHOOSING A CATHOLIC SCHOOL - GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Choosing a school is one of the most important decisions parents will make on behalf of their child. The Diocese has wonderful state-funded Catholic primary and secondary schools, ensuring that children can benefit from vital initial teaching during the formative years of each pupil, through a smooth transfer to secondary education that will prepare them for life in Church and Society. Each school is a Catholic community in which Gospel values are taught and lived out by daily experience.

The Diocesan Education Service has produced guidance documents for parents and carers that outline the benefits of Catholic primary and secondary schools in Sussex and Surrey. The booklets list the schools' locations and contact details and take parents and carers through the school application process, including the importance of listing Catholic schools as their first preferences. These guidance leaflets are available for download or printing by parents, schools or parishes and can be found on the diocesan website [here >>>](#)



ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS - WHAT MUST BE POSTED ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

The statutory deadline for emailing the school's determined 2022-23 admission arrangements to the Local Authority and the Diocese **ended on 15 March 2021**. Thank you to schools for doing this.

The same statutory deadline applies for schools to post the determined 2022-23 admission arrangements on the school's website. BUT PLEASE NOTE it is not just 2022-23.

SCHOOLS MUST ENSURE THAT THEY HAVE THEIR DETERMINED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS (i.e. the Admissions Policy and the SIF) FOR **ALL THE RELEVANT YEARS** DISPLAYED ON THEIR WEBSITE. So:

- 2022-23 - The year the governors have recently set.
- 2021-22 - When the next cohort will be admitted to the school.
- 2020-21 - So any parents considering an in-year admission can find the applicable admission arrangements. This can be removed at the end of the summer term.

ADMISSION APPEAL ARRANGEMENTS DURING COVID-19 UPDATE

On 31st January 2021 the School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 came into force.

These regulations amended the School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. **The main effect of these Regulations is that the amendments to admission appeals arrangements due to coronavirus will continue to have effect until 30 September 2021.**

In summary, the 2020 regulations give admission authorities, local authorities and admission appeal panels more flexibility when dealing with appeals during the COVID-19 outbreak. The 2020 regulations permit appeal hearings to be heard by telephone or video conference. They also allow appeals to be decided on the basis of written submissions only. In addition, the statutory timescales have been amended.

The 2021 Regulations can be found [here >>>](#)

Coming Soon...

A BRIDGE

A Bridge is a forthcoming, well-being, prayer-based resource to support children as they transition from Year 6 into Year 7. It is based on the concept that in a time of change, the one constant in our lives is Jesus. There is nothing that we have experienced that Jesus did not experience with us and there is nothing in our future that we must face without Him. Jesus is the bridge that connects one stage in our lives to the next – primary to secondary school. Each session will explore a different way that we can turn to Jesus in prayer and learn how He can support us through all the challenges and joys that changes can bring. Each unit will be based on a different Catholic tradition of prayer, written with the guidance of individuals from our Diocese. Children will be led through an example of that prayer tradition and learn, through experience, how to turn to Jesus with all their needs, anxieties, joys and fears.

A prayer-based wellbeing resource for Transition



HOME LEARNING RESOURCES

Although children are now back in the classroom, we are keen to continue to provide resources that can be used to support the transition back to school and for those children who may still need to remain at home. **Lent topics** are available now on the diocesan website [here >>>](#) and **Pentecost resources** will follow shortly.

GOOD SHEPHERD EVENT

This year, the annual Good Shepherd Celebration Liturgy will be pre-recorded and accessed virtually. We will be working in partnership with the media team from Missio and those schools who had already prepared their drama, dance, music, or readings for last year's celebration. We will keep schools informed on how to access the virtual liturgy available from 16th June 2021.

RSHE CPD

We have recently seen the first of three sessions on the theology behind the RSHE teaching and learning in our Catholic schools. The sessions are being led by Pia Matthews who is a senior lecturer at St Mary's and the Director of Studies at St John's Seminary, Womersley, an institution affiliated to St Mary's. She gained a BA/MA in Law from Cambridge University, a BTh (Theology) from St John's Seminary and Surrey University, and an MA in Bioethics from St Mary's.

This first session was very well attended and there were opportunities for discussion in breakout rooms alongside opportunities to ask questions.

Session 2 will focus on how we 'flourish':

- Through the choices we make,
- Why we make them,
- What it is that informs us,
- And, where is God in the choices we make?

Again, there will be opportunities to discuss what this looks like in our schools. What do we hear, see, feel in school and outside school, and how does our curriculum choice support the individual needs of pupils/students? We will also look at, what do members of staff in a Catholic school need to learn more about if they are educating our young people and preparing them for life in modern Britain?

Booking details will be sent to schools and advertised on our website. Date to be confirmed.

NEW DIOCESAN WEBSITE

The new diocesan website is now live and brings together all diocesan departments (including the Education Service) onto the same website.

The diocesan website can be found at: www.abdiocese.org.uk
with the Education Service section at www.abdiocese.org.uk/education/home

The screenshot shows the website header for 'THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON'. The navigation menu includes: DIOCESE, FAITH, DEPARTMENTS, NEWS, and social media icons for Facebook and Twitter. A secondary menu lists: News Hub, Schools & Admissions, Governance, Academies, Catholic Life & RE, Catholic Leaders & CPD, Recruitment, and Inspection. The main content area features a large image of children's faces with the text 'EDUCATION SERVICE' and the tagline 'With Christ at the centre, we lead and serve in partnership to secure the long-term future of Catholic education.' Below this are three buttons: 'Find a School', 'School Business & Buildings', and 'Contact Us'. A 'DONATE' button is visible in the top right corner.

BUILDINGS & FINANCE MATTERS



Voluntary Aided Schools' Condition Allocation (VASCA)

We still have about a third of last year's project retentions showing as unclaimed – we do need receipts for the whole project to release these. Please talk to us if there is a problem in obtaining receipts.

Many of this year's projects are now complete with only retention to claim from next year's money. That includes many of the projects being funded from money only announced in July – well done to those schools; that is a great example of the value of keeping a project "warm" and ready to go if the opportunity arises.

We have now prioritised the bids for projects for next year and Diocesan Finance Committee have agreed that much of the expected funding can be committed now to schools in order of priority. Schools have all been notified of the position of their projects at this point. Final confirmation of the quantum of funding was not received last year until 15 April; once we have a firm figure then we will be able to commit to further projects.

Funding rates

The rate for Devolved Formula Capital Grant has been announced as being unchanged for the coming year. The unit rate for VASCA has not yet been announced; there is a modest overall increase in the capital budget but the Department has also announced an intention to move more towards a condition based prioritisation. It is not yet clear what that will mean in practice (and there is a suspicion that this is still not yet decided centrally).

Core revenue funding at LA level is now calculated using the National Funding Formula. The calculated amounts for each school are aggregated to give a total which is then re-distributed according to the local formula. It is interesting to see how the NFF has changed unit per-pupil rates for our schools – there is a spreadsheet [here >>>](#) with the calculation for every school in the country in it. Our schools cover a wide range of demographic areas; the lowest notional funding rate per pupil of £3,513 is the primary school in Haywards Heath and the highest rate of £5,314 is in Hollingdean, Brighton. You may find it interesting to compare the notional rate with the per-pupil funding you actually receive (there are separate workbooks for other elements of funding) – some of the notional funding is, of course, de-delegated for some services but not huge amounts.

There does not currently seem to be a firm timetable for the implementation of a "hard" NFF (applying the formula at school level) but it is stated policy to do so at some point in the future.

Covid issues affecting buildings

There have been further updates to DfE guidance [here >>>](#)

We continue to work with other dioceses and with the ISBL to ensure that the DfE understands the impact of the pandemic on school finances (and staff); in particular some schools have suffered a huge loss of income from lettings which is not being acknowledged in the remedial funding available. We have heard several heartening stories of schools working together to solve some logistical problems such as difficulties in obtaining cleaning materials; as this is written, schools are just re-opening fully so yet further change looms. Our thanks to those who cope with these changes so ably, and with so little fuss.

Buildings Insurance

Several schools have reviewed their insurances and concluded that the RPA is a more effective option than the traditional model of insuring buildings via the Catholic Insurance Service and contents etc through the Local Authority. If you do decide to go down that route, please let us know.

West Sussex Schools Forum has decided to de-delegate insurance funding entirely and has stated that it expects all maintained schools (including VA schools) to be enrolled in the LA scheme; we have made it clear that this is not acceptable to the Diocese (there is no guarantee that they will re-build a school if there is spare capacity in the area, whereas the RPA have committed to doing so). We have asked that Schools Forum find a solution to this at their next meeting – Brighton & Hove have followed this route for many years, but reimburse our schools an amount equivalent to the buildings element, and we have suggested this as one possible solution. We will let you know what transpires!

Reviewing the floor areas on the CIS schedule we have noted a couple of cases where new locks have been constructed but the CIS has not been informed. Please do remember to let them know if you increase the school buildings area – it doesn't affect the amount insured, but it does colour their assessment of risk.

Mark Brunet, Buildings Officer

E: SchoolBuildings@abdiocese.org.uk

CES CENSUS 2021

The CES Census is a survey of Catholic schools in England and Wales. It provides essential information on Catholic education from national to diocesan level, underpinning policy decisions at both local and national levels and enabling the CES to be proactive in promoting Catholic education.

A big thank you to all schools in the Diocese. In 2021 Arundel & Brighton has again achieved a 100% return rate for the CES Census.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Update to CES Guidance Documents

Governing Boards of both maintained schools and academy trusts should be aware that the following CES guidance documents have been updated:

- Guidance for Governors - Recruitment
- Application Forms - Notes to Applicants

Governors can access the guidance documents by following [this link to the CES](#)

or through the [diocesan website](#)

In addition to a general update of the guidance documents, the following key changes have been made:

Guidance for Governors - Recruitment

- The requirement for teachers who have lived/ worked overseas to provide a letter of professional standing
- Changes to right to work checks following Brexit

Application Forms – Notes to Applicants

- Changes to the right to work section to reflect current immigration law
- Updates to the Rehabilitation of Offenders – Disclosure Form section to reflect legislative changes made in November 2020

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

DfE School Governance Update - March 2021

The DfE's Advisory Group on Governance (AGOG) has published its latest school governance update. This update includes an article with the key guidance pages linked to the return of pupils to schools and colleges. There is also a message of thanks from Baroness Berridge to the governance sector.

This update can be accessed [here >>>](#)



NOTE TO CLERKS

The Education Service should receive the minutes of the full Governing Body/Local Governing Committee meetings and any Headteacher report to the Governors on a termly basis. Thank you to all those who have already sent minutes for last term. Please submit any outstanding minutes electronically to gill.sajnog@abdiocese.org.uk as soon as possible.

Clerks briefings through Zoom have proved popular. The next briefing is Wednesday 12th May at 10.00am. Please make sure you are booked onto this briefing, joining details (Zoom) will be sent to all attendees prior to this date.

Next academic year we will trial shorter half termly briefings by Zoom with possibly one meeting during the year being face-to-face. Dates for the academic year 2021-22 will be finalised shortly.

N.B. TO BOOK on the next briefing, please email Claire Martin

E: claire.martin@abdiocese.org.uk

To help with communication in these unusual circumstances we find ourselves in, please make sure that we have up to date contacts for you, email most importantly but a contact phone number as well.

Foundation governor application forms can be found on the Diocesan website [here >>>](#). Please make sure that all areas of the form are completed in full. The completed application form should be sent to:

Marie Ryan,
Director - Diocesan Education Service,
St. Philip Howard Centre,
4 Southgate Drive,
Crawley,
West Sussex
RH10 6RP.

Or by email to Gill Sajnog:

E: gill.sajnog@abdiocese.org.uk

Historically all governors' terms of office were renewed on 1st September regardless of when they had been appointed. Although this does not happen now we still have a higher than average number of governors whose terms of office end this academic year, particularly August and September 2021. Please check for any imminent ends of terms of office and ask governors to submit application forms as soon as possible so we are not overwhelmed at the last minute.

Clerks Briefings

Wednesday 12th May 2021
10.00 – 12.00

Remote log in via Zoom



RECENT APPOINTMENTS

Daniel Getty

Deputy Headteacher

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Crowborough

April 2021

Adam Saunders

Deputy Headteacher

St Bede's School, Redhill

With Immediate Effect

Anoushka De Sampayo

Deputy Headteacher

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Redhill

April 2021

Fiona McGrath

Deputy Headteacher

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Redhill

April 2021

CURRENT VACANCIES

PRIMARY

Headteacher

St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Lewes

September 2021

Headteacher

St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School, Brighton

September 2021

Headteacher

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Littlehampton

September 2021

Deputy Headteacher

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, Brighton

September 2021

Please may we remind colleagues that the Bishops' Conference has a very clear stance on the posts of Headteacher, Head of School, Deputy Headteacher, Head of RE and Chaplain. These posts must be reserved for practising Catholics and clearly advertised as such. In view of this, a senior member of the Diocesan Education Service (DES) is obliged to represent Bishop Richard in the recruitment process for any of the above positions, even if a post is part-time.

With this in mind, it is essential when recruiting for any of these positions that the school liaises with Gill Sajnog in advance of any advertisements being placed or before any dates are agreed. Gill co-ordinates our recruitment diary and is the first port of call for these matters.

E: gill.sajnog@abdiocese.org.uk **T:** 01293 511130

The updated Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers to Catholic Schools can be found [here >>>](#)

UPCOMING COURSES AND EVENTS

Please note that all our courses for the Summer Term 2021 are either being run as an online tutorial or live through a web platform such as Zoom or Teams.

All courses can be booked through Claire Martin:

E: claire.martin@abdiocese.org.uk

Notification of your booking and any links required to access training will be sent to you via email. If you have any queries regarding any of these courses or tutorials, please do not hesitate to contact us and one of our colleagues in the Education Service will help you.

T: 01293 511130.



SUMMER TERM 2021

APRIL

DAY	DATE	EVENT	FOCUS		TIME
TUES	20th	Catholic School Inspection	Preparation for a Catholic School Inspection	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30
WED	28th	Primary	Preparing Outstanding Prayer & Liturgy May is the month of Mary	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30
WED	28th	Governors	Induction Training for new Foundation Governors Module 1	Video Conference	18.30 - 20.30

MAY

TUES	4th	Leadership Development	Middle Leaders' Day (3) (Two options – join either morning <u>or</u> afternoon)	Video Conference	10.00 - 12.00 <u>OR</u> 14.00 - 16.00
WED	5th	Primary RE	'Come and See' Planning	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30
MON	10th	Governors	Aspiring Chairs of Governors	Video Conference	18.30 - 20.30
WED	12th	Clerks to Governors	Briefing and training for Clerks to Governors	Video Conference	10.00 - 12.00
WED	19th	Primary RE	RE Coordinators' Day (3) Self-Evaluation in RE - Creating effective action plans	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30

JUNE

TUES	8th	Primary/ Secondary RE	Effective transition from Year 6 to Year 7	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30
WED	9th	School Business Managers	School Business Managers' Forum	Video Conference	10.00 - 12.00
WED	9th	Governors	Induction Training for new Foundation Governors - Module 2	Video Conference	18.30 - 20.30
WED	16th	Good Shepherd Celebration	Good Shepherd Celebration for Primary Schools	Video Conference	From 10.00am
THURS	24th	Secondary RE	Aspiring Heads of Department	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30

JULY

THURS	1st	Rainbows	Rainbows Training for Rainbows Facilitators	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30
TUES	6th	Governors	Induction Training for new Foundation Governors - Module 3	Video Conference	18.30 - 20.30
WED	7th	Primary RE	NQT Induction Day 3	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30
TUES	13th	Governors	Outstanding Governance: Measuring Impact	Video Conference	18.30 - 20.30
THURS	15th	Secondary RE	Secondary Heads of Department - Day 3	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30



PLEASE SEND US Your Good News and Education stories

We are very keen to celebrate Catholic education and publicise the fantastic work of our teachers, support staff and pupils more widely.

We would love to highlight news from schools across the Diocese on our website and through the diocesan Twitter and Facebook pages. Please do send details to **E:** schools@abdiocese.org.uk

We look forward to hearing from you.

SAYING THANK YOU To Long-Serving Staff



Catholic School communities in the Diocese have done truly wonderful work, particularly in the light of the difficulties that COVID-19 has brought. One of the difficulties that the COVID situation has caused is not being able to say goodbye to students and staff who leave the school in the way that we would like.

In future editions, the Education Service would like to maintain a section at the end of the Alpha Beta where

we can celebrate the work of long-serving staff at Catholic schools in the Diocese who are leaving their schools. If your school wants to celebrate such service in this way, please do send details to **E:** schools@abdiocese.org.uk. The Alpha Beta is usually published five times a year (January, March, June, September and November).