



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON
EDUCATION SERVICE

THE ALPHA BETA

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



MARCH 2022

Director's Letter

Dear Colleagues,

I write in what is yet another period of anxiety as we watch the cruelty of Putin's war in Ukraine and its devastating consequences. The past twenty-four months have been tumultuous as we live through Covid and its aftermath, and now we witness the horror of war on European soil. Who could ever have predicted this chain of events?

The four million British teenagers who have lived through Covid, Ukraine and Brexit – three of the most disruptive events in modern Britain – have been dubbed Generation CUB. Their formative years have been spent watching society and, in some cases, their own families, fracture over UK politics, closely followed by a descent into Lockdown, remote learning and social isolation. Like us, they are now watching with horror as the humanitarian catastrophe caused by Russia's invasion worsens daily. This is of

course true not just of teenagers but also many younger children in primary schools. In fact, of the 37,210 children educated in diocesan schools and academies, very few will be unaware of the terrible events in Ukraine. And nobody aware of the situation is unaffected by what they see. This is a moment in time when the world feels as if it is shifting on its axis. Nothing, it seems, is placed quite how or where we thought it was.

There was a sense of this same 'displacement' in last Sunday's Gospel, in which Jesus recounts the parable of the fig tree which, unusually, is placed in a vineyard. The vineyard owner represents God, who expects to see fruit on His tree and decides to destroy it when He finds none. The gardener, or vineyard keeper who cares for the trees, watering and fertilizing them to bring them to their peak of fruitfulness, represents

Jesus, who feeds His people and gives them living water. The fig tree itself has two symbolic meanings: the nation of Israel and the individual. The fig is a wonderful fruit, containing more seeds within each fig than any other fruit on earth. That's why it is a symbol of fruitfulness as well as an excellent source of nutrition. In the Old Testament, when Israel is doing well spiritually, the metaphor is that of a productive fig tree. Here, Israel is depicted as spiritually barren. As the Gospel parable unfolds, we see the vineyard owner expressing his disappointment at the fruitless tree. He has looked for fruit for three years from this tree but has found none. The timing is significant because Jesus had been preaching the message of repentance throughout Israel for three years. He looked for fruit but what he found instead were Scribes and Pharisees who showed the outward signs of religion but had no heart for God: fig trees with leaves but no fruits.

However, the gardener in the parable pleads for a little more time. There were still a few months before the crucifixion and more miracles to come, especially the incredible raising of Lazarus from the dead which led many to repent and believe. The compassionate gardener intercedes with the vineyard owner to ask for more time to water the fruitless fig tree, and the Lord responds in patience. In the parable, the vineyard owner grants another year of life to the tree. In the same way, God in His mercy grants us another day, another hour, another breath.

The lesson for us is that time is borrowed; we do not own it, nor can we control it. The horrifying violence inflicted on Ukraine has appalled everyone and led us all to wonder would we stay to fight or flee to freedom? And would we be prepared to die for our country whilst hoping that many years of life still stretch out in front of us? This week's parable brings this dilemma into sharp focus as it makes us ask ourselves "What if it was me? Have I borne fruit?"

There is grace entwined in the figs and vines, and the grace that Jesus talks of may come when we least expect it, in places we least expect, and from people we least expect. Surely this is what we are witnessing in humanity's astonishing response to the plight of displaced Ukrainian women and children, with people opening their hearts and homes to traumatised strangers and welcoming them as long-lost friends. As the UK begins to receive refugees from the war over the coming weeks and months, we prepare to welcome them into our schools and parishes. The fig tree of the parable finds itself in the unfamiliar environment of the vineyard and is given time to fruit. Give grace a chance, Jesus says. Nourish it and let it grow. You never know where you might find it.

Warmest wishes to you all,



Marie Ryan

DFE HUB OFFERS ONLINE RESOURCES TO HELP SCHOOLS SUPPORT PUPILS WORRIED ABOUT UKRAINE

The war in Ukraine is a cause of deep concern to people across our community. The Education Service believes diocesan schools and academies are well equipped to handle questions they may be receiving from worried or anxious children and students regarding the war in Ukraine, with a range of useful advice and supporting resources available online to help support teachers and families talk to our young people about the Russian invasion.

The Department for Education's (DfE) [Education Hub](#) aims to help teachers navigate the concepts and issues the conflict brings up, with an awareness that the situation 'raises issues some schools and teachers may never have encountered before.' Resources on this page include:

- **Establishing the facts** by pointing pupils towards "trusted, reputable sources that explain the what, where, when, why and who".
- **Being comfortable without an answer for everything** – and helping your pupils feel comfortable with that too – by being clear that in many circumstances there is no one 'right' answer

The Catholic charity CAFOD have joined the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal, you can find out more about CAFOD's work by clicking on the button below. CAFOD's website can be found by clicking [here >>>](#)

STRICTLY EDUCATION

Headteachers may be interested in **Strictly Education**, an education-specific provider of professional support services to over 2,000 schools, academies, and MATs. They support governors and school leaders to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people and operate across **four strategic areas**:



They have recently launched a brand new education specific HR, payroll and pensions system, [EduPeople](#). With one employee record at its core, EduPeople aims to save time, save costs, and improve strategic decision making.

For further information, please contact:

E: Barry.Smith@strictlyeducation.co.uk

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2023-24 – REMINDER OF IMPORTANT STATUTORY DEADLINE

The School Admissions Code is clear as to the statutory duty on schools to determine (i.e. formally set) their admission arrangements. Every year, schools **are required in law** to send a copy of their determined admission arrangements for the new year (2023-24 in this case) to their Local Authority and the Diocese, and to post them on their website by **15 March**.

A number of schools have still not complied with this statutory requirement. If your school has not done so, please ensure that you send your admission arrangements to Simon Parr at the Education Service, to your Local Authority, and post on your website, **as soon as possible**. Thank you.

Contact Simon Parr if any questions or help is needed. **E:** simon.parr@abdiocese.org.uk

'PROUD TO CALL YOU MY PARTNER' – EDUCATION SECRETARY TELLS CATHOLIC EDUCATORS

Speaking to a gathering of Catholic educators in Parliament on Wednesday 23rd February 2022, the Secretary of State for Education, the Rt Hon Nadim Zahawi MP said he was 'proud to call' the Catholic Church a 'partner' in the provision of education.

The event was hosted by Conservative MP Mary Robinson and was celebrating the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Catholic Education Service (CES). To mark the occasion the CES also used the opportunity to launch a new publication entitled [Catholic Schools: Partners in Formation](#). The book gives a brief overview of the history of Catholic education in England and Wales as well as a reflection on why the Church continues to provide Catholic schools with their distinct ethos.

A copy of the book was presented to the Secretary of State by the Rt Rev Marcus Stock, Bishop of Leeds and Chairman of the Catholic Education Service.

The event was attended by more than 100 guests including representatives from dioceses, Catholic universities, and other Catholic educational institutions. Also in attendance was Amanda Spielman, Chief inspector of Ofsted, the Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel De Souza, representatives from the DfE, MPs (including the Rt Hon Jacob Rees Mogg) and members of the House of Lords.

In his speech to the assembled guests Bishop Marcus Stock said: "When it comes to being partners, the Catholic Church was the first provider of schools in England. "Today with 2,200 schools, 850,000 pupils and 50,000 members of staff, and four universities, it is the second-largest provider of education in our country. This is an incredible achievement, and represents one of the most successful Government partnerships, in the delivery of such an essential service as education and schooling."



Pictured (L to R: The Rt Rev Marcus Stock, the Rt Hon Nadim Zahawi, Mr Paul Barber (CES Director)

Responding to Bishop Stock in his speech the Rt Hon Nadim Zahawi MP said: "I am extremely grateful to be given an opportunity to speak to you all in person at this important event to celebrate 175 years of the Catholic Education Service. "175 years is a significant achievement, so I just want to thank everyone in the room, and of course colleagues here who are so supportive of this extraordinary human endeavour and recognise the incredible valuable work that you do and have done and continue to on behalf of so many young people and staff in schools across our country.

"You deserve high praise, since many of your schools serve some of our most diverse and disadvantaged communities where the challenges include reaching out to those families where neither parent may be in work or those for whom English is a second language – as it was for this Secretary of State."

The Secretary of State concluded his speech by saying, in reference to the Catholic Church's historic role as a provider of schools that he was "proud to call [the Church] my partner".



Voluntary Aided Schools' Condition Allocation (VASCA) – next (financial) year's project bids

In February, we were able to provide confirmation for 13 projects totalling nearly £2.5m to go ahead for 2022/23; we anticipate another four projects will be confirmed once the final capital allocation is definite (probably in April) to bring the total up to £3m. That leaves only a very modest contingency to deal with emergencies, so please note that and make sure that bids for each round of capital funding are submitted on time (the next deadline is October 2022).

VA schools insurance

We hope that by now every VA school will have completed the Charterfields' questionnaire for the insurance renewal – if there are any problems with this, please contact us.

Year end

We know that VA schools will be working on closing down FY21_22 over the next couple of weeks; Easter follows and hopefully many of you will get your batteries re-charged. Bearing this in mind, we will be looking for returns on the analysis of Governor funds during April – it would be great if we don't have to chase any of these into May!

School Business Managers' Forum

The next meeting of diocesan SBM's will be on 7 June and we are planning to meet "in person"! This will be the first opportunity to do so for two years and we know that many SBM's are looking forward to it.

The venue is yet to be confirmed but will be in the centre of the Diocese – starting at 10.00 am. SBM's can sign up now [here >>>](#). As ever, we will be exploring topical issues – in particular, how to move towards Net Zero.

Thought for the month:

On the subject of Net Zero – do you cool the spaces where your IT equipment sits? What to? We have found a couple of schools recently keeping their server rooms at 18°C – but there is no need for this, 24°C is fine, and every 1°C less cooling saves 10% of the energy bill (works for heating, too).

Mark Brunet, Buildings Officer

E: SchoolBuildings@abdiocese.org.uk

CES CENSUS 2022 – THANK YOU!

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.

We are delighted to report that we have had a **100% return rate again** for the CES CENSUS. We would like to sincerely thank all school staff that have made this happen by submitting the relevant information in a timely manner.

Some facts for Arundel & Brighton Diocese:

- There are 37,210 pupils in our Catholic Schools and Colleges across the Diocese
- The percentage of Catholic pupils across all phases is 63.64%
- The percentage of Catholic Teaching staff across all phases is 35.18%

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 **E: gill.sajnog@abdiocese.org.uk**

It is very important that you notify the Education Service to any changes in the governing body, particularly if you have any Foundation Governor resignations.

Please check terms of office and ask governors to complete re application forms promptly.

At the next briefing we will ask for any topics you would like to cover at the briefing in July. We are still hoping this will be face to face and will confirm as soon as possible.

To book onto any of these briefings please go to the [website >>>](#)

Please make sure that we have up to date contacts for you (email most importantly, but a contact phone number as well).

Remaining dates for Clerks Briefings for this academic year 2021-2022 are:

DATES FOR THIS ACADEMIC YEAR:

Tuesday	10 May 22	Clerks' Forum	10.00 – 11.00	Video Conference
Tuesday	5 Jul 22	Clerks' Forum	10.00 – 12.00	Venue TBC

COME ALONG TO THE BEE-LIEVE FOUNDATION CHARITY BALL ON 30 APRIL 2022



The Beelieve Foundation was set up in 2020 by Steve Tindall, Headteacher of [Holy Family Catholic Primary School](#) in Addlestone, to mark his thirty years in Catholic education. The Foundation's mission is to help as many young people and their families to deal positively with the challenges caused by mental health issues. **Here are a few facts:**

- 20% of young people will suffer with depression before they are 18 years old.
- Mental health problems affect more people than cancer and cardiovascular disease.

- One in ten children aged 5-16 are diagnosed with a mental health condition every year. That is three children in every classroom across the UK.

You can find out more about the Beelieve Foundation on their [website](#). The Foundation are holding a charity ball on 30 April 2022 to fundraise for their wonderful cause. The event will include food, drinks, live music and much more. If you would like to book a place to attend the charity ball, please contact the Foundation [here](#).

A flyer for the Charity Ball can be found [here >>>](#)



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON



JOIN OUR TEAM

The Diocese is seeking to recruit two part time RE Advisers based in Crawley to support the work of the Education Service; a Secondary RE Adviser 0.8 and a Primary Adviser 0.4. The successful candidates will provide advice and support to schools on Catholic ethos, Religious Education and related areas with the promotion and further development of schools' Catholic ethos and distinctive character integral to both roles.

To find out more about these exciting and rewarding opportunities please visit our website: www.abdiocese.org.uk/careers or contact:

E: julie.oldroyd@abdiocese.org.uk

VACANCIES - HEADTEACHERS

Primary

Headteacher - St Paul's Catholic Primary School, Thames Ditton

September 2022

Headteacher - St Philip's Catholic Primary School, Arundel

September 2022

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](#)

[>>>](#)

RECENT APPOINTMENTS

Natalie Carless: Headteacher - St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Angmering

September 2022

UPCOMING COURSES AND EVENTS

Please note that most of our courses for Spring and Summer Terms 2022 are either being run as an online tutorial or live through a web platform such as Zoom or Teams.

The CPD Booklet detailing courses for the whole of the 2021-22 academic year and flyers for individual courses can all be found on the Education Service website [here >>>](#)

Available courses for the rest of the Spring Term and for the Summer Term are also listed below.

All courses can be booked online through the Courses and events section of the CPD page of the [diocesan website](#) or, alternatively, through Claire Martin and 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.

E: Claire.martin@abdiocese.org.uk

T: 01293 511130

MARCH

THURS	24th	Primary RE	RE in a Creative Curriculum	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30
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SUMMER TERM 2022

MAY

TUES	3rd	Governors	Called to Serve: Prospective new Governors	Video Conference	18.30 - 20.30
TUES	10th	Clerks	Clerks' Forum	Video Conference	10.00 - 11.00
WED	11th	Chaplains	Support for Chaplains with Bishop Richard	Quiet Day at Worth Abbey	10.00 - 15.00
MON	16th	Governors	Foundation Governor Induction - Module 3	Video Conference	18.30 - 20.30
WED	18th	Primary RE	Primary RE Coordinators' Day - Day 3	Roffey Park Institute, Horsham	9.30 - 15.00
THURS	19th	Cross-Phase Primary and Secondary	Effective transition from Year 6 to Year 7	Video Conference	15.30 - 17.30
WED	25th	Aspiring Leaders	Middle Leaders' Day - Day 3	St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School	9.30 - 12.30

JUNE

MON	6th	Governors	Aspiring Chairs of Governors	Video Conference	18.30 - 20.30
TUES	7th	School Business Managers	School Business Managers' Forum	Venue TBC	10.00 - 12.00
THURS	9th	Secondary RE	Secondary Heads of RE - Day 3	St Wilfrid's Catholic School, Crawley	15.30 - 17.30
THURS	16th	Primary & Secondary Early Career Teachers (New ECTs)	Welcome to teaching in a Catholic School - Day 3/3	Roffey Park Institute, Horsham	9.30 - 15.00
WED	22nd	Good Shepherd Celebration		Venue TBC	11.00 - 14.00

JULY

FRI	1st	School Leaders	Mass of Thanksgiving with Bishop Richard	Venue TBC	9.30 - 15.00
TUES	5th	Clerks	Clerks' Forum	Venue TBC	10.00 - 12.00
WED	6th	Primary RE	Outstanding RE Teaching and Learning for the year ahead	Venue TBC	9.30 - 15.00

Please send us your Good News and Education Stories

We are very much 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.

www.abdiocese.org.uk/education/home

The Arundel and Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No. 252878