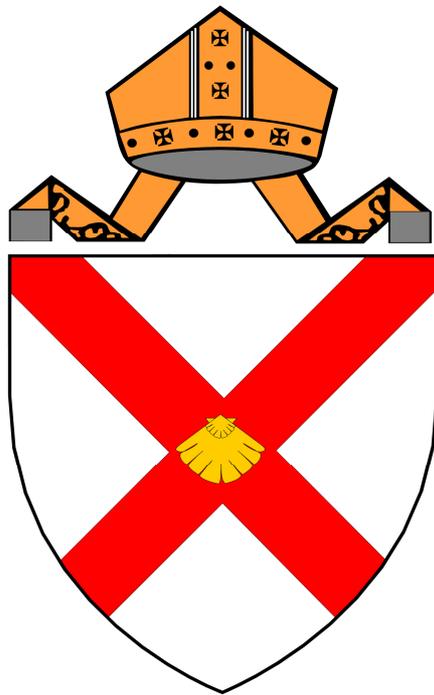


Diocesan Affiliation Scheme 2011-12

Schools & Academies



Diocese of Rochester

Foreword by the Right Reverend James Langstaff, Bishop of Rochester

I am very pleased to commend to you our new Affiliation Scheme for Schools and Academies located within the geographical boundaries of the Diocese of Rochester. This is an exciting and innovative development for the Diocese which we believe will make a valuable contribution to education in our area.

The Diocesan Board of Education has recently launched its 'Rochester Diocesan Family of Schools' (RDFS), a new initiative and way of working with our Church schools in this new educational landscape.



We now invite community schools, independent schools, academies and Free Schools to establish a relationship with us through the process of 'Affiliation'. This gives a basis for working together so as to provide excellence in education based on Christian values and distinctiveness.

If you are a Headteacher or a Governor and are interested in finding out more about what the Diocese of Rochester can offer, please get in touch via the Diocesan Office using the details below and one of the Education Team will arrange a visit to your school.

Early indications suggest that a number of schools are interested in exploring this possibility further. We look forward to working with those and other schools, and I and those who work with me also look forward to welcoming those schools into the life of our Diocese.

+ James.

James, Bishop of Rochester
September 2011

The Affiliation Scheme for Schools & Academies

This Affiliation Scheme for all Schools and Academies located within the Diocese of Rochester is part of new initiative by the Board of Education in response to the fast changing educational landscape of our current times.

Many of our own Church Schools who we have worked with closely over many years, have recently approached the Diocese asking if it was possible to formalise their links and relationships with us and with neighbouring schools.

In response, we have launched the *Rochester Diocesan Family of Schools (RDFS)* of which all of our Church schools are members, committed to working with each other and the Board of Education through the Diocesan Schools' Forum, a representative group who meet termly to discuss the needs of our schools and to initiate projects which support school improvement or Christian Distinctiveness.

This initiative has been warmly received, so we have decided to offer membership of this family to community schools, independent schools, academies and Free Schools in order that the Christian values of our own Church School network can be shared with other schools who are seeking to establish a Christian ethos and distinctiveness within their organisation.

We know and are already aware of a number of schools where are Church schools are already working closely with partner schools either through hard federation, trust arrangements, collaborative partnership or just mutual informal supportive working and the Affiliation Scheme is also designed to recognise the hard work of these schools in these specific situations.

The Affiliation Scheme is also designed as a way of recognising and building on the many productive relationships that exist between parish churches and their local schools.

Many schools without church school status have asked if provision might be made for a more 'official' way of recognising the link between the Diocese and their school.

The Affiliation Scheme is essentially a non-binding (no legal implications) three-way working relationship where school, parish and diocese work together for the benefit of children and families in our communities.

Links between schools and parish churches go back a long way. For two centuries the Church of England has been a major provider of 'free education for all' in this country. In 1811 the Church established the National Society and it was this body that set about encouraging the establishment of thousands of local 'National' schools in every community. This predated state provision by some 40 years.

Schools and parish churches have many aims and values in common: the well-being of their communities, the flourishing of individuals and families, the common good. Both are natural centres for the community and it is therefore natural that strong links grow up between them.

From the Diocesan perspective the Church is concerned not only with its Church schools but is keen to contribute to the well-being and support of the wider education community. The Affiliation Scheme is a way of extending what we can offer for the benefit of many more schools and therefore children.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Diocesan Affiliation Scheme, it is administered by the Rochester Diocesan Board of Education. In the first instance, one of the Education Team will make an initial visit to discuss the implications for your school and your community of seeking to join the Diocesan Affiliation Scheme and normally, subject to commitments and assurances the Partnership Agreement can be signed by all three partners.

As a Diocesan Affiliated school in addition to the benefits of joining the RDFS, you are entitled to you the Diocesan Coat of Arms on your headed notepaper and will have access to the RDFS training programme and directory for your Staff and Governors. In addition, you can choose to join the RDBE's Service Level Agreement (SLA) for schools and will benefit from a reduction on the use of our Specialist Associate Consultancy team.

On behalf of the Diocese of Rochester and the Board of Education, I look forward to working with your school and your local Church through the Affiliation Scheme in the months and years ahead.

Alex Tear
Diocesan Director of Education

The Rochester Diocesan Family of Schools (RDFS)

The RDFS will offer all members schools:

- provide a new, direct and effective channel of communication and consultation between schools and the Board and its officers
- facilitate collaborative working amongst our schools which will identify their needs and provide a support structure for the procurement of services
- provide a structure within which member schools can know themselves to be supported and encouraged through prayer and practical and emotional support by other partner schools.
- facilitate the sharing of best practice amongst the family of schools in the following areas:
 - RE, Christian Distinctiveness and Collective Worship
 - Professional Development including Teaching and Learning, deployment of ASTs and SLEs
 - Succession planning for Leadership Development and Good Governance
 - Procurement of services to schools including Facilities Management, Personnel and Administrative Support
 - Collaborative approaches and peer to peer work in School Improvement areas including the brokering of NLE & LLE's, the use of data, performance management and self-evaluation