

## NEWS BULLETIN SPRING 2022

### FROM JOHN CONSTANTI, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

As we approach two years since the first Covid-19 lockdown, life has altered for so many.

We have all had to adapt to new ways, none more so than those in our Church schools.

As ever, thank you for all that you have and continue to do for the benefit of your pupils and the school community in such challenging times – it is deeply appreciated.

If there is any way in which we can assist or support, please do get in touch.

### CORONAVIRUS

Covid infections are increasing across the United Kingdom with about one in 27 (one in 25 in England) people infected, according to the latest estimates from the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The ONS infection survey, which tests thousands of people randomly in households across the United Kingdom, estimates that 2.6 million people would have tested positive in the week ending 5 March - up from 2.4 million the previous week - roughly one in 27.

After falling steadily since January, official data shows Covid hospital admissions have also been going up gradually in the rest of the United Kingdom, with England showing the largest rise since the end of February.

The latest Coronavirus national data can be summarised as follows:

People tested positive up 56.3%

Positive rate per 100,000 people equals 458.7 and

People hospitalised up 16.9%

Number of cases in England totals 16.5 m compared to 15.5 m previously.

We are continuing to see increased infection numbers amongst some staff and pupils in our Church schools.

## OFSTED

Ofsted have confirmed –

1. Their deferral policy for inspections at schools that have been significantly impacted by staff absence will remain in place and
2. Ofsted temporarily halted the use of part-time inspectors who are also front-line leaders but will now invite those who are able to inspect again to do so from Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January.

We have recently had a total of seven Ofsted inspections in Church schools and generally the inspector's approach and judgement was both fair and reasonable.

Please pay particular attention to all aspects relating to safeguarding, including record keeping.

## CHURCH ACADEMIES

The much-anticipated education White Paper may contain provisions in relation to Academy conversions. We have also received a number of queries in relation to academies and, therefore, I thought it would be useful to reiterate a number of points associated with this.

The current number of our Church schools and academies in the Diocese can be summarised as follows.

- 7 Multi Academy Trusts – home to 38 Church academies
- 1 Sole Church Academy Trust
- 21 Voluntary Aided Church schools
- 29 Voluntary Controlled Church schools

The following are key factors -

- a. Church VA schools should normally only join Church majority (not Church minority) MATs
- b. Church VC schools can join Church majority or minority MATs
- c. Church schools should not join MATs without any Church representation
- d. It is unlikely that agreement will be granted to the establishment of new MATs and
- e. Early discussions with the DBE team would be useful

Further details can be found at

<https://www.rdbe.org.uk/page/?title=Academies&pid=31>

We are aware that many continue to send emails to the address [teresa.spearink@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:teresa.spearink@rochester.anglican.org). As this is no longer used and is not monitored, please could the address [rdbe@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:rdbe@rochester.anglican.org) be used instead.

After some nine years supporting our schools, Caroline Crofts, our Lead Associate for School Improvement will be leaving us on the 31 March 2022. We are very grateful to Caroline for all her work and the support she has given and wish her well. From the 31 March, please no longer use Caroline's email address but do please use [rdbe@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:rdbe@rochester.anglican.org) for any school improvement queries.

**FROM VIRGINIA CORBYN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)**

### ***SPIRITED ARTS 2022 COMPETITION***



[https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-2022/?utm\\_source=emailmarketing&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=spirited\\_arts\\_2022\\_prospects&utm\\_content=2022-03-15](https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-2022/?utm_source=emailmarketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=spirited_arts_2022_prospects&utm_content=2022-03-15)

Join hundreds of schools from around the world taking part in this year's Spirited Arts competition! Winning entries will provide a good response to one of the 5 themes, and judges will be asking: **Is it original? Is it well-crafted? And (most importantly!) Is it excellent RE?**

#### ***Themes:***

1. "We have far more in common with each other than that which divides us."
2. God's good earth? ("Beautiful World, wonderful God?")
3. Searching for God
4. A view of the world
5. Celebrations: big days and big ideas

***They welcome entries in (almost!) any art form your pupils can think of, including:***

- Art (painting, drawing, sketching etc)
- Poetry
- Photography
- Dance
- Music
- Drama
- Sculpture

Pupils can enter individually, in pairs or groups, or as whole class, year or school entries. We have also been pleased to receive entries from whole community groups previously.

You can get inspiration from previous art pieces we have received, by clicking [here](#)

**All entries must be received before 31 July 2022.**

**Here are a few key things to remember:**

1. If teachers are able to collate and send in their 10 best entries (as usual), that would be a big help for us!
2. If this isn't possible due to social distancing policies, pupils can submit their own entries but they must include their NAME, AGE, SCHOOL POSTCODE and have the ARTWORK AND WRITE UP TOGETHER.

## BELONGING AND BELIEVING

<http://www.booksatpress.co.uk/belongingandbelieving.html>

The new Belonging and Believing series of books and resources will help you enable young children to engage with the lives of a five or six year old child from eight different religions and worldviews. In line with the Commission on RE's recommendations, the books focus on the lived experience of children their families and communities, bringing real lives into the classroom. The Belonging and Believing resources aim to inform, inspire, engage and excite children, teachers, and everyone interested in understanding and respecting diversity of religion and worldviews.

## THE OFFER FROM WINTERSHALL

<https://www.wintershall.org.uk/>



I have visited this peaceful and memorable place and I know that a number of our schools have taken school visits. There is something quite special about becoming a 'follower in the crowd' as the life of Jesus unfolds. As well as the plays, there is a wider education package on offer.

## HUMANISM

I have had a number of emails from teachers asking if they can teach and explore Humanism again. You are more than welcome to use the home learning packs from last year to discuss Humanism. However, these were written for home learning so they will need adapting and they were written for whole phases, so many children will be repeating learning they may have done at home. Also remember that this should be part of a broad and balanced RE curriculum. There are some wonderful new resources on the Understanding Humanism website that you could use to extend your lessons in Term 4. <https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/> <https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/resources/>

## KENT AGREED SYLLABUS

The Kent Agreed Syllabus says that it is up for revision in 2022. If you spotted that, then do not panic! There will not be a new syllabus this academic year, but there may be some updated units to reflect how RE has moved on since its launch 5 years ago. SACRE revise their syllabus every 5 years, but usually only rewrite it every 10 years, so keep calm and carry on.

## THE SPRINGS DANCE COMPANY

<https://springsdancecompany.org.uk/about/>

If you are looking to develop your curriculum in creative ways, this dance company: -

- Specialises in cross-curricular Dance, in particular with RE and PSHE
- Delivers creative, inspiring, fun and energetic performances, workshops and assemblies
- Grows children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through dance
- Values young people, giving them a voice and allowing them to thrive



## THE WIDER CURRICULUM



<https://www.boreplace.org/what-we-offer/schools>

As an education team, we have supported Bore Place in their programmes which foster respect, awe and wonder for the God's wonderful world.

*In their own words,*

*"We will inspire and educate people to make a difference and positively impact the environment in their daily lives, while connecting with nature to support their health, wellbeing and development, providing equal access to the natural world."*

The schools' day visit programme has been designed around a whole-site project - Bore Place: We Are Nature. This is an ambitious, ongoing conservation scheme aiming to restore habitats and champion nature, and Bore Place needs your help to do it!

## **FOR YOUR OWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

***Delhi and Beyond (July-August 2022)  
with Pamela Draycott and organised through Soul of India***

Some of you know Pamela – she says,

'The trip I am leading to India has been twice postponed due to the pandemic. I am pleased that as travel restrictions to India have been lifted the trip is now going ahead 31<sup>st</sup> July to 13<sup>th</sup> August with an optional extension until 17<sup>th</sup> August'.

The hotels and guest house are of good quality, bed, breakfast and evening meal are included, as are entrance fees and travel as specified on the itinerary. Not included in the price are a visa, tips and lunch. Some places of worship/museums charge a small fee for photography/videoing which is not included in the tour price. If you are interested, further details are available on the Soul of India website (escorted tours) - <http://www.soulofindia.com/join-a-group-tour/a-journey-to-delhi-beyond/> but please feel free to give Pamela a ring (07806796082) or to phone the company (020 8901 7630).

## **WORKING WITH YOUR LOCAL PARISH – PLEASE PASS ON TO THOSE WHO WILL MOST BENEFIT AND WILL MOST BRING THE BENEFITS BACK TO YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

### **BOOST: RE-IMAGINING SCHOOLSWORK**

***Re-imagining Christian work with and within schools***

***in the light of all we have learned during the pandemic***

**at the Emmanuel Centre, Westminster, on Saturday, 18th June 2022**

**<https://www.separtnership.org.uk/boost>**

Come and join us, and passionate likeminded people  
who are eager to reach children and young  
people in schools with the good news of Jesus!

The pandemic has impacted us all. Children's and young people's lives have been significantly affected. Christian schools work has been really shaken up. But this gives us a great opportunity to re-imagine, re-envision and re-connect with schools in an imaginative, creative new way.

Hear from

- Dr Sarah Holmes (Liverpool Hope University) and
- Lucy Moore (Growing Faith Foundation)

and many others what has been happening through this time, what has been learnt and how it is shaping our thinking about ways forward, and so catch a God-given vision for sharing our faith in schools.

Imagine together what a massive difference we could all make on schools across this country.

The call is for all children, young people, staff, parents, carers, schools workers, church leaders, youth workers, children's workers to join in!

So please share this with anyone and everyone who would value being part of this opportunity!

More details and the booking form are here: <https://www.separtnership.org.uk/boost>

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The term by term planning is on the website – Year 1 Term 5 has been posted and Term 6 will be added soon.

<https://www.rdbe.org.uk/page/?title=Year+by+Year+Planning+for+Collective+Worship&pid=47>

We are working towards a 3-year rolling programme starting with Year 1 (produced this year) and then revising Years B and C so that they become years 2 and 3 (amended from having a Covid focus).

## Guidance from the Church of England Education office



<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Collective%20Worship%20Guidance%2018052021.pdf>

If you have not caught up with this guidance document from the Church of England, please take a look – it sits alongside the SIAMS schedule but is not statutory. However, it has been produced to challenge, to guide and set expectations for Church school communities and diocesan authorities encouraging them to reflect on their practice and to ensure that collective worship remains the relevant and essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish and to 'live life in all its fullness' John 10:10.

## Signposting to additional resources for Easter and Pentecost

Easter Sung worship: Risen by Shauna Edwards

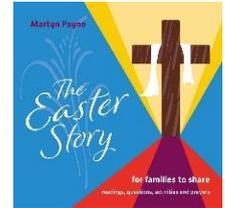
<https://youtu.be/xCQsK1t9EKY>

Jesus gave it all – Story song of the Easter Story

<https://youtu.be/RLZwSre8Odw>

Exploring the Easter story:

<https://www.brfonline.org.uk/collections/christian-life/products/the-easter-story-for-families-to-share>



<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/resources/the-greatest-miracle-of-all/>



Pentecost – 5 June

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/resources/the-in-between-time/>



Blowing Wind and Tongues of Flame (Pentecost) Lyric video

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBQyw\\_1Wc\\_A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBQyw_1Wc_A)

## SIAMS

Four of the fourteen schools on the published list for Rochester Diocese either have been inspected or have been notified. -

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/Schools%20likely%20to%20be%20inspected%20in%202021.2022.pdf>

Inspections are picking up momentum steadily so those on that list should be as prepared as possible in case they receive 'the call'. The Diocese is notified at the same time as the school and Virginia is more than happy to touch base with you on that day and to answer any questions that she can.

The process is clearly laid out here –

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/SIAMS%20Information%20for%20Schools%20220202.pdf>

as is the most up-to-date version of the inspection schedule –

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/FINAL%20-%20SIAMS%20Evaluation%20Schedule%20%28Revised%20September%202021%29%20-%20UPDATED%20211019.pdf>

Virginia or another member of the education team will do their best to attend feedback at the end of the inspection day.

## **ADMISSIONS**

**Although the handling of in-year admissions has not changed, there seems to be a little confusion in some schools so please note:**

Paragraph 2.7 of the Code states that “A decision to offer or refuse admission **must not** be made by one individual in an admission authority. Where the school is its own admission authority the whole governing body, or an admissions committee established by the governing body, **must make** such decisions.”

Even where a school is undersubscribed, there is a decision to be made in relation to each application. The allocation of a place isn't automatic just because the school has places available, it would be possible for an admission authority to refuse admission under paragraph 3.10 of the Code.

This means that the governing body or admissions committee does have to meet to consider every application. The amendment to the Code to clarify that such meetings can be held by telephone or video conference is intended to reduce the burden on admission authorities.

## GOVERNANCE

### Keeping up to date is important – here is some suggested reading for you

- Ofsted Timings  
Inspecting schools: guide for maintained and academy schools - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- Attendance Report (Ofsted)  
Good attendance: listen, understand, empathise and support - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- KCSIE Consultation  
Keeping children safe in education: proposed revisions 2022 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- Performance Data  
Coronavirus (COVID-19): school and college accountability 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- State of the Nation Report  
State of the nation 2021: children and young people's wellbeing - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

FROM CAROLINE CROFTS, LEAD ASSOCIATE

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

### OFSTED GRADES

In our 89 schools we currently have the following grades:

- 12 schools graded as outstanding
- 69 schools graded as good
- 5 schools graded as requires improvement
- 1 school graded inadequate
- 2 schools with no current grade (either new schools or moved into a Trust)

This means that 91% of our schools are currently judged good or better

### INSPECTIONS SO FAR 2021-2

The Inspection Framework is being constantly updated so we would urge school leaders to keep up to date: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif/school-inspection-handbook>

At the time of writing this, 7 of our Church schools have been inspected. This is less than we expected as many of our schools are now potentially in the Ofsted window, and we still have some schools with a longstanding outstanding judgement that are eagerly awaiting the call.

One more inspection was arranged but then deferred due to COVID.

One secondary school and 6 primary schools were inspected. 4 of these were 2-day, section 8 inspections and 3 were 2-day, section 5 inspections. Feedback from inspections has been that the teams have been thorough but largely fair. Not surprisingly, safeguarding has been the most important element so we would urge schools who are due inspection to ensure that they have recently audited all processes and protocols in preparation. There are providers that schools can commission to undertake a safeguarding audit if this is deemed necessary. There is possibly some inconsistency in responses to issues with documentation because, in some cases, schools have been able to rectify these errors or omissions during the inspection and others not. However, we have not had enough inspections yet to see if this is, in fact, a major issue.

## THEMES FOR INSPECTIONS:

Section 8 inspections largely focus on the curriculum. Section 5 inspections cover all areas. The team will undertake 'deep dives' into certain subjects which are negotiated before the inspection starts with the school. Safeguarding is always a focus and, if this is deemed ineffective, the school will automatically fail the inspection.

Themes this year have varied, but common areas appear to be:

- Safeguarding – many schools have had issues with this, and it has been a factor in some dropped or poor grades
- Reading
- Phonics
- Curriculum, particularly Foundation subjects

We have many schools that could be inspected. There is no clear process of predicting when inspections may come due to the delays caused by the pandemic. This is very stressful for schools and also causes the team some issues with capacity as we endeavour to attend all feedbacks. We are notified of your inspection at the same time as schools so we will get in touch with you to offer support and organise who will attend feedback as soon as possible the day before the inspection. Do let us know if you wish one of the team to speak with the inspector about the school. This is usually via a brief phone call. Not all inspectors will ask to do this so do mention it to the inspection team if you would like them to have contact with us.

## NEW HEADTEACHERS

We had 9 new head teachers this academic year. Some were appointed towards the end of the previous year and others started in September 2021. All were invited to an induction day last autumn and we also try to visit each new head teacher once they are settled in post. All have been provided with a mentor in liaison with the Local Authority or Trust.

We would like to thank those head teachers that have agreed to mentor a new leader, either formally or informally. We know it is much appreciated. So far, we only have 2 new head teachers for September, but this may increase.

## THE PROPOSED WHITE PAPER

We are eagerly awaiting the publication of the government's white paper and there has been much speculation around the proposals and the key theme of 'levelling up'.

55 'cold spots' across the country have been identified for more investment (mainly in the North, Midlands and the South -West).

Proposals include:

- Retention payments for teachers
- A move for schools to go into academy trusts (particularly those with successive RI judgements)
- An aim for 90% of pupils to go into secondary education at expected levels by 2030
- The creation of an online UK "National Academy" (similar to the Oak National Academy)
- The requirement for "food statements" on schools' websites (stating what their approach to food is)

A £5000,000 budget for a new cooking curriculum

- A pilot to inspect food standards in schools (alongside The Food Standards Agency) in Blackpool, Lancashire, Plymouth and Nottingham
- The encouragement of bids for "Elite" 16 – 19 Free Schools
- A reform of the National Citizen Service
- A clear vision of schools in a strong Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)
- The consideration to allow Local Authorities to run MATS

## SCHOOL SUPPORT

We currently have a team of 9 associate consultants who provide support to schools focussing particularly on:

- Leadership
- Coaching
- Supporting governors with Headteacher Appraisals
- Monitoring standards and provision across the 89 schools
- Liaising with Trusts and Local Authorities

The team have been busy this year, particularly with appraisals and coaching which is always well-received.

If you would like to commission any school support, please email [rdbe@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:rdbe@rochester.anglican.org)