**To           :              Headteachers; Chairs of Governors; Foundation Governors; Ex-officio clergy; Deputy Headteachers; RE CoOrdinators                           (and please forward widely)**

**From     :               Jeff Williams**

**Date      :               26th May 2021**

**Re           :              Fortnightly email and resources from the Diocesan Education Team**

Dear colleagues

‘To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow’ – Audrey Hepburn.

With the current downpours and high winds, I’m sure the organisers of the world-famous **Chelsea Flower Show** are breathing a sigh of relief that they had already re-scheduled the show from last week to September in anticipation of wider Covid relaxations. Gardening and wildflower planting are all over the **media** at the moment :

* The **UK government**, in a thrust to emphasise critical countryside conservation, has committed to **banning peat** in gardening products from 2024
* **Denmark** has reinforced its laws to **require farmers** to plant wildflowers on **5% of their land** to benefit bees
* **Local Authorities** across the country are creating **‘living walls’** in towns and cities – but also saving tens of thousands of pounds by allowing roadside **verges to be uncut** for a season while benefitting wildlife
* Councils, parishes and individuals are supporting the ‘**No Mow May’** initiative to continue into the summer (even if it’s only not mowing a small part of our lawns to allow wildflower growth)
* **‘B’ line maps** are growing exponentially to support the flourishing of bees in towns and cities with strategically placed planters containing insect and pollinator friendly flowers
* **Wildflower champions** are surreptitiously planting wildflower seeds in public places
* The interest in **gardening and allotments** has blossomed (excuse the intended pun) massively during Lockdown and pandemic Britain
* BBC **Countryfile’s** special episode (23 May available on BBC iPlayer) focussed entirely on encouraging **school and community gardens** and planting wildflowers in a two-year initiative to help **combat climate change**, help wildlife and pollinators and transform our own **wellbeing**.

I’m so pleased that many of our schools have embedded and continued the activities and suggestions we featured in our **‘Bee Inspired’** diocesan project in 2019 (project booklet and newsletter featuring schools are attached for reference) because a recent statistic sadly declared that **three-quarters of UK children spend less time outdoors than convicted prisoners** in our gaols. Arthur Parkinson, a 25 year old up-and-coming  gardener says **‘The cost and daily work of the garden, I justify as being necessary medication for the soul’.**

Your personal and community engagement with the acknowledged and research-rich benefits to mental health and emotional well-being through outdoor learning, gardening and contributing in your local area are to be welcomed, celebrated and blessed. Even a window box has the power to unleash vitality for the greater good of your mind, onlookers, and the planet – nurturing flora, insects and pollinators and creating visual and mental sanctuaries.  This year’s Diocesan project encourages our schools to create **Spiritual Gardens** – please seriously consider this wish, challenge, plea. Along with our **Orchards in Schools** initiative, these are permanent features, but if you can’t currently commit to that level……………………………..

At this year’s Chelsea Flower Show (21-26 September) there will be a **show garden on the theme of Psalm 23**, sponsored by The Bible Society. Past Chelsea gold medal winner Sarah Eberle has designed a garden which will bring Psalm 23 to life.  The Bible Society hopes that communities, including schools, will be inspired to create a Psalm 23 garden of their own. Easy, free videos and downloadable resources are available at [www.biblesociety.org.uk/psalm-23/get-active](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1lg85i-0005qT-60&i=57e1b682&c=NJCI3K_7lBMMeHWiZKhxsQra49atU3_w6Ye8WzglHLy61xXgSxIh_A0DqqpW97cA-gtolqnTABiTaH0OU71z2bBz0DrQ6HrDQ1izvkZ_f5xpDYjOoScSncxKyO8Xh-TKilOWGEC2jaABNenERKieBFJdoFD17AaxRNLmtwFAwSUO4aVJ3K_-1KxoM9dvArLOYsaIWBmtQyJrYqulfSM1DfVGb05xSI-O25_janpNsz_UAGXjhchaonqvXzcbZQB3EAAIC_0Ff77p0NCQN_D0qQ) including :

* A gardening guide, which sets out how to create a Psalm 23 garden on any scale, from a just a couple of planters to a larger space
* An assembly / school worship in which children can learn more about Psalm 23 and reflect on what it means for them
* Some resources for lessons about Psalm 23 and gardens in the Bible
* An opportunity to obtain free trees from the Woodland Trust to get the garden started

Creating a garden themed on Psalm 23 will enable children, whatever their spirituality, to connect with this amazing psalm and its restorative, sustaining message, which seems especially relevant in these times. You may also consider creating one in your Church grounds or personal garden?!

If none of the above lights your flame, why not consider sending **Bee Bombs and Seed Bombs** to friends and family as birthday presents – or even better, leave them on neighbours’ doorsteps as part of the **Random Acts of Kindness** approach?

I end agreeing with children’s author Rob Biddulph, and you might like to reflect on ‘why?’ : **‘Wherever a flower blooms, so does Hope’**

Thank you for all you do, and who you are in our schools, parishes and families.

Best wishes

**Jeff**

**Free Governor Training : Promoting Inclusive Recruitment : Thursday 10th June 5pm-6.30pm** – please book before 28th May <https://www.bameednetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Conference-Programme.pdf>

**Foundation Governor Training** (online):a reminder that this takes place **tonight** Wednesday 26th May 6pm-7.30pm. If you would like to attend please email sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org

**Free webinar for C of E schools : Using Picture News to Support Christian Values**  - A webinar covering how these resources can be used effectively to support **collective worship, Christian values and SIAMS**. The 1hr session will be led by SIAMS Inspector and Blackburn Diocesan Advisor Lisa Fenton and Assistant Headteacher and English Lead James Young. **Tuesday 15th June, 4-5pm**

**Book your place** <https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=5ji2Hfr3mUG6Gfj-k-xSs8cuXFMCtWZDjPyqwQ2WaABUNDBJS0FENDNGMklEWFJaRFkwUDlIRFZISSQlQCN0PWcu>

**National Professional Qualifications from Autumn 2021**. You may have read, the Church of England was named as one of just 9 national providers of NPQs for the new reformed qualifications. All of the 6 new qualifications will be available to leaders in every part of the country from the tip of Cornwall to the top of Northumberland and everywhere in between in partnership with over 80 delivery partner organisations. This includes around a quarter of all the newly appointed Teaching School Hubs, a huge range of MATs, and some individual schools too, meaning that applications for these programmes will be able to open at the end of this month, for a November start. You can read more about the new frameworks at [this page](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1lia68-0000hn-5G&i=57e1b682&c=0h_p0ZBo8vKAigY99qpf2OwuTEJmV6O4aXnA_iTE8YuIxkHFJPgKQHTIiFyLRhiUiQ5TyDsMJE_oKJRCwJtT4CPLvAS6hrei7L2xNrImcpICUO32KV9gbpOkFb6TD7yhkbtoFqMcaqlDnLSTzKR_yYdHiXjjLXWxuYEwDWwjGZye96cuhxAbxeGQuOnU8-nSWIqaS0Ngg1fVlTpCvXbDzHlN87CWh6aKYbtNRW564agP7x9nzgPjMNIBsyxql7gAxBRkgMDjT7F8ii4AgvUtTJVRpn6AzOmV2ywZIIeLCbcVepjK8eWJ_KDKkpScp5Ul3SjnXsD3EeyejhdVrFAW3A) which outlines all the courses available,  from the reformed NPQEL/NPQH/NPQSL programmes to the new specialist leadership programmes for Leading Teaching, Leading Behaviour & Culture and Leading Teacher Development.
 In our programmes, we have taken a very strong focus on culture and vision and the way this affects all of our leadership decision making, whilst also ensuring that we have a strong focus on making all the programmes accessible and attractive to all kinds of schools (with a particular focus on small and rural schools, who can sometimes feel a little left out of major professional development reforms). All the programmes will be a blend of online and face to face delivery and available at a local level. They will also have a key focus on coaching, with an expert coach for every leader on every programme. You can read more at [www.cefel.org.uk/npq](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1lia68-0000hn-5G&i=57e1b682&c=Xx7DayW7MkZsSFH4ZGE7vgnMm6rrQH7m_fy6OaCLkLq-8K6j_wGWbqIwhGGH_USmEaOGKsTJdRIzyOw9RkGfXQMEUV_0Nf30CgUIYKFWD-8Lgm0GKAI8lCfAm0REk21EVQ9UUjTZERDJhnB8KiUlBbg9ogazrsPZu2qch16WxZiowB8hKt3KVZ2ruWwhxwAM1Gh3X9SYuPSoas7BWjeGrAJmq1f7ZAIYf2F8_IsX3JB5zXIRE_xu_HAuUiCzriM2qC_Qhv5pibqZvYpH0mN-34UoWekXJ0mscdml72_evl7gF1Kpwj4wMJKW5XzJLvzrZ_2F-yM44CklZFfpeAuEbg) and register your interest there too.

**30 Days Wild :** a heads-up that throughout June an eco-campaign will be featured on Winchester Diocese’s social media platforms, and some of our schools will be featured. Enjoy!

**OFSTED report on Religious Education** - published on 12 May the [report](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-publishes-research-review-on-religious-education) includes a review of recent research on the subject. It talks about ambitious RE and the importance of pupils making sense of a complex world of religious and non-religious beliefs, avoiding stereotypes and misconceptions. RE should be ‘intellectually challenging and personally enriching’ for all pupils, including disadvantaged learners and those with special educational needs.  The report encourages schools to focus on depth of knowledge and understanding, rather than trying to cover too much content, and highlights the importance of pupils developing their own personal beliefs as well as valuing other worldviews. Next year OFSTED will publish a further report, drawing on evidence from inspectors’ deep dives into RE.  NATRE, the  RE teachers’ association, has printed a [response to the  report](https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/natre-welcome-ofsted-s-re-research-report/), which contains two useful videos from Dr Richard Kueh, the OFSTED lead for RE.  While it is unlikely the OFSTED will focus on RE in a church school, we can assume that SIAMS will have similar expectations for high-quality, ambitious RE.

**Global Neighbours :** now has 100 schools with the award and about 10 of those are from our Dioceses.  Well done!  If you’re interested, please contact Jane Kelly our RE & Children’s Spirituality Lead Jane.kelly@portsmouth.anglican.org Jane will be hosting an online information session on **22nd June** for schools who’d like to find out more. We also offer one-to-one support or staff meetings on **Global Citizenship.**

**Restorative Justice in Schools** : a one hour **online initial information session** outlining the Christian basis for this as a toolkit for schools in approaches to dealing with conflict resolution with children and families. Training by Richard Wharton for all staff or key individuals can be booked subsequently. To book a place on these Zoom information sessions on **Thursday 17th June 1.30 p.m. or Tuesday 22nd June 10.00 a.m.** please contact Sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org who will give you the Zoom ID and Passcode.

**Congratulations to St Alban's Primary School** – the school entered the **Let's Count Census competition** and it was announced last week that they are the **Southeast regional winners and also National winner**!! To help rebuild the school community due to the global pandemic, St Albans’s focused on two areas of data. Key Stage 1 ventured outdoors to count insects, trees and flowers. The aim – plan additional planting to encourage pollinators. Key Stage 2 data was ‘people’ based. Year R pupils needed allocating to their school house, ensuring siblings remained together and maintaining equal numbers. The school used the data to support the launch of its **‘Seeds of Hope’ project.** The aim – to produce enough packets of seeds to share with the school community and surrounding area. Calculating the number of seeds needed formed a central part of data collection and can be seen on the display photos and children’s video :

<https://census.gov.uk/census-primary-education-programme-lets-count>    The achievement was also featured in the local press :

[https://www.portsmouth.co.uk/education/havant-schoolpupils-named-number-one-in-counting-competition-inspired-by-census-3242991](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1ljRfC-0001qr-5Y&i=57e1b682&c=0Mi9BdRHQdAEioiAIlCbJ2qWyix9S10Gp_88wCxIx_JGhroMWCJUdOBtYwkkhWU2LSgJCK4fouKmqDGdsiPYVfecfu9YHiSmy8CMP2quGwqSBTUpHCs7GfNp7JkL4KEkpY8lys1XXmS-kQrK_9bGPKR8ptXIVQgVIjZ90lkxMZIdrpP0XDiy7AE1E6Mw2mR678lGt7R6MwxXNyflGvtgZ7RGv6MkoQkMKTm_fYBezt_NToP0q0eNULUD0E8CSdSppTIYRbhebrPH2W4w5nnJUh7-E7-kRaHNmoGIHHe8BxtNNmL6cbJQpd8iLAEay8JrlMrZzm-X2vf1fBrfPBh_Z67MbJrJC0q5DqoirqPu3DQ)

**Dates and further aspects related to this week’s musings by Jeff :**

30 days Wild: 1st - 30th June <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/30-days-wild-2021-sign-your-pack>

Churches Count on Nature:5th - 11th June <https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/get-involved/expression-of-interest-in-churches-count-on-nature-2021/>

World Environment Day: 5th June

G7 Summit (UK Presidency 2021) Cornwall: 11th - 13th June

World Nature Conservation Day: 28th July

Climate Sunday: 5th September <https://www.climatesunday.org/>

Creationtide: Annually in the CofE September 1st – October 4th

Winchester Green Week: 25th Sept - 3rd Oct

UN Climate Change Conference in the UK (COP26): 1st - 12th November <https://ukcop26.org/uk-presidency/what-is-a-cop/>

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