

Diocesan Education Newsletter

February 2018

Our vision – Deeply Christian, Serving The Common Good



Welcome to this Spring edition of the diocesan newsletter. Please enjoy reading about the variety of work going on in our church schools and parishes. Highlights include:

A feature on a festival of light at St Mark's School, Southampton

Children take ownership of their school's Christian values

Ways to support children's understanding of global issues

A message from Director of Education, Jeff Williams

Having dried our very large, soggy, but loving dog, after a much needed walk at the end of a damp and mildly 'challenging' day I settled to the BBC News.

Nationally, and regionally, appeared schools that in most cases (but not all) were bemoaning the step of cutting of The Arts from their curriculum : minimal, nominal or nil drama, music and art, were responses to the current financial situation and the educational expectation that the 'core' curriculum is the only driver that is apparently measured or valued in our schools.

I reflected on the hour I'd spent that afternoon with a passionate and inspiring Headteacher, who unashamedly celebrated the 'broad' curriculum and opportunities for every child to 'fully flourish' in our diocesan school(s) - both of us wholly unaware of the developing media focus on a reduced curriculum that was to shortly be publicised widely.



I was then transported to the two hour meeting/fellowship that same morning I'd spent with a good friend : our conversation and work review - but importantly his offer (again, in ignorance of the political and media focus that was to develop that evening) of a letter from John Bosco in 1883, who at the time bucked the trend and instituted a radically different approach to teaching. I share a large extract of it here:

The young people of our times constitute the most vulnerable yet valuable section of human society. We base our hopes for the future on them, and they are not of their nature depraved. Were it not for struggling parents, idleness, mixing in bad company, it would be so easy to inculcate in their young hearts the principles of order, of good behaviour, of respect, of religion, because if they are ruined at that age, it is due more to carelessness than to ingrained malice. These young people truly have need of some kind person who will take care of them, work with them, guide them in virtue, keep them away from harm.

When teachers are thought of as superior and no longer as fathers, brothers and friends; they are feared and little loved. And so if you want everyone to be of one heart and soul again for the love of Jesus you must break down this fatal barrier of mistrust, and replace it with a spirit of confidence in you.

In general, the system we ought to adopt is called Preventive, which consists in so disposing the hearts of our students that they ought to be willing to do what we ask of them without need of external violence. I would like to think that coercive means are never to be used, but only and exclusively those suggested by patience and charity. If we wish to be seen as friends wanting the real good of our students, and require them to do their duty, we must never forget that we represent the parents of these young people. If therefore I want to be a true father to these children, then I must have a father's heart, and not turn to repression or punishment without reason and without justice, and only in the manner of one who does so under duress, and for the sake of duty.

How often in my long career have I had to convince myself of this great truth! It is certainly easier to lose one's temper than to be patient; threaten young people rather than reason with them. I would say that it better suits our lack of patience and our pride to punish those who resist us, rather than bear with them firmly and with kindness. The charity I am recommending to you is the one St Paul used towards the faithful newly-converted to Christianity, who often made him weep and implore them when he saw them less docile, and less responsive to his zeal. Hence I recommend all teachers that they should be the first to practise fatherly correction in respect of our dear children, and this correction be done in private. Young people often need convincing that we have confidence in their ability to improve, and feel there is a kindly hand to help them. You can get more with a friendly look, with a word of encouragement that gives his heart new courage, than you can with repeated blame, which serves only to upset, and weaken enthusiasm. Using this system, I have seen real conversions among those one would otherwise have believed impossible. All youngsters have their off-days - you have had them yourselves! Heaven help us if we do not try to help them to get through them without trouble. Sometimes simply having them understand you do not think they acted from malice is enough to ensure they do not fall again into the same fault

Fast-forward a week, which is said to be a 'lifetime' in politics, and, having basked in the sublime score of the Wales - Scotland rugby game, followed by the England match, I settled to the mountain of Sunday broadsheets in our lounge. I ponder on Lord Lloyd Webber's comment that the removal of public funding that has forced schools to charge for music classes or scrap them, is a huge "false economy" - and in the same Sunday Times article, that the DfE's is investing £400m between 2016 & 2020 "for a diverse portfolio of music and arts education programmes designed to improve arts provision for all children"

Smiling at the sports pages and perplexed at the education inserts, I open a weekly emailed reflection which begins with Psalm 149 : So let the music begin; Praise His name - dance and sing.....

And so I take our dog for her nightly walk, with my neighbours' children skipping and dancing, while I appreciate again a track on my phone composed by a child I taught some thirty years ago, now successful and inspiring another generation.

Jeff



St Mark's Festival of Light

A Southampton school has been celebrating the importance of light with its own festival. The staff at St. Mark's Church of England Primary School and the Priest-in-charge at St. Mark's Church in Shirley, Southampton wanted a positive alternative to the commercial celebration of halloween, teaching the children about its origins around the Christian celebration of All Saints Day on 1st November.

The school has many children and families from different faiths so wanted a way of joining together to celebrate the importance of light, not only in Christianity but in the other faiths represented within the school community. With that in mind, the first St. Mark's Festival of Light was held.

Reverend Kathy Hicken, Priest-in-charge of St Mark's Church contacted the Southampton Council of Faiths to find people within the faith groups represented in the school willing to come in and talk with a class about the importance and expression of 'light' in their faith and to share an art and craft activity with the children. Representatives from the Muslim, Hindu, Quaker, Methodist and Anglican communities volunteered. The children explored the impact light has within a different faith:

The day began with a whole school worship during which Reverend Kathy explaining about the importance of 'All Saints Day' within the Christian church and telling a story about a little girl who was afraid. Through the story, Kathy drew out the importance of Jesus coming to be 'the light of the world'. There was a dance performance from our lunchtime dance club.



Through song, dance, art and poetry the children found out about the significance of light, providing them with a wonderful opportunity to grow in their understanding and respect of each other's faiths.



Priti Dave from The Vedic Society Hindu Temple helped KS1 to explore Rangoli patterns and light within Hinduism. The children made their own patterns using coloured chalk and had great fun drawing them on the playground.

Minister Brian Purchase from the St. James Road Methodist Church and Trish Roscoe and Celia Withers from the Quaker Society of Friends in Southampton worked with the older children to make a working model of a lighthouse and talked about how the light of Jesus guides us through the darkness and brings us safely back to shore.



Shehzadi Jan from Fitrah Islamic Primary school in Southampton and Qurat Ahmed and Rezan Muse from the Bashir Mosque in Portswood explored with children how light can bring people out of the shadows. Year 5 shared poems and made paper lanterns and Year 6 thought about how Jesus was born in the shadows and yet brought light to the world. Each child designed their own 'flame' and wrote a personal prayer on it.



The After School Club joined in the fun with the children creating their own firework pictures.

A pumpkin carving competition was also held with the children encouraged to carve pumpkins with symbols including crosses, hearts and smiley faces instead of the traditional scary images. The pumpkin designs made a spectacular display in the hall.



The school's catering team prepared a light-themed lunch.

The first St. Mark's Festival of light was a shining success!

World's wettest school run

Church schools are being invited to put an end to the World's Wettest School Run and help other children have access to an education through a new appeal and accompanying worship resources from international maritime charity Sailors' Society.

Young children in the Philippines have to swim 2km to school, arriving for class with their clothes and school books drenched. They risked being swept out to sea and at times couldn't even attempt the journey. The Sailors' Society has stepped in to provide boats to help get children from five tiny islets to school safely. The charity helps seafarers and their families around the world, providing education and welfare grants for children whose parents may be struggling, building houses, medical centres and schools to help give young people a brighter future.

Paul Brown, head teacher at Bransgore Primary school said; "We're always looking for ways to help children gain a better awareness of the world around

them and the World's Wettest School Run helps them feel connected to their peers thousands of miles away."

Schools are asked to hold an act of worship centred on the children's plight and the World's Wettest School Run using accompanying assembly resources. Children bring in a donation and line the coins edge-to-edge around the school hall or playground. The Sailors' Society is 200 years old in 2018 and if 200 schools took part the charity would collect enough coins to stretch the 2km route the children had to swim to school – and raise an incredible £85,000 in the process.

As global learning continues to play a key role in the National Curriculum, Sailors' Society is planning to develop its school partnerships further, through competitions and twinning opportunities that will enable children to communicate with and learn from their peers elsewhere in the world. More information is available on the charity's website: www.the-educator.org/ending-worlds-wettest-school-run-sailors-societys-primary-aim

Children Develop their School's Christian identity

Children at St Martin's Church of England Primary School in East Woodhay are working with staff and governors to develop their knowledge and understanding of the school's new Christian values.

The school has worked with the diocese to reinvigorate the Christian identity of the small rural school and spent a long time carefully choosing values that would reflect the ethos of the school and its hopes for pupils.

Milla in Willow Class takes up the story.....

In January the values were launched with our whole school community. We worked in our house groups (mixed Year R – 6 groups) to learn more about our four school values - friendship, courage, respect and creativity - through fun activities and we thought about what we can do to demonstrate each value.



For courage we made shields with sentences on which described what we could do to be brave. Each value was investigated through bible stories, for example:

Courage is a core value for our school because it underpins the way that Jesus lived his life. It stands for fearlessness, bravery and strength. This means being brave enough to try our best and do what we know is right.

Courage is a constant message throughout the Bible. We hear about the importance of courage in the stories of Daniel and the Lions, David and Goliath and Jesus and the Crucifixion. In John's Gospel Jesus said, 'It is I; don't be afraid,' showing that we never need to be afraid because Jesus is with us. At St. Martin's Church of England (Aided) Primary School we try to show courage in all that we do. We approach new challenges bravely and always persevere, even when we find things difficult. We recognise right and wrong and have the courage to say 'No' when we need to and stand up for what we believe in.

In creativity we made nature sculptures inside a ring. We enjoyed this chance to show our creative side. Then we made little people who looked like us and linked them together to represent friendship. In our respect session we made cut outs of our hands and made a garden of respect. We discussed how respect grows and put quotes about respect on our paper hands.



Finally we invited our parents into school to share our learning with them. THANKYOU teachers for making our day so FUN - we really enjoyed it and think our school values are really important!

Never too late for Faith

Faith the sheep has finally received her colour coat six months after her compatriots – but it was certainly worth the wait.

Staff and children at St Faith's Church of England Primary School in Winchester bought a sheep along with hundreds of other diocesan schools for the Ewe Matter project last Summer. However the school delayed decorating Faith after becoming involved in a project for the National Gallery and an art exhibition for parents.



Headteacher Dawn James said: 'I decided to leave the sheep project until the beginning of the Spring term as I thought it would be a good time to really focus on the project and to reflect on our values at the beginning of the new year. We are always looking for ways to reinforce our values.'

'At the moment Faith is living outside my room and the children are enjoying looking at her and seeing what their class has done! She has been part of our recent whole school worship and we talk about her in our achievement assemblies when children are awarded crosses for displaying our values. Faith will live in our Spiritual Garden in the better weather and will form part of class worship. I thought it would be good to create a sheep that would have meaning for the whole school and reinforce what we stand for.'



Bringing the Bible to life

A Southampton teacher is offering his professional acting skills to bring the Bible to life for children.

As well as a professional actor, Stefan Smart is a teacher at King Edward's School in Southampton.

Stefan's speciality is biblical storytelling and he visits schools with a solo word for word dramatisation of Mark's Gospel. Called 'Question MARK', the performance promises 'many moving moments, a host of colourful characters and a rich vein of humour.'

"It's been great fun, and it's gone down really well. Consequently I'd like to visit schools a bit more!," Stefan. Schools can find out more about the production by visiting www.markinthepark.org.uk.

On the Money LifeSavers Conference

Adrian Lyons, HMI for Ofsted, is one of the key note speakers at the On the Money LifeSavers Conference on 14th March 2018 in Central London. LifeSavers is a financial education programme offering primary schools a unique, cross-curricular and comprehensive way to help children learn how to manage money. With 1 in 6 of the working age population indebted and children forming attitudes and habits around money before they are 7 years old, primary schools have a key role to play and LifeSavers gives schools the resources to make a positive impact. Schools attending this free conference will receive a set of LifeSavers resources, an induction to using them and the chance to hear from other schools about how to make the programme work. Reserve free places at <https://onthemoneyconference.eventbrite.co.uk>, take a [look at the conference flyer](#) or [see the LifeSavers website](#) for more information about the conference and the LifeSavers Programme. <https://www.lifesavers.co.uk/docs/lifesavers-conference-flyer.pdf>

Mental Health Green Paper

The government is asking people for their views on a green paper setting out measures to improve mental health support for children and young people. The green paper focuses on earlier intervention and prevention, especially in schools and colleges. It is important that the views of school and the voices of pupils and young people themselves are heard in this consultation. [Read the paper and respond to the consultation here.](#)

**“Education is the most powerful weapon which
you can use to change the world.” Nelson
Mandela**

Sign up now to be part of a truly inspirational global education awareness day. Share a Pencil Day allows schools to touch on some of the key reasons millions of children around the world are still unable to go to school. Teenage marriage, extreme poverty, war & conflict and natural disasters.

Although it is a serious topic Share a Pencil Day is designed to be a fun, engaging and interactive day for all Primary and Secondary schools. Taking place the week after the Year 6 SATs tests it is the perfect opportunity to reinforce our School's Core Values.

Find out more at www.shareapencilday.co.uk and sign up for free.

A very special outfit

Schoolchildren have worked with parishioners to create a new garment for their vicar. The Reverend Jane Isaac from St John the Baptist, Waltham Chase, said she was delighted with the design of her new chasuble which has been crafted with the help of children from the church school.



After studying the story of Noah, children designed, prepared and then cut out dozens of felt doves which formed the key to the design. 'I'm delighted that 12 members of the church community joined the children to share a variety of crafting and needlework skills. They led and supported classroom-based activities including tie dying, Binka embroidery and blanket stitching .

There are now plans to make stoles. 'We'll now make this a separate activity with smaller groups at a later date. Bishop Christopher will be visiting school in March and during his time will dedicate both stoles and chasuble,' said Jane.

Understanding Christianity

Three quarters of our schools have now taken part in the Understanding Christianity training. The feedback from our latest course (pictured) has been very positive, with headteachers and teachers describing the resource as a very helpful addition to RE teaching. There are still places on the 28th March course. The training will take place at Old Alresford Place and the cost will be £110, which will include a set of the materials. To book a place please contact Julie.Stirling@portsmouth.anglican.org



Dates for your diary

Area headteacher/governor meetings this term are as follows (all from 1.30-3.30):

Tuesday 20th March, St Francis Primary Academy, Isle of Wight

Wednesday 21st March, Old Alresford Place

Tuesday 27th March, Bransgore Primary School

Thursday 19th April, Church of the Good Shepherd Crookhorn (PO7 5QB)

Thursday 26th April, Old Alresford Place

The Headteachers' tea party for the Winchester Diocese will be held on Wednesday 13th June between 3pm and 5pm at Wolvesey. The date for the Portsmouth Diocese tea party is yet to be finalised but will be given out as soon as possible.

An Easter opportunity?

Schools and parishes are asked to consider the article below as an inspiration to find creative ways of delivering the Easter message.

Hasna Khatun's eyes lit up when she spotted some deep steps and a wide space outside Centenary Quay, Southampton.

"When I first saw this I thought it would be perfect for drama," said Hasna. Drama is just one of Hasna's passions.

She has a background in

politics, education and acting and is now a Pioneer Minister, living in a flat in the new development which is Centenary Quay, Woolston, and being a presence of the church.

A curate in Sholing Benefice and funded by Jerusalem Trust and the Mission Growth Fund, Hasna spends her days meeting people and is particularly drawn to Mettricks Coffee Shop which she sees as 'Centenary Quay HQ'. There she is welcomed and it was here she put on a Christmas play "with a difference". "It went better than I hoped for!" she says. "So many people were praying, for which I'm eternally grateful. The staff and customers were delighted. James, the manager, wanted it to be longer, louder and repeated every week in the run up to Christmas! So we thank God for this encouragement."

She believes that the people at Mettricks have got to know her as their minister, an unspoken status which has come from her focus on relationship and community. "It takes several months to build relationships and at least six months to do active listening and observation," she says. So she listens, observes and comes alongside people and asks: "What does building a community look like?"

She adds: "We have to think through how the parish model serves a community that is transient and not there on a Sunday—many of the people



are away at the weekend and then other families come to eat in the coffee shop on a Sunday. On Sundays the place is buzzing with people who travel from outside of Woolston. People meet here for family time.” or Hasna, God’s mission is happening in the community. “The way I work is the way I see God’s mission. It’s God’s mission not *my* mission. God is already on the case and will raise opportunities. I have dreams and visions but it’s a case of understanding, relaxing and enjoying the journey. I’m excited about what God is doing because of the doors he is opening. Does it matter if I don’t know what is going to happen in a year’s time? I am also so humbled by the way I have been received here.”

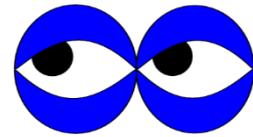
She doesn’t work alone. Pioneer Ministers work with others and Hasna receives a great deal of support from Greg and Jane Bakker from Sholing as well as from Jon Oliver, her Pioneer coach. Added to this there are several people from a mix of denominations who are constantly praying for God’s mission in Centenary Quay. “I have the backing of enablers,” she says. “The support of people who want to enable God’s mission, people who think outside the box.”

Among those she spends time talking to is the local Methodist minister Carole and the two meet regularly to bounce ideas off each other about making God’s presence known in the area. Hasna also spends time in the library helping with storytelling for pre-schoolers. “I enjoy being a helper. It’s really amazing to see a lot of pre-school boys getting into books as this was one of the concerns for primary literacy specialists when I was a teacher. Children getting into literacy has an impact.”

In everything she does locally, Hasna strives to put the Gospel into the context in which she finds herself. “It’s important to remember what has happened here,” she says. “Woolston is mainly white, working-class. They have seen developers come and do away with the docks and commence a gentrification process. People who have moved into Centenary Quay are working professionals who go away at the weekends. Another lot come in for lunch at Mettricks at the weekends and there is a third group who remember the area as it was.”

From My Perspective

A look at church schools through the eyes of people working in the school community.



Jane Kelly- new Diocesan RE / SIAMS consultant

I am the new RE / SIAMS consultant for Winchester and Portsmouth Dioceses and am really looking forward to meeting you and supporting the good work that is already taking place in your schools. I have taught for over 30 years across all key stages in a wide variety of schools and I hope to draw on this experience to encourage others in their work.

I love RE and the opportunity it gives children to explore big questions: why are we here? How can we make the world a better place? Good RE encourages children to be real and honest; a Year 5 girl asked recently, "What right has God to tell us what to do?" I'd much rather engage with challenging questions, than the children who just play safe. There's often no easy answer and we're all searching together. I have been a Christian since I was a teenager and it's an important part of my life, but RE is not about trying to persuade children to adopt a particular point of view and some of the best RE teachers I have known have not had a faith of their own, but have found creative ways of helping young people engage with the subject.

This is an exciting time for RE; I know there is already a lot of high quality RE taking place across the two dioceses and I would love the opportunity to come in and see what's happening and to help teachers link up and share ideas that have worked well – and their challenges! I hope to meet many of you soon at RE network meetings. Please let me know how I can support you – and if I don't know the answer, I'll find someone who does!

Free Trees for Schools

The Woodland Trust has free tree packs to give away to schools. The free tree packs are available for planting on one publicly accessible site. Packs will be awarded on a first come first serve basis. All applicants need to do is find a suitable site and supply the volunteer planters and tree protection. Tree packs

for schools and communities offer the perfect opportunity to bring people together to plant trees - encouraging local wildlife, protecting our landscape against tree disease and creating beautiful wooded areas that people can enjoy for years to come. For more information - www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

The 100th anniversary of the Representation of the People Act 1918

To mark the anniversary of some women winning the right to vote, the Rt Revd Rachel Treweek, the Bishop of Gloucester, reflected on how far we've come but also how far we still have to go. Bishop Rachel wrote about the chains that many girls and women still face in this country and around the world, particularly in relation to education. She also reflected on the importance of challenging the messages about appearance perpetuated by advertising and social media, a message Bishop Rachel has been focusing on in her [#liedentity](#) campaign. [Read Bishop Rachel's message here.](#)