



**DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Minutes** of a meeting of the Diocesan Board of Education held on Wednesday 15 September 2021 at 4.00pm in the St Nicholas Centre, Ipswich.

**Prayers:** The Rt Revd Dr Mike Harrison led the opening prayers.

**Present:**

Mrs Jane Addis	The Revd Carl Melville
Mr Tom Brooke	Mrs Gillian Mitchell
Mr John Dixon	Mr Pete Mumford
The Rt Revd Dr Mike Harrison (Chair)	Mr Hugo Parker
Mr Nicholas Jardine	Mr Paul Ryle
Mrs Mary Lewis	The Revd Toby Tate
Mr Guy McGregor	

**Apologies:**

The Revd Penny Brinkley	Mr Tim Fairbairn
Mrs Elaine Burdiss	The Ven Jeanette Gosney
The Revd Dr Karen Burton	Mr Drew Quayle
Mrs Jane Eccleston	

**In Attendance:**

Mr Daniel Jones	Diocesan Buildings Officer
Miss Gemma Kingston	Diocesan Schools' Adviser
Mr Phil Knowles	Diocesan School Effectiveness Officer (SEO)
Mrs Jane Sheat	Diocesan Director of Education (DDE)
Miss Jacqui Studd	Administrator (Education)
Mrs Sue Todd	Deputy Diocesan Director of Education (DDDE)

**WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

**21.31 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2021 were approved and signed.

**21.32 MATTERS ARISING**

None.

**21.33 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

The SEO declared an interest as a trustee of the Elveden Church of England Primary Academy and a trustee of Bury Christian Youth.

**21.34 DIOCESAN DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION'S REPORT**

The DDE referred to Paper A, which provided an update to DBE members on issues arising since the last meeting. The DDE noted that the Church of England has published guidance and template legal schemes for the new DBE Measure for use by

Dioceses. As the new scheme offers greater flexibility on the size and membership of DBEs, the DDE has proposed a membership of between 14-17 to run from 1 January 2023.

John Dixon felt that reducing the size of the DBE was sensible but questioned the balance between the number of elected members and those co-opted. The DDE advised that a number of other dioceses had reduced the size of their DBE. John Dixon commented that the current balance of a majority of elected members to co-opted members should continue with the new DBE. The Chair commented that it was important to have a balance between representation and skills. Mary Lewis added that it was important for DBE members to have the relevant skills. Jane Addis asked if there was a skills set for being a DBE member. The DDE offered to look at this if it would be helpful. The Revd Toby Tate felt that elected members represented the wider Diocese. The DDE highlighted that elected members are responsible for co-options and the idea is for integration into the wider diocese.

The Chair asked members to send any further comments to the DDE. The DDE advised that the proposal would go to Diocesan Synod in March 2022 and further discussion on the proposal would take place at the November DBE meeting as well as at Bishop's Council.

The DDE noted that all DBE members were warmly invited to the annual service of celebration for church schools on Sunday 3 October 2021 at the Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds at 5.30pm and also to the annual church school leaders' conference on Wednesday 3 November 2021 at the St Nicholas Centre, Ipswich.

The DDE then provided an update on academisation and highlighted recent powerpoint slides from the Regional Schools Commissioner which had been sent to members. The DDE had met with the three local CEOs of church school-led MATs who were content with the revised DBE strategy for academies as discussed at the last meeting. All had commented that being geographically close to other schools in a MAT is not as important as schools first thought. John Dixon felt that the academies strategy provided the right balance. Members approved the DBE academies strategy which would be made available to schools and kept under review.

The DDE noted that the research project, part of the Diocesan Educational Leadership Programme (DELP), had been completed and would inform the next DBE strategic action plan. A research conference is planned for 23 November and further details had been made available to members. Mary Lewis asked about the vision statement for education and the DDE advised that this would be discussed shortly. The Chair asked about episcopal and ministerial development reviews for clergy. The DDE advised that questions about working with schools could form part of these reviews.

The DDE referred to the DBE Strategy Action Plan 2019-2022 which had been updated to reflect recent work by DBE officers. The DDE highlighted the responsibility of DBE members to monitor objectives within the action plan and hoped that more could be done as things return to normal. The Revd Toby Tate asked about the CARES training provided by Suffolk Mind. The SEO advised that the training which he had undertaken would help to facilitate conversations with schools, having provided a toolkit to support Headteachers. The DDE advised that the team had built up a relationship with Suffolk Mind over the last year through a number of training sessions delivered to Headteachers.

The Chair asked about the Archbishop of York's Young Leaders Award. The DDE advised that there is a well-produced set of resources for KS1 – KS4 which help develop pupils' resilience and leadership skills. A number of church schools are

involved and a representative from the Archbishop of York Youth Trust would be speaking at the conference in November. The Chair suggested congratulating those involved to help promote the award.

The DDE advised that as the current three year action plan will end in 2022 the DBE will need to consider an action plan for the next three years as well as a vision statement for education. This statement will involve articulating the purpose of the DBE to schools and the Diocese. The DDE felt that the existing four priorities of the DBE strategy action plan remain relevant and suggested that the statement could focus on building on the concepts of growth and flourishing.

The Chair asked about which distinctive characteristics of flourishing the DBE would wish to pursue. The DDE advised that information from SIAMS inspections would help by providing a high-level view of how schools are doing. The SEO agreed and added that the National Director of the SIAMS team at the Church of England has provided further clarification on excellence in church schools, together with the updated SIAMS framework and other resources. Further information is available on the Church of England website: <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/siams-inspections>

Paul Ryle asked if there was a definition for excellence under the new SIAMS framework. The SEO advised that excellence is informed by the Christian vision of the school and because it is context-driven, will be different for each school. Paul Ryle queried the consistency of this approach. The SEO responded that the SIAMS national team will look at the evidence base when awarding excellence.

Gillian Mitchell suggested that schools could visit those schools judged excellent to understand this further.

The Chair thanked the DDE for the report.

## **21.35 ADMISSIONS**

The DDDE referred to Paper C, providing an update on admissions since the last meeting. The DDDE noted that:

- the local authority has written to Headteachers and Chairs of all Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools to give early notice of a consultation on Suffolk's Admission Arrangements 2023-24 which will include the proposal to remove the oversubscription criteria for admissions to VC schools. The consultation will run from 1 October – 12 November 2021
- a new School Admissions Code came into effect from 1 September 2021 which includes a requirement for children who are internationally adopted previously looked after children (IAPLAC) to be given equal first priority in admission arrangements. VA schools and academies were advised in June to add a variation to previously determined policies for 2021-22 and 2022-23
- the new Admissions Code also improves the in-year admissions process and makes changes to improve the effectiveness of Fair Access protocols
- guidance regarding admission policies for 2023-24 has been sent to schools
- the temporary arrangements for appeals to be conducted online are likely to be extended until 30 September 2022.

Mary Lewis asked about the removal of the religious criteria for VC schools. The DDDE advised that this would come into effect with 2023-24 admission policies and only applied to over-subscription criteria in the admission policy and not to the

Christian distinctiveness of the school. The DDE highlighted that this had been discussed at the previous meeting.

The Chair thanked the DDDE for the report.

### **21.36 SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS REPORT**

The SEO introduced Paper C, providing an update since the last meeting. The SEO noted that:

- two church schools were inspected by Ofsted during the final week of the summer term
- SIAMS inspections will focus on the Christian vision and how this underpins the curriculum and assessment and ensures that pupil flourish. Data will not be required but inspectors will look at the response to COVID and how the Christian vision has helped the school and community
- a list of schools which are expected to be inspected in 2021-22 has been published on the Church of England website
- a revised early years foundation stage statutory framework came into force on 1 September 2021.

The Revd Carl Melville asked how schools are advised of the SIAMS support offered by DBE officers. The SEO advised that details of education services are sent to schools annually. The DDE added that a number of SIAMS support visits to schools have taken place over the last year and feedback has been positive. Carl suggested regular communication to schools about the services provided.

The Chair thanked the SEO for his report.

### **21.37 RE AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP UPDATE**

The Schools' Adviser introduced Paper D, providing an update on RE and collective worship work since the last meeting.

The Schools' Adviser noted that:

- following feedback from schools about collective worship planning, resources have been produced on the seasonal year as well as on values
- 86% of church primary schools are engaged with the Schools' Adviser on RE
- over 200 schools have now purchased the Emmanuel Project and a map has been created which reflects the scope and impact of the resource outside of the diocese
- SACRE is now developing a new Agreed Syllabus and is consulting with schools and the Schools' Adviser will be involved.
- additional resources on assessment of RE are being developed.

Mary Lewis advised that in her role as the DBE member monitoring RE and collective worship, she has attended training and engagement has been good. Mary will be visiting three schools this term with the Schools' Adviser.

Gillian Mitchell highlighted how helpful the collective worship resources have been to East Bergholt CEVCP School.

The Chair asked which values had been included in the collective worship planning. The Schools' Adviser replied that the values were those which had been recommended by Values for Life by the Diocese of Gloucester, as used by many schools in Suffolk. The Chair thanked the Schools' Adviser for her work.

### **21.38 LOCAL AUTHORITY UPDATE**

Pete Mumford referred to Paper E, which provided an update on local authority issues arising since the last meeting. Pete Mumford noted that:

- support continues to be provided to schools on COVID related issues
- three more active conversions are underway which include Bedfield CEVCP which is due to convert on 1 October 2021 with the Diocesan MAT and Kersey CEVCP which is due to convert on 1 November 2021 with the Tilian Partnership
- the relocation and expansion of Thurston Church of England Primary Academy has been completed
- following the publication of the School Admissions Code 2021, the local authority has made a variation to Suffolk's Admission Arrangements as set out in Suffolk's Co-ordinated Schemes for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years
- the local authority will also be consulting on the Admissions Arrangements for the 2023/2024 school year from 1 October to 12 November 2021 which will include consulting on removing the oversubscription criteria regarding religious criteria for admission to voluntary controlled schools
- 60% of primary schools may see a fall in roll.

The Chair thanked Pete Mumford for the Local Authority update.

### **21.39 CONFIRMATION OF FOUNDATION GOVERNORS**

The DBE ratified the appointment of Foundation Governors listed in Paper F.

### **21.40 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Budget – Gary Peverley, Finance Director

Environment Policy – Buildings Officer

### **21.41 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

### **21.42 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Board noted that future meetings would take place on:

Tuesday 23 November 2021 at 4.00pm via Zoom

Wednesday 9 February 2022 @ 1.30pm

Tuesday 3 May 2022 @ 4.00pm

Tuesday 13 September 2022 @ 4.00pm

Tuesday 22 November 2022 @ 1.30pm

The Chair thanked members for their contribution to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 5.15pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
[Chairman]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_