



Diocese of Bristol
TRANSFORMING CHURCH.
TOGETHER.



Church
& School
PARTNERSHIP
AWARD

CHURCH AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP AWARD

The Church and School Partnership Award celebrates the positive partnership between a school and parish that leads to flourishing relationships and involvement between pupils, parents, school staff and church community. The Award provides an opportunity for members of both communities to review their partnership and identify ways to deepen this, with the support of the Diocesan Education team. Every CE school in the Diocese of Bristol, with their parish church, can apply for the award.



What is the purpose of the Partnership Award?

This Award celebrates positive and mutually beneficial partnership between a school and parish. It provides an opportunity for discussion and support between key members of both communities: a 'stock take' of current practice and ideas to inspire and deepen this partnership further. The Award can be achieved at Bronze, Silver or Gold which reflects the extent to which the partnership is flourishing, valued and growing.



The Award



Who is the Award for?

The Award is for all schools. It is for all churches who recognize the value of work with under 18s as part of God's design for human flourishing. Each stage of the Award describes the current degree of partnership working between the church and the school. Some will be at the Bronze stage, where partnerships are new and emerging but there is a sense of energy in looking to develop more meaningful interactions in the future. Some will be further on in their partnership, with some established activities and mutually supportive interactions. The Gold Award is for schools and parishes with deep and well-developed, impactful commitments to one another and their communities, with plans for further deepening in the future. Some schools and churches will consider reaccreditation as some time has passed since the last Award was achieved and new and different partnerships have been established.

Where a parish serves more than one school, each school needs to make a separate submission to celebrate their unique relationship to the church and the activities that work for their particular context. Churches with no school in their parish are strongly encouraged to work with a local school, CE or otherwise, to explore how this Award may be appropriate for their context. Partnerships will look different in each context, including where churches partner with schools without religious designation.

How is the Award achieved?

The Partnership Award does not look at the quality of teaching or leadership. Rather, it concentrates on encouraging the work of the church community in providing opportunities to build deep relationships and demonstrate Christian love and care to those working and learning in the school. In supporting the pupils and staff to flourish day by day, it's a 'living out' of the message of Jesus who came that everyone is able to experience 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). The Award is structured around four strands: **Enhancing Prayer and Worship; Deepening Relationships; Serving the Community** and **Sharing our Resources**. The self-evaluation is sent to both the incumbent or vicar of the parish and the Headteacher of the school to think together with their teams about how to achieve the Award and the stage that best describes the current partnership.

Does the Award replace the SIAMS inspection?

No. SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) happens every five years. It focuses on the effect the Christian ethos of the church school has on the children and young people who attend it. SIAMS looks at standards of learning and progress, statutory compliance with, for example, foundational documents; the quality of the teaching in RE and how well distinctive Christian character impacts upon the whole curriculum. The Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) celebrates schools that do well in SIAMS as it is an important indicator of the 'health' of a church school. SIAMS cannot however, 'make' a church invest time and energy in its local CE school.

What is the process for applying or reapplying for the award?

- 1** **The incumbent / vicar / ministry lead and headteacher agree together that the school and church will apply for the Award.** They ask the PCC and School Governing Body to support the application.
- 2** **The church or school will assign a main link person to co-ordinate the process.** This could be a Foundation Governor or church school worker/volunteer, or other appropriate nominated person. This coordinator will collate the information relevant to the application and may organize meeting(s) to engage others in the process as required e.g. headteacher, incumbent, children, staff members, collective worship leaders, parents, PCC members/churchwardens, Licensed Lay Ministers.
- 3** **The application form is completed** by providing evidence in the sections numbered 1-5 and then sent back to the Diocesan Education Team. The form is designed to facilitate meaningful discussions between all parties as it is being completed. Bullet points are acceptable as long as they provide enough detail.

While it is important to have evidence of many of your activities and interactions, this should not involve additional work collecting it all into a portfolio (unless you wish to do so for your own school or church).

Use the ideas at the back of the application form to kick-start your conversations or to audit your current expressions of partnership. You will probably be able to identify activities and events that you do which are not listed in the examples. You might find it helpful to 'RAG' rate (Red, Amber, Green) how you are doing in each section and maybe start some new expressions of partnership before submitting your application as a result of this.

- 4** **Following the submission of the application form a diocesan adviser will arrange a visit of about 2.5 hours to meet with the headteacher, church representatives and children** to discuss the application and experience the partnership in action.

In addition to discussion of the application form, additional evidence may be observed from things such as; a learning walk, parish magazine articles, display boards, discussion with children or attendance at a collective worship service or event. There is lots of flexibility to organize the adviser's visit as you feel most appropriate.

If the adviser feels from the application form and visit that there is good evidence of partnership between the church and school, then **the Adviser will recommend to the Board of Education** that the church and school have fulfilled the criteria and should receive the award at the level applied for.

- 5** The school and church will both **receive an Award certificate** and arrangements are made for presentations. The Award lasts for 3 years.