

Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education April 2021



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

Living the story. Telling the story.

The Diocesan Education Department: Context and Scope

The Role

The role of Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) is a voluntary one, being an opportunity for a person to offer a significant Christian service to the life of the diocese: its Church schools, academies, parishes and organisations. The DBE Chair has an important role in communication with the wider diocesan family and as an advocate for our Church schools and academies and spokesperson for the DBE.

The DBE Chair plays a key role in the strategic leadership of the diocese, especially through working with the Bishop and his senior staff, the Diocesan Synod and the Bishop's Council. The Chair of the DBE is a Diocesan Bishop's nominee¹ of Bishop's Council; the role is that of a non-executive working at a strategic level. The relationship between the DBE Chair and the Director of Education is an important one. It is expected that the DBE Chair will work collaboratively and in support of the Director of Education; holding the Director to account but enabling them to lead the Education Department in the development and implementation of the Board's set strategic policy.

We are seeking a new DBE Chair during a time of continued change, particularly within the Education sector and the growing need for the diocese to respond to changing needs and expectations both with regards to the level and ways in which we support Church schools. With the national review of the DBE Measure, expected to come into being in 2023, and a subsequent reconstitution of the DBE, the next couple of years will be a period of change and adjustment for the committee and its sub committees. The DBE Chair will play a key role in supporting this change. Along with the implementation of the new Measure, the actioning of some of the recommendations of a recent governance review are still a work in hand.

The Diocese

The Diocese of Bath & Wells covers the whole of Somerset including Somerset County Council and the unitary authorities of North Somerset and Bath & North East Somerset, with a total population of approximately 940,000. The diocese spans over 1,600 square miles stretching from Exmoor in the west to the boundary of Bristol in the north, with Chard and Yeovil to the south and Frome in the north east. The diocese includes Bath, Taunton and Wells, where the Cathedral Church and the administrative headquarters for the diocese are situated. Further information about the diocese can be found on the website: [Bath and Wells Diocese](#)

At the core the diocese is committed to its role in providing distinctive education rooted in the Christian narrative and ensuring the integration of education with the new diocesan vision and strategy, which identifies three priorities for action:

- To place mission and evangelism at the heart of everything that we do
- To realign our ministry resources towards mission
- To identify, develop and use the gifts of all our people

¹ NB Bishop Ruth (Bishop of Taunton) is presently Acting Diocesan Bishop with the authority of the Diocesan Bishop.

Further information about the diocesan vision and strategy can be found at: [Bath and Wells Diocese | Vision](#)

For broader information about the Church of England's work in Education including the work of the National Society can be found at: [Education and Schools | The Church of England](#)

Growing Faith

Growing Faith promotes a partnership between church, school and household to enable discovery, exploration and growth of faith for all. Growing Faith, fully aligned with the Church of England's vision for the 2020's, is about creating, or strengthening, pathways between churches, schools and households; between generations. We have noticed, in particular during the pandemic, how important inter-generational connections are for a community. There is so much to be gained, individually and in community, from the sharing of energy and experience, enthusiasm and questions. There are many different contexts and communities across our diocese and yet each one will include children, young people or households in some way. In every context there will be overlaps where church, school or households connect. It is in these overlaps where pathways can be formed, connections made, relationships developed. Through Growing Faith, we want to celebrate and share examples where this works well. We also want to offer support or resources to encourage local, contextually relevant, responses that will help you to identify opportunities and create pathways too. Many connections and pathways are already there, we simply need to be encouraged and equipped to step on to them.

Here is a link to the Growing Faith section on the Church of England website: [Growing Faith | The Church of England](#) and a link to the Church of England Vision for Education (2016) [Vision for education | The Church of England](#)

The Diocesan Board of Education

The Bath and Wells Education Department works under the strategic direction of the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE), which is a statutory body governed by the 1991 Measure (To be changed to the 2023 Measure imminently). This group of people are approved by the Diocesan Synod or co-opted to the Board, and voluntarily offer a wide range of professional expertise. They are committed to seeing the Church taking a full and active part in education and also contribute to a small number of specialist committees and broader activities on behalf of the Board. Further information about the DBE's vision can be found on our website: [Bath and Wells Diocese | Schools](#)

The Education Department has a responsibility for work with children and young people, primarily in Church of England schools and academies, and in voluntary groups within parishes and deaneries. The Department has two key aims:

1. All church schools are sustainable and providing highest quality education for all pupils and enabling all individuals to flourish.
2. All church schools and parishes empowered and equipped to work well together in order to offer clear pathways to distinctly Christian support or activities in both schools and parishes.

The department oversees the development and support of educational chaplaincies and there are chaplains in each of our secondary schools/academies and Church of England chaplaincies working in Further Education Colleges, the University of Bath and Bath Spa University.

Schools and Academies

Two hundred years ago, the Church of England pioneered education for all, building a network of church schools across the nation that served their local communities. While education has changed almost beyond recognition, the original vision is still held and the Church of England retains a large investment in teaching and learning, notably in this diocese through its 181 schools and academies.

Across our three local authorities over 50% of all primary provision is via Church of England schools/academies, with a single school inside the boundary of Dorset. There are, in addition, six secondary schools/academies and, within areas that operate a three-tier system, three Church of England middle schools/academies, deemed secondary. In all, over 35,115 children and young people attend Church of England schools/academies across this diocese. More than 800 people serve as Foundation Governors/Trustees in Church schools/academies and many more church members serve as Governors/Trustees in Church and Community schools/academies.

The Bath & Wells Multi Academy Trust

The Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust (BWMAT) is a successful MAT and has its own leadership and governance structure. The DBE Chair is also expected to be a Foundation Member of the BWMAT offering a non-executive oversight of the Board of Trustees. As of April 2021, 35 primary schools have joined the MAT, with more seeking to join. The central team of the BWMAT, with a recently appointed CEO, Nikki Edwards, is based in Flourish House adjacent to the diocesan support services, including the Education Department. Colleagues from the BWMAT and the Education Department work in partnership to deliver high quality and distinctively Christian education as well as a wide range of support including chaplaincy links.

Voluntary work with children and young people

The Church of England, collectively across the country, is one of the largest providers of voluntary activities for children and young people. Based upon an audit undertaken in 2016, in this diocese there are approximately 8,500 children and young people in over 320 voluntary church-based groups on a weekly basis. This does not include things such as one-off events and holiday clubs. Of these, there are approximately 208 groups for children aged under 11 and 112 groups for young people aged 11+. Approximately 1,800 volunteer adults work with them in addition to 35 local paid workers.

Youth and Children's Archdeaconry 'Go Teams'

In September 2017 we launched the diocesan Youth and Children's 'Go Team'. Underpinning the 'Go Team' is the challenge from Jesus in Matthew 28: 18-20 to 'go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'. Each of the three archdeacons have their own Youth and Children's 'Go Team' Adviser who provides local support, resources and equipping for youth and children's ministry. Although the advisers are archdeaconry based for most of their time, they join together for diocesan-wide youth and children's initiatives, events and conferences. There continues to be central administration in Wells for the 'Go Team' advisers, meaning the team are fully contactable and able to communicate what is happening in youth and children's ministry across the diocese.

Department staff organisation

- **Director of Education**
- **School Effectiveness** – one Assistant Director and two full time equivalent (fte) School Effectiveness Advisors- includes leadership development, RE, collective worship, generic school improvement, SIAMS, well-being and mental health, school/parish relationship, integration of schools into Deanery Mission Plans. One part time adviser (0.2) offering support for secondary school improvement and secondary RE.
- **School Organisation** – one Assistant Director (0.6 fte) and two full-time School Organisation and Governance Advisors covering all school organisation matters including the whole academisation agenda, school admissions, governance, school buildings and finance.
- **Go Team** – one Assistant Director plus two full-time Go Team Advisers, working on an archdeaconry basis to support youth and children's work in parishes and schools, including chaplaincy; leading on the Growing Faith adventure (connecting schools, churches and households), co-ordinating with colleagues in Education and Ministry for Mission.
- **Admin Team** - One full and two part-time administrators combine a broad and complementary skill set to support the above.

Funding

Every day of the year the Church, through its members, is sponsoring and supporting learning and teaching. The Education Department's work is funded from regular parish giving, Trusts, Local Authorities and other specialist funding streams. Through its charged services the department also achieves significant income to support and develop its work.

Role Description

Post: Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education

Our vision

In response to God's immense love for us, we seek to be God's people living and telling the story of Jesus.

The key aims of the Education Department:

1. All church schools are sustainable and providing highest quality education for all pupils and enabling all individuals to flourish.
2. All church schools and parishes empowered and equipped to work well together in order to offer clear pathways to distinctly Christian support or activities in both schools and parishes.

Key purpose of the role:

- To work with the Bishop and members of the Board of Education and its committees, to shape strategic purpose and direction for the future of the Church of England schools and academies within the diocese and schools within the extended church school family.
- To lead the Board in ensuring it fulfils its responsibilities for The DBE Measure (1991) of the organisation and strategic direction of the Trust.
- To work alongside the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) as part of the planned, greater integration of the DBE into diocesan structures.
- To work in partnership with the Director of Education to ensure the strategic direction agreed by the Board is translated into appropriately resourced activity, thus achieving the mission of the organisation
- To work with children and young people in the Diocese of Bath & Wells

Accountable to: Diocesan Bishop

Time commitment and support:

The workload is not spread evenly through the year, but the main commitments are as follows:

- Diocesan Synod: 3 meetings per year (two evenings/one half day and occasional away day)
- Bishop's Council: 6 meetings per year
- Board of Education: 3 meetings per year (2 hours in length, afternoon/evening)
- Bath & Wells Multi Academy Trust: three member meetings per annum
- Attendance at other committee meetings as agreed or required
- Meetings with Bishop and Director of Education: arranged on an informal basis as required
- Deanery and Parish visits: as and when required

The chair will have the time and capacity to fulfill the role based on an assumption that this is likely to take around 30 days per year. The appointment is for an initial term of two years and is eligible for reappointment for a further term of three years.

The office of Chair is not remunerated, but the Chair is encouraged to reclaim all travelling and similar expenses incurred in the course of DBE business, via the appropriate diocesan routes. Clerical support is provided by the Director's PA who is also the DBE Clerk.

Key relationships:

Director of Education and members of staff within the Education Department
Diocesan & Suffragan Bishop
Members of the Board of Education
Diocesan Secretary
Chair of the Board of Finance
Chair and CEO of the Bath & Wells Multi Academy Trust
DBE Clerk

Specific Responsibilities:

- Ensuring that the Board sets strategy and policy objectives for the short, medium and long term, in consultation with the director and staff
- Ensuring that the organisation complies with The Measure, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations and making sure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in The Measure, supported by the DBE Clerk
- Ensuring that appropriate resources (personnel, financial, material) are secured and deployed effectively in order to effectively fulfil the Board's objectives, goals and values
- Leading on the monitoring of progress of the organisation in light of its objectives and strategic direction
- Chairing the Board and ensuring the effective functioning of the Board, its committees and subsidiary companies
- Ensuring that the Board annually reviews its structure, role, relationship to staff and implements agreed change as necessary
- To be a contributing member of the DBF attending meetings as required.
- Member of the Bath & Wells Multi Academy Trust representing the Bath & Wells DBE Trust which requires attendance at three member meetings per annum.

Representation role**Internally**

- To represent the Board of Education and when necessary be the 'public face' of the organisation
- To be present where appropriate at relevant diocesan events
- To visit schools, academies, deaneries and parishes from time to time in order to:
 - Foster the relationship between the diocese and its schools, Multi academy trusts academies, deaneries and parishes
 - Communicate DBE priorities and policies
 - Receive feedback and comment

Externally

- To meet from time to time with the DBE Chairs and Diocesan Directors in the South West Region on an informal basis for the purpose of sharing and extending good practice
- To attend national events alongside the Diocesan Director of Education where relevant and appropriate

The Person

The Chair will have a committed and mature Christian faith and will:

- Have a strong commitment to church schools and the work of the DBE and the values, aims and objectives of the Diocese
- Have a deep awareness of the changing world of Education
- Act fairly and impartially in the interests of the Diocese and the DBE, using independent judgement and confidentiality as appropriate
- Attend all meetings of which he/she is Chair or Member, or give timely apologies if absence is unavoidable
- Make him/herself available to attend induction/training events organised by the Diocese or other appropriate bodies such as the Education Division of the Church of England
- Will have termly meeting with the Diocesan Bishop for both briefing on issues facing the Board and also for receiving feedback on performance
- Have a passion for furthering the mission of the church within the Diocese
- Be able to think strategically about both finance and mission
- Have a grounding in local parish life
- Have a professional background in education, business or public sector work
- Have experience of working with a charitable company
- Be a proven communicator
- Be an effective chair of meetings
- Be used to working collaboratively with both staff and volunteers