

Welcome to the first newsletter of the new school year!

## THROUGH THE VALLEY OF SHADOWS, ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

As we begin to emerge from this pandemic at the start of this 2021-2022 academic year, truth be told, we still find ourselves in a 'valley'. Some of us may be on the brighter uplands of the higher slopes now, and some of us may be low down in shadowy and dark places. We all share sorrows and griefs to differing degrees. In our DBE Education Team we were immensely saddened last year by the loss of Josh Youngman, Liz's son, and many have struggled on a personal level. Some of you will know that my wife has been very seriously ill for 18 months now, experiencing Covid and then long Covid with associated health complications, having nearly died in August 2020. I'm acutely aware of so many other colleagues who have suffered so greatly too, and all around the world the suffering has been absolutely immense.

The Scriptures have much to say to encourage us in the face of such devastating and life-changing experiences. When David's life was in danger, he wrote: 'Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil' (Psalm 23:v4). Being fearless is not something that comes naturally to us in our deepest and darkest hour, but David held out this hope that we can be fearless in the face of the most difficult circumstances. Why? Well, he was able to say: 'The Lord is my shepherd' and went on to say: 'for you are with me, your rod and your staff they comfort me'. He was aware of God being close to him, watching over him, caring for him and encouraging him to keep moving forward in the right direction. We too are well placed to discover a deeper personal relationship with God for ourselves in this pandemic and to help all those in our care to do the same, with a greater degree of empathy and compassion.

As Handel's most famous oratorio, The Messiah, reminds us, Jesus was known as 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief' (Isaiah 53:v3), and yet he was also often a source of 'great joy' (Luke 2:v10) Jesus ministered from both a place of profound personal blessing and an empathetic appreciation of the very deepest suffering. Such is the true path of discipleship, and so the opportunity is there for us today to become much richer, deeper, and more fulfilled people, embracing the sufferings that God has seen fit to entrust us with. We can become much better able to engage with and care for all who suffer, because we have walked through the valley of shadows and have found that we can say, with exhilaration and expectation, 'I will fear no evil', assured that God is with us, guiding us every step of the way, and that His loving presence will light up our path.

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW HEADTEACHERS AND HEADS OF SCHOOL

We welcome this term a number of headteachers and heads of school stepping into new posts: Carly Thom, as Head of School at Boddington; Darren Smith as Headteacher at William Law; Emily Birch as Headteacher at Great Addington; James Sherlock as Headteacher at Geddington; Jo Shortland, as Headteacher at Sywell; Lisa Witheyman as Head of School at Collingtree; Louise Cook as Head of School at Naseby; Pete Smith, Headteacher at Newbottle and Charlton; Tricia Robertson as Acting Head of School at The Abbey; Jo Griffin as Headteacher at Oundle; Sally Beaton as Headteacher at Towcester; Tom Burrows as Headteacher at Trinity; Suman Bedi as Headteacher at Barby and Laurie Hill as Headteacher at Blakesley.

## A LETTER OF WELCOME FOR PARENTS / CARERS NEW TO CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOLS

Archdeacon Richard Ormston, Chair of the Diocesan Board of Education, has provided a letter of welcome to parents / carers new to Church of England schools in Peterborough Diocese, as attached. Please email this out to all parents / carers who are new to your school.

## OUR NEW SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMME

We are once again including all the training for free if you sign up for the Gold Service Level Agreement; we were pleased that almost all schools signed up for this last year. We will also again include in this a termly visit from Diocesan Schools Consultants – although one or more of these may be online depending on ongoing circumstances. In addition, if you sign up to Gold you get the full support of all of our officers free of charge. We will deliver a full training programme, which will be offered either at Bouverie Court and venues around the Diocese or through Zoom and Microsoft Teams, according to the government advice at the time. During the autumn term, virtually all our training will be delivered through Zoom and Teams.

*Education for life, deeply Christian, serving the common good*

We are also offering some additional services. Andy Lakatos, who is a Lead Ofsted Inspector and our Schools' Effectiveness Adviser, will be offering support to all school leaders with self-evaluation and school improvement planning. There will be an increased range of training courses, as well as repeats of popular courses from previous years such as having challenging conversations with colleagues in the context of performance management and competency processes, and 'Mental Health First Aid'.

We are delighted to welcome to our team of Diocesan Schools Consultants three distinguished headteachers who have recently retired: Tracey Cunningham, formerly Head of William Law Church of England Primary School, Rachael Hutchinson, formerly Head of All Saints Church of England Primary School, and Richard Meekings, formerly Head of Great Addington Church of England Primary School.

An early school response to the SLA & Schools Training Programme would be appreciated so that we can deploy DSCs accordingly; we are grateful for the early positive responses already received from the CEOs of PDET and RLT on behalf of all their schools, so if you are a headteacher of a PDET or a RLT school there is no need for you to issue an individual school response.

## HEADTEACHERS' CONFERENCES

We hope to inspire you, encourage you, bless you and equip you in this coming year to lead your schools forward in a spirit of excellence, and so we have put together a great training programme and SLA, and invited some fantastic speakers to join us at our Headteachers' Conferences. Biographies of the speakers are attached, and outlines of the conferences are provided below:

### *Reimagining and Reinvigorating Education in a Post-Pandemic Future*

The keynote address at our autumn term conference will be given by Professor Dame Alison Peacock, CEO of the Chartered College of Teaching, sharing the vision and mission of the Chartered College of Teaching, and addressing the main conference theme about 'Reimagining and reinvigorating education in a post-pandemic future'. Lorna Fitzjohn, Regional Director, East of England, will share Ofsted's expectations of post-pandemic education, best practice which has been recently documented and her own aspirations for our national education system. Dr Margaret James, National Director of SIAMS, will set out the nature and purpose of SIAMS under her leadership, and what this will mean for Church of England schools in practical terms. Tim Oates CBE, Director of Assessment Research and Development at Cambridge Assessment, will share thoughts on enabling children to succeed in education through high quality contact time, social learning, quiet reflection, and self-study. In addition, from our own DBE Education Team, Andy Lakatos, DBE Schools' Effectiveness Adviser, and Jane Lewis, Assistant Diocesan Director of Education, are very mindful that you will want to ensure your SEF accurately reflects your school and your development plans show real clarity in your intended outcomes, with Ofsted and SIAMS inspections resuming from the autumn term onwards; Jane and Andy will share their thoughts on SEFs and SDPs which we trust you will find helpful.

### *Every Dimension of Every Life Matters*

Our spring term conference will include a main presentation from: Dr Ruth Valerio about 'The Earth's Life Matters', addressing important themes about: the environment, climate change, courageous advocacy and ways to help children and young people look after God's world and love their global neighbours. Allana Gay will speak about 'Black Lives Matter', addressing important BAME, UKME and decolonising the curriculum themes. Lat Blaylock from RE Today, will address the theme of 'Religious Lives Matter', illustrating the importance of religion in our world, with 80% of all people on our planet practising some form of religion today, and will consider RE teaching and curriculum design, referencing resources and training courses that would be helpful for teachers, especially for colleagues in the primary school sector. Dr Anne Lumb will present on 'Spiritual Lives Matter', considering afresh the spiritual dimension of pupils' lives and how Church of England school leaders can most effectively support children's and young people's spiritual development.

### *Happiness, Wellbeing, Resilience, Growing and Flourishing*

Dr Bill Mitchell, a highly experienced clinical psychologist, whose clinical work is about rebuilding resilience in people who have been temporarily 'de-railed' by complex life events, will address the theme of 'Wellbeing and resilience' at our summer term conference, encompassing:

- identifying personal pressures

*Education for life, deeply Christian, serving the common good*

- recognising early signs of not coping
- the physiology of mental fitness
- having helpful conversations.

Richard Crellin will speak about the Children's Society 'Good Childhood' report, which is a vital tool for measuring the happiness and well-being of the children and young people; it is the only report of its kind that actually asks the questions directly to children and young people, rather than to their parents and carers, and is used to inform government policy. Ian Soars will share with us the support that Fegans (a leading UK charity supporting vulnerable children and families) gives and why it is important. Chris Whittington will lead experiential workshop you will be introduced to meditation in the Christian tradition as a simple but radically effective path to greater peace, wellbeing and community. Through a series of short talks and periods of practice, we'll explore:

- forming a new relationship with life with all that offers us and throws at us
- establishing peace in ourselves so we can be places of peace for those around us
- taking what we have encountered out into our daily life and places of work.

## NATIONAL CHURCH OF ENGLAND GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE

The national virtual Church of England Governors' Conference, on 22<sup>nd</sup> September from 6.00-8.00pm, is definitely an event not to be missed. As well as Archbishop Stephen Cottrell and Mary Hawes, the conference will also feature the Church of England's Chief Education Officer, Nigel Genders, National SIAMS Director, Dr Margaret James, and Cheryl Govier. We would encourage all Governors to sign up for this two-hour evening conference in September. Further details are attached.

## EXTERNAL ADVISER SUPPORT FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management should be a motivational celebration of all that has been achieved, and provide the focused challenge and support essential for achieving excellence in education. With this in mind, we have again made arrangements with suitably skilled and experienced external advisors, who are all serving Lead Ofsted inspectors, to support governing bodies with headteacher performance management, and to ensure it is a high quality process supporting excellent school leadership and governance, from an objective, external and expert perspective. A brief pen portrait of each external advisor is attached. They will all follow the overall approach advocated by the Diocese, following the attached framework which also includes details of costs. If you would like to book the services of an external advisor simply email [alex.benoy@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:alex.benoy@peterborough-diocese.org.uk).

## RE NEWS

Please find attached a copy of Lesley Pollard's RE Newsletter, which has been sent to RE Subject Leaders, and contains details of a host of CPD opportunities, RE news, resources, examples and tips for profiling RE on your school website.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP RESOURCES

As most of you will know, we don't have a prescribed collective worship plan for schools, because we believe every school's worship should flow from their vision and values, and dovetail with their own particular curriculum design. However, we do recommend a range of resources and recognise that often a lot of work can be saved by avoiding 'reinventing the wheel'. I have often recommended resources shared by the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, and their autumn term offering is well worth a look - [Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich | Collective worship \(cofesuffolk.org\)](http://www.cofesuffolk.org).

## HOLOCAUST EDUCATIONAL TRUST RESOURCES

Free and downloadable teaching resources, which can be found at <https://www.het.org.uk/teaching-resources> and details of HET's outreach programme, through which teachers can arrange for a Holocaust survivor to share their testimony with their students, can be found at <https://www.het.org.uk/education/outreach-programme>.

## ECO SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

Please find attached an excellent Eco School Booklet entitled 'Our School: Our World', which has been produced by Norwich Diocese. The document supports the Eco Schools initiative ([www.eco-](http://www.eco-education.org)

[schools.org.uk](http://schools.org.uk)) which stresses the importance of schools involving their pupils in issues related to the future of the planet on which they live.

## NATIONAL ACADEMY AND SCHOOL NEWS

Please find attached the latest national Academy and School News Update, from educational consultant Tony Stephens, and some additional notes below from Jonathan Lewis, Service Director – Education for Peterborough City Council:

### *‘CO2 Monitors for School*

You may have seen the news around all schools receiving carbon dioxide monitors. They will enable schools to quickly identify where ventilation needs to be improved. The majority of c. 300,000 monitors will become available over the autumn term, with special schools and alternative provision prioritised to receive their full allocation from September given their higher-than-average numbers of vulnerable pupils. CO2 monitors are portable so schools and other settings will be able to move them around to test their full estate, starting with areas they suspect may be poorly ventilated. The DfE also said the number of devices available to each mainstream school would be dictated by the size of their estate and be in the region of one device per two classrooms and staff rooms.

### *Ofsted*

Ofsted are holding a curriculum roadshow on the 28<sup>th</sup> September and 30<sup>th</sup> September – please book via these links. There are also updates on the following guidance –

- Guidance on ‘incomplete inspections’ has been updated to give further clarification on the steps that will be taken if Ofsted decide that a further visit is necessary to gather additional evidence to complete the inspection.
- Guidance for inspectors on how to inspect safeguarding. In this update a new section has been added about Ofsted’s review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges and there are further references throughout the guidance outlining expectations of providers. Updates throughout align with the Department of Education’s updated guidance ‘Keeping children safe in education’. This is not a document that is necessarily widely read but in my view it’s useful for schools and Trusts which are expecting an inspection, if only to know it exists so you can refer to it if needed during an inspection

### *National Tutoring Programme*

The latest update on the NTP programme for 21/22 AY can be found here - National Tutoring Programme (NTP) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). It includes information on school based tutors.’

## PRAYING FOR YOU

We regularly pray for our schools and are always glad to be able to pray for particular schools. So, if you have a particular matter which you would like to draw to our attention for prayer, please don’t hesitate to get in touch; it would be our privilege to pray for you and your school.

## HERE FOR YOU

Together with our team of Diocesan Schools Consultants and the Diocesan Board of Education, we look forward to supporting you and helping you to provide an excellent standard of education which is deeply Christian and serves the common good.

If you would like to get in touch with any member of the Diocesan Education Team at any time, our email addresses are below:

Director - [peter.cantley@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:peter.cantley@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)

Deputy Director - [peter.french@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:peter.french@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)

Assistant Director – [jane.lewis@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:jane.lewis@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)

School Effectiveness Adviser - [andrew.lakatos@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:andrew.lakatos@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)

Religious Education & Collective Worship Adviser - [lesley.pollard@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:lesley.pollard@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)

Finance Officer - [mark.bedford@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:mark.bedford@peterborough-diocese.org.uk).

Executive Administrator - [alex.benoy@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:alex.benoy@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)

Administrator – [louise.ross@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:louise.ross@peterborough-diocese.org.uk).

*Education for life, deeply Christian, serving the common good*

AND FINALLY

May I share with you a prayer from this Sunday, the thirteenth Sunday after Trinity ...

*Almighty God,  
you search us and know us:  
may we rely on you in strength  
and rest on you in weakness,  
now and in all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

Wishing you every blessing for the year ahead!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Cantley". The script is cursive and fluid.

Peter Cantley  
Diocesan Director of Education