### To: Head Teachers and Chairs of Governing Bodies

 **September 2019**

Dear Colleague in Catholic Education,

Welcome back. I hope you and your whole school community have had a wonderful holiday and have returned renewed and refreshed. It is the role of our schools to strive to communicate Christ and to form Christ in the lives of others. As Pope Benedict explained “Every educator and witness finds an equal model in Jesus Christ the Father’s great witness, who said nothing about himself but spoke as the Father had taught him.” Catholic Schools should be able to build on their primary mission to allow students to be able to encounter the living God who is Jesus Christ who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth.

This autumn the challenges facing all Catholic Schools in the year ahead are considerable and cannot be met in isolation. We seek your support in providing us with information on data we require to address issues on pupil numbers, finance and recruitment and retention. The data needs to be transparent and complete and known to all our community. During this term various requests will be sent to Governing Bodies and it is imperative that the information is submitted. We will have difficulties in allocating LCVAP funding if we do not receive full compliance.

As you will all be aware under the terms of the current Diocesan Protocols all Capital works must be approved in advance by representatives of the Education Commission. You will be required to provide information relating to pupil numbers when we are considering your requests for Capital Projects. This will apply to both voluntary aided schools and Academies. We have taken steps to simplify the data uploading process. There is a data sorting tool now available on our website.

The Cardinal has asked Fr Michael Dunne to Chair the Education Commission for this academic year. On behalf of all the Education Service we thank Fr Michael for his continued commitment to the Commission and his passion for Catholic education. Please be assured of our prayers and support.

At the start of this term we have made an additional division to the work that will be undertaken by the Academy Project Board. This new division has the clear remit to provide qualitative analysis on standards, finance and Governance on both emerging Trusts and existing ones.

In regard to standards, the Academy Project Board has asked for greater insight into the strengths and weaknesses of each emerging CAT and how we can identify early on collaborative work from a position of strong academic performance. Paul Stubbings, Headmaster of the Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School, has kindly volunteered to prepare a desktop summary of school standards and will meet with individual Headteachers and the Chair of Governors to steer a discussion based on desktop benchmarking and his analysis that will look beyond the key performance indicators and will focus on the strengths and identify any other areas of weakness for further development.

In relation to finance the Diocesan Academy Project Board has found that every school that has completed the due diligence process to date and converted to Academy in 2019 forecast declining reserves of the next three-year period taking it to 2021- 22. We expect this trend to continue and given the current pressures on school funding forcing schools to make some difficult choices over the coming years. In order to address this situation the Diocese has recently appointed Jane Gibson, Business Management Services Manager for Herts for Learning (HFL) to work with schools to examine trends and pressures and challenge underlying assumptions. We are delighted that Jane and her team are able to work with those schools who have expressed an interest in becoming an Academy and HFL will use schools’ two year budgets return as the basis of an ongoing dialogue and discussion.

The Diocese has asked Christine Gilbert, the ex-Head of OfSTED, to explore the challenges faced in Leadership and Governance within existing Academy Trusts. She will aim to provide recommendations that can be shared with all Trusts and schools as to the best way forward for Governance that can provide robust challenge for school leaders. The Diocese is continually trying to improve those processes and the support it can provide for schools who are engaging in this due diligence exercise; this can be seen to benefit all.

During the summer our Events and Marketing Coordinator, Francis Leeder, moved on to a new position within the legal profession. Our sincere thanks to Francis for the excellent work he achieved whilst working with the Education Service. He did a fantastic job. I am delighted to announce that Diwura Olayinka will be taking up this role at the beginning of November as his replacement.

Finally, I would ask all the Catholic Community to keep the following Schools, who have tragically lost either a member of staff or a pupil since the term began, in their thoughts and prayers. The loss of anyone in our community is exceptionally painful and may God’s grace, guidance and care be with them always.

* Larmenier and Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
* St Michaels Catholic Grammar School
* Cardinal Wiseman Secondary School

Thank you for all you are doing to support, promote and protect Catholic education across our Diocese.

With best wishes.



**JP Morrison**

**Director of Education**

**Catholicism Unpacked (see attached document)**

We know that developing the religious literacy of staff can be a challenge within Catholic school communities.  We are absolutely delighted that our CCRS and Foundation Stones courses are now proving so popular with your schools.  We do however appreciate that budget constraints impact not only funds, but also the available time of existing staff to attend courses and external training.  Consequently, we have **created a resource that we hope will effectively assist schools in developing the religious literacy of their staff in a specific area,** without the need to attend a course or liaise with external speakers.

The resources we have created so far focus on the **topic of Mary**, as this is often an area where there are misconceptions, and is timely as we approach October, the month of the Rosary.  We recognise there are many areas of the Catholic faith that would have been equally useful places to start and remain open to the possibility of addressing them in the future.

We have created a **Question and Answer** document that can be provided to staff and governors, either electronically or in hard copy.  Although the information within may be useful, we have also created an **accompanying presentation** which includes quizzes, discussion prompts and video links which we hope will encourage active engagement and undoubtedly aide learning.  We are confident that there will be at least one individual, if not a team, within each school community, who will have the expertise to guide the staff through the document and accompanying Powerpoint.  The Powerpoint can be located on our diocesan sharing platform, SLACK, as it is too large to send electronically.

*Contact:  Amanda Crowley* *amandacrowley@rcdow.org.uk*

**Want to Improve Your Teachers Understanding of Catholicism?**

Foundation Stones is a twelve hour introductory course to Catholicism that is taught in schools and is organised into sessions that suit schools.  The teachers taking part will learn about key Catholic beliefs and practices and the course is designed to allow participants to discuss and gain insights into the Catholic faith.  It aims to improve teachers’ theological knowledge and understanding and as a result improve Religious Education.

Starting in September 2019, there will be a number of new courses being led by members of the Diocese of Westminster Education Service. The courses will be hosted in hub schools across the Diocese and participants will be welcomed from the hub school and other nearby schools. There needs to be a minimum of 10 participants for each course to run.

The cost of Foundation Stones is £200 per staff member or £300 per school for two or more staff members. (There is a discount of £100 for the hosting school, so £100 for one staff member or £200 for two or more staff members).

At present courses will begin in the following hubs in the coming weeks:

* Ruislip, Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School
* Tower Hamlets, Bishop Challoner Catholic Secondary School
* Hitchin, Our Lady’s Catholic Primary School
* South Oxhey, St. Joseph’s Catholic Primary School

It is hoped courses will begin in the following hubs in the coming months:

* Islington, St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School
* Sunbury-on-Thames, St Ignatius Catholic Primary School
* Enfield, St Monica's Catholic Primary School

To book and find out further details please use the following links -

Non-host schools

For individuals attending from outside the host school, please purchase tickets at this link: <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/foundation-stones-individual-ticket>/

For external schools sending multiple staff, please purchase tickets at this link: <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/foundation-stones-school-ticket>/

Host schools

For host schools sending an individual, please purchase your tickets at this link: <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/foundation-stones-host-school-individual-ticket>/

For host schools sending multiple staff, please purchase your tickets at this link: <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/foundation-stones-host-school-school-ticket/>

*Contact:  Claire O’Neill* *claireoneill@rcdow.org.uk*

**Relationships and Sex Education**

As you are aware, RSE in schools becomes statutory in September 2020. We know this is a big change for many of our schools and so we are running a series of training days called ‘Catholic RSE Policy and Practice ‘ to help our schools prepare for delivering RSE in a Catholic context. The training days take place on October 17th, February 12th and 2nd April. The aim of the days is to help schools to understand the Catholic teaching on the themes in the CES model curriculum, explore effective ways of teaching RSE, equip schools with the knowledge to discern resources and give advice to schools on practical and legal matters. The training is for both primary and secondary schools. Please ensure the senior leader with responsibility for implementing RSE is booked onto these training days by clicking on the following link  <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/catholic-rse-policy-and-practice/>

*Contact:  Primary – Theresa O’Sullivan* *theresaosullivan@rcdow.org.uk**Secondary – Trisha Hedley* *trishahedley@rcdow.org.uk*

**Primary School Assessment – Standards Training**

For schools that would like to begin to use the Standards Framework there are two training opportunities  during the Autumn term.  The aim of the day is to develop an understanding of the new framework and explore the resources which support the three attainment targets.  There is no charge for these sessions but participants are asked to bring their own lunch.  Further information and booking can be made via the following links.

10th October – Vaughan House <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/new-standards-framework/>

13th November – Niland Centre <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/new-standards-framework-2/>

*Contact:  Diana Robert* *dianaroberts@rcdow.org.uk*

**Formation for Catholic Educators – David Wells - 3 day course (25/11, 23/01, 10/03)**

There are many Catholic teachers who aspire to leadership and this three day course, led by internationally renowned speaker, David Wells, provides an insight into the mission and purpose of Catholic education, combining a knowledge and understanding of Church documents with a practical insight into Catholic models of leadership.  This course is most appropriate for Catholic teachers or middle leaders.

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/formation-for-catholic-educators/>

**Suicide Prevention Skills – led by CEO of Papyrus, Ged Flynn – 4th October**

Following the success of Ged Flynn’s sessions at our leadership conferences and requests for an opportunity for extended training we are delighted to offer a half day course for pastoral leaders focusing on suicide safety for young people and those who support them.  This course is suitable for primary and secondary practitioners.

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/suicide-prevention-skills/>

**Year of the Word**

This academic year the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales have designated as 'The God Who Speaks - A Year of the Word’ to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Verbum Domini - Pope Benedict XVI’s Apostolic Exhortation on ‘The Word of the Lord’, and the 1600th anniversary of the death of St Jerome, who translated the Bible into Latin. In keeping with the Church’s three year cycle there will also be a specific focus on St Matthew’s Gospel.

The aim of The God Who Speaks - A Year of the Word is ‘Celebrating, Living and Sharing God‘s Word.’ It will be an opportunity in our schools to enrich current scripture practices and to develop and explore new ways of responding to the Bible. Throughout the year, there will be available to schools a range of events, activities and creative resources which will help students engage meaningfully with the Bible. The Education Service will keep you informed about these opportunities and will also suggest ideas and useful links.

The year begins on the 30th September when the Cardinal will release a video from the National Gallery launching the year using a painting of St Jerome. There will be two subsequent videos released on the 1st December 2019 and 26th February 2020 to mark the beginning of Advent and Lent. The year will end on the 31st December 2020.

We will be emailing and putting on SLACK a presentation for staff and an assembly for students to help you launch the year and inform everyone in the school about this exciting initiative. There is also a website dedicated to ‘The God Who Speaks - A Year of the Word’  which can be found using this link - <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/the-god-who-speaks/> In addition to this, you will receive two brochures at school detailing the rationale behind this special year and some initial ideas to promote/support your work. If you do not receive these brochures please email - Adrian Cullen at adriancullen@rcdow.org.uk Please use the staff presentation, assembly, website and brochure to plan what your school will do to realise the aims of 'The God Who Speaks - A Year of the Word.' Please also use these resources to produce a wall display in a central area of the school which explains the Year of the Word.If you have any queries concerning any of the above please do not hesitate to contact us.

*Contact:  Primary –**tonygorton@rcdow.org.uk**Secondary –**claireoneill@rcdow.org.uk*

**CPD – Upcoming Events**

Primary NQT Day – 1st October

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/being-an-nqt-in-a-catholic-primary-school/>

New to Catholic Education day – 3rd October

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/new-to-catholic-education-3/>

Suicide Prevention Skills – led by Papyrus CEO Ged Flynn – 4th October

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/suicide-prevention-skills/>

Child Centred Call to Action – 9th October

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/child-centred-call-to-action/>

Chaplains’ Day – 11th October

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/chaplains-day-4/>

Secondary RE NQT Day – 15th October

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/secondary-religious-education-nqts-day/>

School Admissions – 15th October

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/school-admissions/>

RE in the EYFS – 16th October

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/religious-education-in-the-eyfs/>

Local Academy / Family of School Meeting – 16th October

<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/local-academy-family-of-school-meeting/>

*Contact:  Events and Marketing Coordinator* *eduemc@rcdow.org.uk*

**Inspection Update**

As inspectors, we aim to carry out all of our work to a high standard but recognise that, occasionally, concerns may arise about our actions or the conduct of inspectors. The Complaints Policy sets out our approach and procedures for handling complaints about diocesan inspection in the Diocese of Westminster and an updated version can be found on the Diocesan Inspection section of the Education Service website.

*Jane Goring, Chief Inspector,* *janegoring@rcdow.org.uk* *020 7798 9183*

**Choosing a Catholic Secondary School**

This diocesan guidance (attached), provides admissions information for parents and schools, for entry to secondary school in September 2020.

**Admission Arrangements 2021 - 2022**

Thank you to those who have already sent in their admission arrangements. All remaining policies and SIFs should be sent to the diocese as soon as possible and by half-term at the latest. Model policies and SIFs are contained in the admissions guidance, which is attached. Those needing to consult can do so from 1st October 2019, for a minimum of 6 weeks, to finish by 31st January 2020. Remember, if you haven’t consulted since your 2014-15 policy you will need to consult this year even if your policy remains the same. The procedure for consultation is attached.

The admissions timetable for 2021-2022 is attached.

**Skills Audit**

Now is a good time for governing bodies to carry out a skills audit. This is especially useful if you have not done this audit for a few years and you are looking to recruit new governors. It is helpful to see what qualities we are looking for in prospective governors and also when choosing training for governors for the new school year. We recommend that governors use the skills audit from the CES website which is designed for Catholic schools.

<https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/guidance-for-schools/governance>

**Note to Clerks**

It is very helpful when schools keep their information on GovernorHub and the school website up-to-date.

This is a request that the current constitution of the governing body, together with dates of appointment be put on GovernorHub and on the school website.

**Transgender Issues in Education**

Governor training  on ‘Transgender Issues in a Catholic School’ is available on request.

*For further info please contact* *maryryan@rcdow.org.uk*

**Governor Training**

**Admissions** – Training on 15th October 2019 at 6.30pm in Vaughan House. This training is for all governors and those involved in admissions. Please register on GovernorHub.

**Complaints Procedures** – Training on 26th November at 6.30pm in Vaughan House. All governors should have done this training before sitting on a complaints panel. Please note that the 2019 Complaints Procedure has been updated substantially. Please ensure that you are using the 2019 version which is attached and is also on the diocesan website.

*For further information please contact* *maryryan@rcdow.org.uk*

**CAPITAL**

**Capital Work Protocol**

Reminder – Schools must employ the services of a Diocesan Approved Buildings Consultant when planning, specifying, procuring and delivering any Capital Works Project. This directive is based on the advice of legal counsel and is intended to protect both the owner and occupier of a Catholic School.

The Diocesan Trustees appreciate the efforts that school make to stretch funding as far as possible. However, they have determined that they can no longer accept the potential jeopardy that this practices creates for school staff/governors/directors and for the Trustees themselves. Governors and CAT Directors are asked to ensure that all of their employees understand and comply with the latest protocol.

**PUPIL PLACEMENT PLANNING**

**Enumeration Day 2019 – Thursday 31st October**

The focus of the Autumn Term Data Return is:

**Registered Pupils**

**(Including Nursery Children and Sixth Form Students)**

The return focuses on all pupils registered to attend school on the designated date.

School staff will need to process pupil level data in advance (or on enumeration day itself) in order to supply the postcode district data required by the Education Commission.

The link to the online form is: <http://w.pfrms.co/87zbs>

To support the processing of your data, a Data Sorting Tool is now available on the PPP page of the DOWES Website. Schools add three elements of data from their SIM System and the tool will then process that data and present it in the correct format for uploading to the DOWES system. Our thanks to colleagues from St Mary’s Catholic Secondary School in Bishop’s Stortford for their help in creating this tool.

The Data Sorting Tool was introduced to those colleagues who attended the CPT (PPP) Training Course at Vaughan House on Wednesday 11th September and was well received. It was noted that it should reduce the admin/processing time by a significant amount.

Once school data has been pasted into the Data Sorting Tool, colleagues can proceed in one of two ways. They can either:

* Email the whole work book to nigelspears@rcdow.org.uk and we will complete the upload on their behalf, or
* School based colleagues can complete the online form line by line.

*Contact: Nigel Spears.* *nigelspears@rcdow.org.uk**, 07738183828*

**LCVAP 2020/21**

The 2020/21 LCVAP funding application process is now live. Governing bodies of Catholic Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools are invited to submit 1 (ONE) Condition Related LCVAP proposal for a capital project, to be delivered within the 2020/21 financial year.

**LCVAP: Click** [**Here - LCVAP 2020/21 Online Form**](http://w.pfrms.co/a3wp9) **to access the submission form.**

**Please note:**

* Your submission must be received by 12:00 Noon on Friday 22nd November 2019 to be eligible for consideration. Submissions received after Noon on November 22nd will not be accepted for the 2020/21 funding round.
* Only 1 (One) application per school is allowed. Therefore, if two or more proposals from a school are received, only the final/most recent submission will be retained and considered. All earlier submissions will be purged from our database. Please make sure that you liaise with your retained building consultant to ensure that only a single entry is submitted on behalf of your school.

**For LCVAP Proposals:** An A4 Word document (maximum of 2 pages) containing supplementary information and/or pertinent photographs can be submitted by email. When naming and saving your Word document, please use the following naming protocol:

**###### LCVAP 2020-21 (AddInfo)** The 6 # symbols in parenthesis should be replaced by the six digit Unique Reference Number your school.

Please email your additional information document to nigelspears@rcdow.org.uk, including the protocol name in the subject line of your email by 12:00 Noon on Friday 22nd November 2019.

In December 2019 and January 2020, all proposals will be scrutinised by Diocesan Officers in Finance, Property and Education. Projects will be ranked and then presented to the Diocesan Schools Building Committee and the Education Commission (Capital Strategy Committee) for their consideration and approval. Information relating to the allocation of LCVAP will be published in the second half of the spring-term of 2020.

**Discussions relating to the processing of “the son of LCVAP”** after LCVAP is officially retired in March 2020 are ongoing. As a precautionary measure, we are proceeding with the standard application round in order that appropriate projects can be identified. Further information about capital management from April 2020 will be communicated when available.

**Special note to school supported by DHPUK:**

The Diocese is currently exploring the possibility of using a system called Statlog. We have been advised that Statlog has been issued to all of the DOW Schools supported by DHP. As part of our evaluation of the effectiveness of the Statlog, colleagues from Diocesan Property and Education will be reviewing the condition data held in the system when considering representations received from those schools. Please work directly with the DHP team to ensure that your data is correctly presented.

*Contact: Nigel Spears.* *nigelspears@rcdow.org.uk**, 07738183828*

**Land and Buildings Collection Tool (LBCT) – Focus on Academies**

This term, the LBCT return is due to go live on 1 October. Returns are due by 4 November and Diocesan sign off is required before your documentation can be submitted. Directors and Trustees are asked to ensure that all relevant information is completed as soon as possible after the system goes live. The Education Service will process submissions as quickly as possible, normally within 5 working days. Documentation will not be processed during half term (21st – 25th October). Ideally, all documentation should be with the Education Service by Friday 20th October.

Hopefully, this return should be reasonably straightforward as the DfE already has detailed LBCT information for many CATs in Westminster Diocese.

If you have any questions about the LBCT process, please contact Nigel Spears: nigelspears@rcdow.org.uk

**Faith, Politics and Power – The Catholic Effect in Public Life**

The Staff and Governors of Maria Fidelis School are proud to host the CPW Autumn Lecture.

Key Note Speaker: Mike Kane MP. Labour Shadow Minister for Schools and MP for Wythenshawe and Sale. A question and answer session will follow the keynote presentation. It will be facilitated by Janet Emmanuel (Citizens UK, Trustee of the Community Land Trust) In addition, there will be a Foyer Exhibition entitled “Sink or Swim”. Its focus is Catholicism in Sixties Britain through the cartoons of John Ryan. This exhibit will be introduced by its co-curator Alana Harris, Lecturer in Modern British History at Kings College, London

This lecture will take place on Tuesday 8th October 2019 at 7:30 pm. (doors open from 6:30 pm).

We hope that this presentation will be of interest to school staff and all students studying courses that include modules on Government and Politics.

*For further information, please see the post on the DOWES Website*

**CCRS News**

Congratulations to the teachers who completed their Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies by attending courses in Ealing and Hammersmith. We very much enjoyed celebrating their success at the end of last term with a beautiful Mass in the Cathedral Crypt, followed by the presentation of certificates in Vaughan House.

CCRS is of great benefit to all teachers and particularly for those considering a leadership post. Teachers say how much they have enjoyed their studies and regularly use their new knowledge in everyday classroom practice.

There are two new opportunities to study for the CCRS. The first of these will be taught as twilight sessions and we are very grateful to the host school for providing the venue:

* Bishop Challoner School, Tower Hamlets, starting on 23 September and running on Mondays from 4-6pm.

The second course provides an opportunity for teachers who find it difficult to attend twilight sessions and so runs on two consecutive Saturdays per module:

* Vaughan House, Westminster from 10 – 3.30pm. The first module on Old Testament will be taught on 21 and 28 September, with Module Two, New Testament on 9 and 16 November.

Although the first sessions at both venues have taken place, it is not too late to join the course. Please send registration forms as soon as possible – these, along with a course overview can be found at:

<https://education.rcdow.org.uk/professional-development/ccrs>

*For further information please contact: Liz O’Brien at* *ccrs@rcdow.org.uk* *07738183831*

**Perspectives in Philanthropy**

CCS Fundraising will host the next in its Perspectives on Philanthropy series on November 14th at 10am at Cathedral View, SW1P 1NL, right beside Victoria Station in London. The event will gather Heads, Development Directors and Trustees to learn more about the growing role of philanthropy in secondary education, and examine the opportunities and challenges it presents. To confirm a place please email Charael Anderson CAnderson@ccsfundraising.com

**Good News Slot**

(Please note: this section of the Communique consists of good news which have been sent in from schools around the diocese. It may well be that others have achieved similar awards or success and, if so, we congratulate them too! Please send your news to greenyl@rcdow.org.uk )

*We are happy to publicise all sorts of achievements, although we do not usually feature OFSTED outcomes.*

***Belated Congratulations to*** Mrs Siobhan Gilling, Headteacher of **St. Anne’s Catholic High School for Girls, Enfield** who was shortlisted for the TES Headteacher of the Year Award.  This was a wonderful tribute to her in her retirement year.

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