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

 **February 2020**

Dear Colleague in Catholic Education,

Every year, February marks the annual Diocesan Headteachers’ Conference and this year it is being held in Colchester. This is wonderful opportunity for school leaders to come together from Primary and Secondary, state and independent sector to share in our common mission to serve the Church. The theme of this year conference is the “Year of the Word, The God Who Speaks”.

2020 is the tenth anniversary of Verbum Domini, Pope Benedict XXVI Apostolic Exhortation on the Word of the Lord. The year 2020 is also the 1,600th anniversary of St Jerome’s death. St Jerome was a great translator of the Bible and he sought to render the scriptures into the common everyday language for ordinary people, to make the Word of God available to all. His zeal to make the scriptures accessible to people arises from his conviction that “Ignorance of the scriptures is ignorance of Christ”. These dates inspired the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales to dedicate the year 2020 as the year of focus for the Bible.

Throughout this year, there is a wide variety of activities and resources to participate all around the country. To help achieve this transformation within our hearts and our communities there will be three themes: celebrating, sharing, and living in God’s word. There are many materials on the Diocesan website for members of your communities to have access to if they are so interested.

The Annual Review for 2018/19 has been published and this document highlights the extensive work the Diocesan Education Service has done over the last year 2018/19:

* The total number of support visits made to schools and colleges was 499;
* The number of support visits made to primary schools was 403;
* Support visits made to secondary schools were 96;
* Pre-inspection support visits was 101;
* Inspection feedbacks attended was 50;
* Deanery meetings attended was 70;
* Number of training session delivered in schools and colleges was 73.

Last year we improved strategic help being delivered to our schools regarding Religious Education and Catholic Life on so many levels. This included Primary Chaplaincy Support, Standards Training, the Improvement of Religious Literacy of staff and guidance on relationship and sex education. There is a lot that we can be very proud of in what we have achieved and there remains a lot more to do.

At the end of the last academic year we sadly saw the closure of St Aloysius Catholic Primary School in Somers Town. This wonderful community had been serving Catholic education in that part of London for over 130 years. The diocese is extremely grateful to the school and the parish for the way they managed the whole process. The Governing Body working in collaboration with Camden Council and the diocese successfully transferred over 240 pupils to Our Lady’s Catholic Primary School, Camden. The experience will be used as a model for us to use as we go forward in challenging times as we consolidate our school provision. My sincere thanks and gratitude to the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team of St Aloysius for their exemplary professionalism in managing what was a very difficult process. This is coupled to the successful reciprocal support by the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body of Our Lady’s Primary in Camden in welcoming the new pupils to their school. In central London we are experiencing a significant drop in pupil number applications. The Diocese are working very carefully to look at the best way to manage these challenges whilst at the same time recognising and promoting the excellent work that is carried out by our schools day in day out whilst coping with very exceptionally difficult circumstances with finances.

Finally, it is with regret that we have two colleagues who will be leaving the Education Service in February. Our sincere thanks to Theresa O’Sullivan who steps down as one of our Primary Advisors. Theresa has proven to be an excellent member of the team and we will miss her valuable and insightful contribution to our work with primary schools. Also, Dee Olayinka steps down as our Events and Marketing Coordinator. Dee was only with us a short time and we are grateful for everything she has done. On behalf of the Education Service we wish them every success and happiness in their new roles in the future.

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

**Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes**

Please see below for an advert for a performance of ‘Peter’s Way of the Cross’ by the choir of the pilgrimage, and also an appeal for volunteers for Summer 2020.

**Word Book Day**

Please see letter below from the Bishop of Wrexham regarding this ‘Year of the Word’ initiative.

**Catholic Leadership Retreat**

An exciting opportunity to discover more about what it means to be a young Catholic leader today.  Why not come to the SPEC Retreat Centre in Pinner for a day of workshops and activities, exploring how to impact your peers? Enjoy lunch and the use of our extensive grounds during the day.

*See the leaflet below for more information or contact Angie Cook, SPEC Retreat Centre at* *spec@rcdow.org.uk* *or 0203 757 2500 for more information”*

**Chaplaincy Support Materials**

A Guidance Document to support primary schools with developing a Chaplaincy Team in Westminster has been created and sent to all schools. Various materials to further support schools with administration, enhancing the school year, developing Catholic Life and leading prayer and liturgy in schools are also available.

All resources are available to download. See <https://education.rcdow.org.uk/re-catholic-life/chaplaincy/>

*For further information contact:  Elaine Arundell* *elainearundell@rcdow.org.uk*

**CCRS News**

It’s not too late to make a New Year’s Resolution – learn more about my faith and join a CCRS group! A new CCRS course has just started at St. Ignatius’ Catholic Primary, Sunbury-on-Thames. This is taught on Thursday twilight sessions, 4-6pm - everyone is welcome to join.

There are two other courses currently running where you can still join the course:

* Bishop Challoner School, Tower Hamlets, running on Mondays from 4-6pm.
* Vaughan House, Westminster from 10–3.30pm. running on two consecutive Saturdays per module.  Module Three: 01 and 08 February; Module Four: 29 February and 14 March.

Although the first two modules at both venues have taken place, it is not too late to join either course. Please send registration forms for any of the three courses 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*

**Do you have teachers worried about teaching RE?**

Foundations Stones is a 12 hour course that aims to improve teachers understanding about the fundamental beliefs and practices of the Catholic faith. As a result teachers are more confident and enthusiastic about their teaching of RE. At present there are five courses running across the Diocese and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive - "I thought I would be taught about things I already knew but this course has been so engaging, inspiring and informative”. "I dreaded teaching RE but now I am excited to get stuck in and can answer the kids' questions."

If you are interested in hosting or sending teachers to a Foundation Stones course please contact your school's Diocese Advisor. The timing of the course can be designed to suit your school, however, there must be at least 10 participants. The cost is £200 for a host school and £300 for a non-host school and for that price you can send as many staff as you want.

This is the web link for Foundation Stones <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/foundation-stones-school-ticket/> *For further information contact:* *claireoneill@rcdow.org.uk*

**Agreed Protocols between the Catholic Education Service and Ofsted – an update**

As some of you may remember, Diocesan inspections used to occur at the same time as Ofsted inspections but this was stopped a few years ago as dioceses across the country were finding it difficult to recruit inspectors at short notice. At this time of ‘decoupling’, protocols were agreed as to which aspects of school life could be inspected by Ofsted and which by the diocese – in summary, Ofsted were not allowed tocollect any evidence from or make any judgements on the quality of religious education nor the quality of collective worship.

Since the implementation of the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) in September 2019, a few grey areas have emerged so I have asked the CES for some clarification, which is outlined below. If you are inspected under the new EIF and you feel that the Ofsted inspectors have stepped outside these protocols, please let me know.

**1)**      **Deep Dive**: Essentially, Diocesan (Section 48) Inspections are the religious education ‘Deep Dives’. Ofsted cannot ‘Deep Dive’ religious education, as they must not make judgements about the quality of religious education. If an inspector suggests a deep dive into religious education, please notify me as soon as possible as they would be in breach of the agreed protocols and the law.

**2)**      **Intent Statements** There is no Ofsted requirement or Diocesan inspection requirement for any department to write an ‘intent statement’. However, a school may decide that curriculum leaders should do this in order to be able to defend curriculum choices about sequencing and depth. If this is the case, it is school policy not an inspection requirement and therefore religious education departments would not be exempt solely on the basis that they are subject to Diocesan inspection.

3**)**      **Cultural Capital** ‘Cultural Capital’ under the new EIF is how each subject presents pupils with the powerful knowledge at the core of their respective subject disciplines. The ‘Cultural Capital’ judgement is not separable from the ‘Quality of Education’ judgement and Ofsted have told the CES that "Quality of Education intent will never be a focus of a religious education visit in a religious school.”

Ofsted may visit religious education lessons and assemblies to make judgements on pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, on personal development and on behaviour and attitudes. However, it is often difficult to discern exactly where the evidence being gathered will be used. The ‘cultural’ part of SMSC is defined in paragraph 223 of the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2019) handbook and is not connected to ‘Cultural Capital’. Ofsted say that it is just an accident of name and though the names are similar, they are entirely separate concepts. Therefore, judgements about them are made in two very different places, one where religious education is relevant (SMSC) and one where religious education is outside of Ofsted’s remit (Cultural Capital).

**4)**      **Leadership Judgement** There have been a few occasions when Ofsted inspectors have interviewed curriculum leaders for religious education in a group of other middle leaders, for instance, when gathering evidence for leadership. This is not appropriate, as it is an inspection activity which provides evidence for Ofsted to arrive at a judgement in ‘Quality of Education’, and religious education falls outside of their jurisdiction for this judgement. The leadership judgement evaluation bullets emphasise the leadership of teaching and learning and planning for the curriculum. Therefore, schools are advised that the religious education lead should not be part of such panels for Ofsted.

*Further information: Jane Goring, Chief Inspector 020 7798 9005*

**Upcoming CPD courses Spring 2020**

* School Admissions Appeals – 30th January 9.30 -3.30pm, Vaughan House, 46 Francis Street, SW1P 1QN <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/school-admission-appeals/>
* Developing the RE Link Governor Role – 31st January, 1:00 – 4:00pm, Vaughan House, 46 Francis Street, SW1P 1QN <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/link-governor/>
* Being an NQT in a Catholic Primary School – 13th February, 9.30 -3.30pm, Vaughan House, 46 Francis Street, SW1P 1QN <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/being-an-nqt-in-a-catholic-primary-school-2/>
* Chaplains Day – 28th February, 9.30 -3.30pm, St Aloysius Hall, 20 Phoenix Road, NW1 1TA<https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/chaplains-day-5/>
* Religious Education in EYFS, 12th March, 9.30 -3.30pm, St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, 140 Dartmouth Park Hill, N19 5DT. – **PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE** <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/religious-education-in-the-eyfs-2/>
* Diocesan Conference for Deputy and Assistant Headteachers’ 2020, 19 – 20 March , De Vere Selsdon Estate

The Diocesan Conference for Deputy and Assistant Headteachers’ is a combined conference for both primary and secondary deputies. The AIM of the conference is to explore the major issues and challenges impacting upon the Catholic school and its distinctive nature. It is also an opportunity for deputies to reflect, pray and network with their peers. <https://courses.rcdow.org.uk/event/ass-dh-conference/>

**Booking a Course**

Our course booking site has changed the way courses are booked and particularly in relation to the referencing of payments made.  We receive a huge volume of cheque and Bacs payments and the processing of such payments can be incredibly time consuming, particularly when payments are made and do not include any reference to an order number or specific course.  Please could we ask for your assistance going forward by requesting the following:

1.       Where possible please pay via credit card or Bacs payment and NOT by cheque

2.       References for BACs payments, please include the following:

·         Order number(s)

·         Invoice number(s)

·         Name of course and date of course

 3.       If it is absolutely necessary to pay by cheque please could the following be clearly written on the back of the cheque:

. Order number(s)

·         Invoice number(s)

·         Name of course and date of course

We would be grateful if you could please pass this information on to anyone in your organisation who is responsible for booking courses for members of staff.  Your assistance is very much appreciated and will ensure a far more efficient service.

**Admissions**

Thank you for all the admission arrangements sent to the diocese. During February, those governing bodies that have not already done so, should meet and determine the admission arrangements. The determined policy and SIF should be placed on the school website and sent to the local authority by the end of February.

There should now be three sets of admission arrangements on your school website:2019-2020; 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

**Admission Appeals**

The arrangements for admission appeals for the coming academic year (applications for September 2020), must be on the school website by the end of February 2020.

This must include:

* a provisional date for appeals e.g. the last week in June or similar;
* contact details for the person who will deal with the appeals initially;
* a copy of the appeals form (if any);
* the date by which parents should send in their appeal.

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

**CAPITAL MATTERS**

**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 schools make to stretch funding as far as possible by not goping through a consultant, but 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.

**LCVAP 2020/2021**

We are still waiting for the Government to announce the School Capital Allocations for 2020/2021. In anticipation of this announcement, diocesan colleagues have been processing the applications received in the Autumn in order to provide ranking options to the Education Commission.The most significant change anticipated this year is the recognition of the Diocese (Catholic and Church of England) as “Responsible Bodies”. Our expectation is that each Responsible Body will receive a single allocation. This will replace the 18 ring-fenced allocation that we have received in the past (1 for each Local Authority).

The responsible Body is accountable for the proper use of the funding and is required to assure the Government that Public Funding has been used appropriately and effectively. The Catholic Education Service is keen to protect the reputation and integrity of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and has commissioned software from an organisation called Statlog that all Diocese will be required to use. Statlog is a product that colleagues from Diocesan Property and Education have been reviewing for some months. The initial priority was to enable schools and academies to manage their Statutory Compliance responsibilities. Some of our schools have purchased the Statlog software and are reporting that is supporting improved productivity at an operational level and confidence at a leadership and governance level.

Modules in Statlog (current or shortly to be released) include:

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| --- | --- |
| **Asset Manager** | Manage and track your assets. Create a detailed asset management schedule with their current and future value together with the costs associated with maintaining or disposing of them. |
| **Capital Finance Manager** | Create and manage capital funding programmes. Used in conjunction with the survey tool, enabling you to allocate and track funding from any revenue stream. Provides overview and management options for everything from single buildings to large portfolios and estates. |
| **CDM Assist** | Ensures full client compliance with the Construction, Design and Management Regulations when managing small projects and maintenance tasks. Quickly create and store pre-construction information, assess contractor competence and be confident that project health and safety is compliant. Guides and prompts you through creating your relevant CDM documentation. |
| **Contract Manager** | Store and manage all your contracts in one place. Collates all contract information including dates, costs, content information and notice periods, with expiry reminders and prompts. Gain full control of your contracts by managing the full contract lifecycle. |
| **Contractor Directory** | Find suitable recommended and vetted contractors quickly with a fully searchable database. The module allows any search combination of trade, location, rating, value, name, accreditations, licenses, DBS vetted staff and response times. Save your favourite contractors for quick and easy future reference. Rate contractors and provide feedback. |
| **Contractor Testing** | Maintain a fully compliant statutory testing and premises safety regime. Features include a bespoke reminder service; contractor performance checks; a fully auditable history trail; live information available at a glance; full practical guidance and Statlog support. |
| **Helpdesk** | The **internal** helpdesk enables you and your colleagues to report building faults and issues. With tracking and updates, seamlessly manage and monitor reported issues. The **external** helpdesk enables you to raise issues and enquiries directly with your building consultant. |
| **Premises Policy Tool** | Quickly create fully bespoke premises management policy documents. Easy to use, create and revise policies in minutes with simple questions tailored to your specific situation. |
| **Project Manager** | Enables the effective project management of small maintenance and improvement projects, whilst ensuring full compliance, financial control and safety. Prompts and guides ensure you follow a fully documented and process driven approach. Review historic projects, track current project progress and view upcoming tasks and milestones. Safety milestones prevent you from missing vital statutory steps and approvals.  |
| **Site Testing** | Simple and intuitive to assist you with your day-to-day statutory testing role. Quickly complete tests and inspections on the move with automatic and instant paperless recording. Never miss a test; guiding you through each step, identifying problems and providing solutions. The Statlog team create a bespoke and ordered testing programme for you, ensuring safety and compliance all supplemented by pro-active support. |
| **Surveys** | Designed to produce simple and consistent surveys highlighting condition, suitability, health & safety and safeguarding issues across your portfolio. Objectively prioritises issues within and across sites, reducing ambiguity. Equally suited to both single and multi-property portfolios where site information is being provided by a range of professionals. |

*More information: Nigel Spears, Capital and Place Planning 020 7798 9005*

**PUPIL PLACEMENT PLANNING**

**APPLICATIONS DATA SUBMISSION DAY 2020**

This term, the Education Service is collecting data relating to applications for admission to our schools/academies in September 2020. The submission data is Friday 28th February 2020. With head teachers across the diocese reporting a significant decrease in the number of application, it is vital that all schools work collaboratively to provide the Education Commission with a complete and comprehensive representation of applications to our schools/academies. Commissioners appreciate that the data is a snapshot in time and that it will change once offers are accepted. However, it is the only opportunity during the year to reflect on the number of parents who have named a Catholic School/Academy in their list of preferences.

This return is required under the terms of School Place Planning (Protocol 2 - Data): “To ensure that the Diocesan Bishop is able to fulfil his canonical responsibility, the Occupier must comply with the Diocesan Bishop’s directions to supply data relating to a) applications for admission (statutory admission rounds) and b) registered pupils”.

The Online Form is available [**HERE**](http://w.pfrms.co/fr3tk).

In order to reduce the time commitment associated with completing this return, the Education Service had published a data processing tool that is available [**HERE**](https://education.rcdow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/190910-DOWES-PPP-Data-Sorting-Tool.xlsx).

In addition, colleagues within the Education Service are prepared to process the raw data submitted by schools and upload it on their behalf. The raw data required is:

a) Postcode (of each applicant) and

b) Religion (simply expressed as Catholic or Non-Catholic).

For the purposes of this return, a Catholic is any Baptised Child.

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

**CARITAS Westminster Notices**

**Advent Giving Calendar**

In December we launched our Advent Giving Calendar suggesting items to donate to a local foodbank each day. We had a brilliant response from parishes and schools and want to send a thank you to all the children and schools that took part in the project. If your school took part please let us know so we can thank you, and do share any pictures and stories of how your collection went with us.

*Contact: Anna Gavurin –* *cfc@rcdow.org.uk*

**Food distribution**

The Caritas Food Collective is a new project working to support parishes and schools to tackle food poverty in the Diocese of Westminster. We know a lot of schools are already doing a huge amount to support children who are coming to school hungry and we are keen to hear about your experiences and what we can do to help. Through our work we now have connections with food distributers The Felix Project, FareShare and City Harvest. These organisations redistribute food that would have gone to waste, but is still perfectly good. They are able to deliver to schools, for example to breakfast clubs and afterschool clubs, and The Felix Project run a programme where they deliver food weekly for parents to take home. If your school would be interested in receiving some of this food and would like some more information, please let us know and we can explore what could work for your school.

*Contact: Anna Gavurin –* *cfc@rcdow.org.uk*

**Bakhita Day School Assembly Resource from Caritas Westminster**  -  link [here](https://www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/bakhita-house.php#BakhitaDay)

On 8 February we celebrate **Bakhita Day**, the Feast Day of **St Josephine Bakhita**, the patron saint of victims of modern slavery.  It is an opportunity for schools to raise awareness of modern slavery and human trafficking, and to gain support for **Caritas Bakhita House**, a safe house for women escaping human trafficking and modern slavery, opened in the Diocese of Westminster in 2015 at an undisclosed location (for protection and safety) and providing accommodation for 12 women at a time. If you would like more information about how your school might help Caritas Bakhita House, more information can be found here: [www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/bakhita-house.php](http://www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/bakhita-house.php)

**Caritas Westminster SEIDS student, Amanda Epe**, is a multi-award-winning author of A Fly Girl Travel book and a creative writer. The founder of the award-winning Fly Girls wellness project she leads workshops and has empowered women to build confidence in self-expression, publish books and developing new leaders in the community. With years of experience working in schools and institutions since 2000 and a BA, MA in Education she is passionate about using education and writing for progressive change.

Fly Girls Forum workshops give students a peek into global and national equality and empowerment discourses, and a space to do creative writing tasks with the opportunity to share their work speaking up and speaking out on human rights and personal narratives.

Helping to DEVELOP CREATIVE WRITING SKILLS | ENCOURAGE SELF-EXPRESSION | ENHANCE LEADERSHIP SKILLS

*To book a Creative Writing Skills Workshop email* *FLYGIRLSUK@GMAIL.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.*

***Many Congratulations*** to **St Mary’s Primary School, Isleworth, Hounslow** who have achieved Silver status in the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools Award.  St Mary’s have also been awarded the Workload Charter Mark and are the first school in Hounslow Borough to do so.

Results at **Cardinal Pole, Hackney** were confirmed as No1 for progress in the Diocese in the Department for Education tables.  Staff and students were delighted to hear that this had been secured. Executive Headteacher, Jane Heffernan, said ‘Everyone at the school works hard to secure Outstanding results year on year in the Sixth Form. These outcomes ensure that our students have the best opportunities in life available to them. I look forward to another set of excellent results this year.’

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