

Diocesan Education Newsletter

Easter 2017

Our vision – Deeply Christian, Serving The Common Good



Welcome to this Easter edition of the Diocesan Education Newsletter. Discover more about how children challenged Bishop Christopher. Other articles include:

The launch of the Foundation for Educational Leadership

Plans to address mental health and well-being in schools.

The arrival of the diocesan sheep!

Our new headteachers

A message from Director of Education, Jeff Williams

“Cream tea for five please” : a seemingly simple request many of us have made, but it became surreal when recently, with my American family, we reflected we were sitting in the dining room of one of our most famous and equally tragic twentieth century poets.

The discussion went laterally, including my proud assertion that I attended the same school as the massively famous actor Richard Burton, whose reading of this poet’s Play For Voices, was our CD nourishment for the journey. I confess to slipping into the tourist shop (formerly the poet’s sitting room!) to buy a ceramic postcard embossed with the title of one of his poems ‘And Death Shall Have No Dominion’, which now hangs on our fridge. The poem and words featured in the film ‘Truly, Madly, Deeply’; they were spoken by Sean Penn in the film ‘The Weight of Water’; and by Peter Capaldi in the 2011 BBC series ‘Field of Blood’; by George Clooney in the film ‘Solaris’ and in the soundtrack of ‘Lost – to name but a few of the places where the words are shared with hundreds of thousands of viewers.

The ceramic card was bought in Laugharne, and now serves as a permanent reminder and daily truth of what Paul tells us in Romans 6:9. ...and if you haven’t yet twigged - it was the home of Dylan Thomas. His poems were first introduced to me by – a teacher. I was taken to the theatre to see his plays by – a teacher. The original words were written by – a teacher. The message and truth were the basis of the life, and death of – a teacher.

As we approach the time of year when we particularly recall the most incredible and transformational event in history, my hope is that we all take up our vocation and call to be teachers of the truth behind this poem, whatever our actual profession or work.

And death shall have no dominion.
Dead man naked they shall be one
With the man in the wind and the west moon;
When their bones are picked clean and the clean bones gone,
They shall have stars at elbow and foot;
Though they go mad they shall be sane,
Though they sink through the sea they shall rise again;
Though lovers be lost love shall not;
And death shall have no dominion.

And death shall have no dominion.
Under the windings of the sea
They lying long shall not die windily;
Twisting on racks when sinews give way,
Strapped to a wheel, yet they shall not break;
Faith in their hands shall snap in two,
And the unicorn evils run them through;
Split all ends up they shan't crack;
And death shall have no dominion.

And death shall have no dominion.
No more may gulls cry at their ears
Or waves break loud on the seashores;
Where blew a flower may a flower no more
Lift its head to the blows of the rain;
Though they be mad and dead as nails,
Heads of the characters hammer through daisies;
Break in the sun till the sun breaks down,
And death shall have no dominion.

Launch of the Foundation for School Leadership

Hailed as a threshold moment for educational leaders, the first annual conference aimed at bringing the Church of England's Vision for Education alive was held in London.

The Archbishop of York, the Right Reverend John Sentamu told educationalists and members of the clergy of his hopes for the future. 'Attainment is important for young people, but exams have to be seen in a wider context as part of an education that allows young people to flourish. Our extraordinary teachers are there to prepare our children and young people to thrive not only in school, but in local communities and beyond – and we need to support them. That is why I am joining leaders in education to launch the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership, focusing on educating for wisdom, hope, community and dignity, he said.



The Foundation, launched this academic year, is working to develop present and future leaders who will share the Church's vision of being 'Deeply Christian, Serving The Common Good' (www.churchofengland.org/education). The work, being carried out in three pilot regions and involving nine dioceses, involves new training programmes such as the Church of England Professional Qualification for Leadership, peer support networks, conferences and research programmes.

Delegates, including members of the Portsmouth and Winchester Diocese Board of Education and diocesan education staff, attended a series of workshops to hear how the Vision is being implemented in education settings and dioceses across the country. Among the keynote speakers at the conference in Church House was Professor Bill Lucas, Professor of Learning at Winchester University and the Bishop of Ely, the Right Reverend Stephen Conway who told delegates: 'A vocation to become a teacher is the same as having a vocation to be a priest, it's to serve people.' Talks from the conference are available on the Foundation's website: www.cefel.org.uk/

School leaders may like to consider using the conference prayers below in their worship.

God of Wisdom,

We look to you to inspire and empower us with your confidence, delight and discipline in the decisions we face, in the relationships we hold, in classrooms where we teach, in the meetings we lead. Fill us with your wisdom to shape life well and may we not lean on only our own understanding, but trust in you, hear your voice and choose wisely. Amen

God of Hope

We look to you to inspire and empower us with your spirit as we teach and learn how to face the future, as we heal, renew and repair, as we repent, forgive and reconcile. Grant us the strength we need to embody hope in our schools, filling our reservoirs with your living water. May bad experiences and behaviour never have the last word and may you continually help us to see our future through your eyes, not our own. Amen

God of Community

We look to you to inspire and empower us to live well together to invest generously in our relationships; to contribute well to our communities; to seek justice and grace for our neighbour; to pursue activities and opportunities that help us not simply to succeed, but to flourish together as we build your community here on earth. Amen

God of Dignity

We look to you to inspire and empower us to love one another as you love us, see one another as you see us, value one another as you value us and as we live out your vision for our lives, fill us with your Spirit to lift each other up, encouraging and enriching one another's experience as we seek your kingdom first. Amen

Bishop Christopher faces difficult questions!

If there is life on other planets, does that mean there are other religions? If God has a plan, why do people bother to pray? And is there really such a thing as heaven on Earth?

These are just some of the difficult and searching questions posed by children at Liphook Junior School when Bishop Christopher agreed to be put in the hot seat by years five and six. The children asked a range of challenging questions, some of which reflected their current learning in the classroom. Their maturity and depth of thought enthralled Bishop Christopher who admitted to the children that he had really had to think about some of his responses.



The Bishop was extremely impressed by the level of understanding he found at the school during the visit and the experience had led him to want to do more question and answer sessions in schools. The Bishop has set aside time to visit schools across the Portsmouth diocese and similar sessions are planned. 'The children were fantastic. They really challenged me and I love that,' said Bishop Christopher.

The children explained their understanding of issues, such as what heaven may look like, as the Bishop discussed the beauty that he often sees in the world and within people's actions. Children listened intently as Bishop Christopher explained how bible stories were written and collated, dispelling the children's belief that the bible was one book written many years ago. 'The children so

enjoyed it, they will have got so much from it. We were amazed by some of their questions.’ said Head of School Jacky Taylor. Bishop Christopher ended his visit by leading a worship focussed on Candlemas.

Someone Order A Flock Of Sheep?!



With spring now here, life size fibreglass sheep are being delivered to schools across the Dioceses of Portsmouth and Winchester. The deliveries mark the start of ‘Ewe Matter’, an intergenerational initiative across Hampshire and Dorset’s church schools that aims to foster closer links between schools and the parishes in which they sit.

As part of the project, worshippers from local parishes, particularly from older generations, will visit schools to lead worship, read with pupils, help them in the classroom and share their skills and experience. The project aims to help children to think positively about their self-worth, as well as the value of the skills and experience of people from other generations.

The sheep, initially delivered to more than 60 schools across the dioceses with others still being ordered, will be used in Collective Worship and across a range of curriculum areas. Schools have been provided with a resources pack with sheep activities linked to the National Curriculum. Schools can contact the Diocesan Education Team if they want further information on the excellent resources. Children will decorate the sheep in a project reminiscent of the Marwell Zoo zebras in Southampton and the Paddington Bear statues in London. Once decorated, sheep from across the dioceses will be displayed at Portsmouth and Winchester cathedrals and Christchurch Priory in July during a number of Leavers’ Services for children moving on to secondary school.

Children at St Mary's Bentworth C of E Primary School (pictured) ordered six sheep – the most of any school in the dioceses. Headteacher Jo Ayres said: 'We have six sheep to represent the villages and towns from which our students are drawn. We are really grateful for the opportunity that the Ewe Matter project will give us to forge even closer links with the local parish. The children are also really excited about decorating their sheep, and having the chance to express what make them and their community so unique – they can't wait to get started!'

Diocesan Director of Education Jeff Williams said: "We're really excited about Ewe Matter and I've been so pleased by how enthusiastically students and teachers across the dioceses have embraced it. These sheep will act as visual aids in the classroom and will provide impetus for students to think about what makes their community great, and what they can learn from people from other generations".



Any school wishing to order a sheep can do so by contacting Sarah Page on Sarah.Page@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk

Understanding Christianity

Understanding Christianity is the excellent new resource for teaching Christianity in church schools that the Diocesan Education Team discussed at headteacher briefings and RE network meetings last autumn. Eighteen of our church schools have been trialling these materials and have been extremely positive about how helpful they are. The team has also been working with Hampshire to discuss how the Understanding Christianity materials may integrate with Living Difference III.



We are now in a position to offer the Understanding Christianity training and materials more widely to schools and are taking bookings for the following two days:

Monday 5th June

Thursday 22nd June

The training, details of which have been emailed to schools, will take place at Old Alresford Place and the cost will be £110, which will include a set of the materials. Once RE leaders have attended a training day, the team will be offering follow-up support through the RE network meetings.

School celebrates a range of achievements

West Meon Church of England Primary School is celebrating after receiving a letter of congratulations from the Minister of State for School Standards Nick Gibb for the high level of progress its pupils are making. The whole school community was thrilled to obtain official recognition for the hard work put in by the children and staff, with the support of parents and governors. In Year 1 100% of pupils reached the expected level for phonics and 82% reached a good level of development in Early Years.

‘Your school’s results show that your school is amongst the top 3% of schools in England in terms of the progress your pupils make between Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2 in English reading, writing and mathematics,’ wrote the minister.

Headteacher Julie Kelly said: ‘The school has been going from strength to strength over the last few years and the children, parents, governors and staff are very proud of their achievements. We firmly believe that our Christian Values of Respect, Courage and

Creativity underpin our Five Minds for the Future by Howard Gardner in preparing our pupils for their further education experiences.’

The tribute to the school’s continued emphasis on the education of the whole child was promoted by Tatler magazine, which included West Meon in the top ten best state Primary schools 2017. The school has attained the School Sports gold award and has also become an outreach centre for the Theatre Royal, Winchester.

At a meeting of headteachers organised by the Diocese Education Team (see below). the school shared a range of approaches it has developed to ensure to the well-being of its pupils These included ‘Whizzgulers’ (named by the children after reading the BFG) which the Class 2 children create. They are individual boxes in which the children record a positive memory from each week and post it into



the box. They are used to swallow up the childrens' worries and endeavours to learn so many aspects in the new curriculum. The memories, read later in the year, help to promote a 'can do' attitude without feeling under unnecessary pressure.

The children are encouraged to personalise their box. Below are some comments from the children:

"Memory Whizzgulpers gulp up our happy memories ready to regurgitate at the end of the summer term...I think they are fantastic things!" Oscar

"I think a Memory Whizzgulper is an amazing idea because we will open them and it will bring lots of fun, happy memoires back." Daisy-May.

"I think my Whizzgulper is useful because I usually remember the bad things." Esme.



Mental Health Workshop

A range of strategies to address issues of mental health and well-being in schools were discussed at a workshop of senior school leaders. The Diocesan Education Team is currently investigating a series of initiatives said to improve mental health, including Christian Mindfulness, Soulfulness and Christian meditation, to investigate their impact on children. Headteachers reported seeing an increasing number of children presenting with problems such as anxiety, poor resilience, aggression, attachment issues and concerns over body image.



The workshop followed Theresa May's announcement on new measures to tackle the mental health agenda in schools. The Prime Minister said mental health had been 'dangerously disregarded' as secondary to physical health and changing that would go 'right to the heart of our humanity'. Figures show young people are affected disproportionately with over half of mental health problems starting by

the age of 14 and 75% by 18. Every secondary school is to be offered mental health first aid training – which informs teachers how to identify symptoms and how to help children who may be developing a mental health issue. Leaders at the workshop outlined a collection of strategies currently happening in schools to address issues. These included buddying, installing spiritual gardens to give children a reflective place to think, nurture groups and the employment of support workers. Headteachers also reported anxiety and stress amongst the teaching profession and the resulting need for staff well-being initiatives. Teachers are being offered coaching, work audits, drop-in sessions, supervision and sometimes sessions with external mental health professionals.

The Diocesan Education Team will continue to investigate a range of options that address mental health and well-being in schools with a view to offering training to schools in the near future, along with supporting resources that we are developing with

Fair Trade Fortnight At St Lawrence

St Lawrence Church of England School in Alton has received its Fair Active Award. Children and staff at St Lawrence have been celebrating Fair Trade Fortnight with a range of exciting activities. Children learnt about Fair Trade using the classroom resources available on the Fair Trade website; they also enjoyed mixing up the lessons and taking part in fun games and activities.

Key Stage 1 children were visited by Rev David Hinks and Jo McGregor who talked about Fair Trade and what it really means to the farmers. Years 3 and 6 have been to visited Amery Hill School in Alton and enjoyed playing African drums and Gamelan. Children in Year 4 visited Waitrose to find out what Fair Trade goods the company sell and Year 5 visited Sainsbury's. Both supermarkets in the town were very welcoming and after a talk, allowed the children to complete a Fair Trade 'Treasure Hunt'. The children left with Fair Trade chocolate and bananas which were very well received!



The school's Fair Trade Ambassadors ran a quiz in their classes – with winners receiving Fair Trade chocolate! The children were so inspired that they produced fantastic examples of Fair Trade homework.

The celebration of Fair Trade culminated in a festival that included parents and governors. The festival included the Fair Trade Café hosted by our Year 5 class in the hall. The Ambassadors are now investigating 'The Real Easter Egg' website – there are some useful resources for schools on the site (including a competition!):

<http://www.realeasteregg.co.uk/>



New Church School Leaders



The most recently appointed leaders of our church school enjoyed a day of training and familiarisation as they get used to their new roles.

After input from the Diocesan Schools Advisors, current church school headteachers from Gosport, Ringwood and Southampton spoke about their experiences of leading church schools. Topics covered included delivering Collective Worship that is interactive, the development of Christian Values and working in the wider community.

The new headteachers enjoyed a brief history of church schools and were able to see how they had taken their place in a history of education dating back to 1811. It is fair to say that the new leaders left with a wealth of ideas!

The new Headteacher Induction Course is part of regular training offered to our church schools which includes termly briefings, staff and INSET training, governor training, help with school inspections and advisory notes.



A visit from Bishop Christopher and Archdeacon Gavin

Article written by Ellie Gibbs and Katie Charman, pupils at St John the Baptist Primary School, Titchfield Common.

St John the Baptist Primary School, Titchfield Common received a visit from their vicar Reverend Gavin, the Bishop of Portsmouth and the Archdeacon of the Meon valley - Archdeacon Gavin. Our worship theme for the week had focussed on understanding that, whilst we all have different skills and abilities, Christians believe that God calls us to work

together, to work as a team to build and encourage one another. We had explored 1 Corinthians 12v21 and everyone in the school had made a paperchain link with their gifts and talents written on it. The chain stretched almost half the perimeter of our hall! An intriguing worship time was given with Archdeacon Gavin explaining the roles that he and Bishop Christopher have that help build and encourage Christians in their faith. We learnt how the diocese works as a team and that Christians believe that God asks us to be a team sharing God's love to each other.

Heateacher Mrs Merriman, Head Boy Rueben Glover and Head Girl Ellie Gibbs gave the important visitors a tour of the thriving school. The school councillors then spoke with our visitors and asked them a few questions. Below is a snapshot of our questions and answers.

As a child did you and your family go to church?

Bishop

Christopher: Yes I went to church regularly, a little less when I was at secondary school. As my faith grew I went to church as often as I did when I was a young boy.



When did you first think of working in the church?

Bishop Christopher: When I was 16, I began to think about working in the church. I couldn't stop thinking about it. I really wanted to be a vicar as I was a follower of Jesus and for me, felt this was the right thing to do.

Archdeacon Gavin: I used to be a lawyer. I was involved a lot in the church in the evening and at weekends and felt that a calling to do this full-time.

When you first started working in the church did you think you would become what you are now?

Archdeacon Gavin: I was a lawyer but I was a follower of Jesus too. I was doing a lot of voluntary work in the church and realised that I could be doing this as my job. At the time I didn't know what an archdeacon was or did – becoming an Archdeacon developed from my role as a vicar.

How long have you been a representative in the House of Lords and can you describe what you do there?

Bishop Christopher: I have been a member of the House of Lords for three years and I am one of twenty six Lords Spiritual. I am involved in debates and votes. Lord Spirituals read prayers at the start of each daily meeting and play a full and active role in the Upper House. There is always a Lord Spiritual in the House of Lords when it is sitting. As well as a rota, Bishops, can choose to attend the House of Lords when matters of concern or interest to them are being discussed. Bishops provide an important independent voice and spiritual insight.

We were really grateful for the time that Bishop Christopher, Archdeacon Gavin and Reverend Gavin spent with us.

New Diocesan Intergenerational Ideas booklet

A new booklet packed with ideas, plans and templates for intergenerational projects in schools and parishes is to be distributed to schools this term.

The Portsmouth and Winchester Dioceses are actively promoting and initiating projects that bring younger and older people together in our parishes. This intergenerational work is one way in which our church schools can 'live out' the Church of England vision to serve The Common Good and to be active and intentional agents of social transformation.

A recent meeting of interested schools, clergy and parish representatives showed the amazing variety of projects already happening across both dioceses to bring older and younger people into each other's lives. These ideas, and a few more for future projects, will be included in the booklet which will be sent to all church schools in our dioceses.

The projects are designed to be fun but missional opportunities for our communities. We know that older people working alongside schools and giving their experience, insights and inspiration are hugely important in so many ways and are often at the centre of and underpin all of our Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan ministries.

Schools are encouraged to look out for the booklets which contain ideas for mosaics, Remembrance Day 2017 and labyrinths.

Silver Jubilee Celebrations At St Francis

St Francis Church of England Primary School in Chandler's Ford has celebrated 25 years, working to serve its community in Valley Park, Chandler's Ford. Bishop Jonathan and Diocesan Director of Education Jeff Williams joined in the Silver Jubilee celebrations, alongside Councillor Peter Edgar, Executive Member for Education at Hampshire County Council. The children enjoyed a special worship, a performance by the school choir and a question and answer session with the special guests. Lunch was served by the school's Christian Voice group (see below for an article submitted by the group).

A rose was planted in commemoration of the event and the guests helped children re-bury a time capsule. The capsule had been opened after 25 years underground and children found pictures and writing from the first children at the school. A tape, on which Reception children could be heard talking to their teacher, was discovered inside. The capsule had new items added and was re-buried. It is hoped that it will be opened again when the school celebrates its Golden Jubilee.



Christian Voice at St Francis

We are the children of the Christian Voice, a pupil leadership group that we think may be unique to St Francis. We make sure that everyone knows about our School's Christian identity. Along with the other Pupil Voice groups in school, such as house captains, the school council and the junior librarians, we help the staff to keep the school running.

We dedicate our time to celebrating links between our school and the church, helping to lead worship in school and attending special events. We lead and write assemblies including prayers, lighting of our Trinity candle and welcoming and blessing everyone in assembly. We arrange our own meetings, help to set the agendas and even take minutes. Every Monday we take the new weekly worship leaflet to every class. This helps the teachers and children to know what to pray and reflect about in their class prayer spaces during that week. We sometimes have special jobs to do like reading in church. Twelve of us were elected by the children in our classes to be Christian Voice representatives. We come from different faiths as you don't have to be a Christian to represent the school as a Christian Voice member. It would be nice if other schools had a Christian Voice group, so we could link up and share ideas. The photograph above shows three of our Christian Voice group interviewing our Chair of Governors Mrs Fiona Grove about her role at school and within the Church



Thy Kingdom Come

Schools may be aware that this initiative was launched last year and has gained even more impetus this year, with a massive focus on prayer. There are a range of really good resources that schools may find useful, for this event, but also more generally.

Headteachers are encouraged you to take a

look https://www.thykingdomcome.global/search/resources?tags=1&theme_id=5