

# Diocesan Education Newsletter

May 2019

**Our vision – Deeply Christian, Serving The Common Good**



## A message from Director of Education, Jeff Williams

Stephen Mangan, author, actor and TV host who studied law before hitting our screens and stages, and recently profiled in The Sunday Times, lamented that 'misinformation is like a virus.... this misinformation fuels distrust and anger, and makes it difficult to co-exist peacefully as a society. Neither the left nor the right can claim any virtue here'.

I read this as the use of the word 'genocide' surfaced in CofE publications, along with references to the Independent Review of The Worldwide Persecution of Christians – all of these as I returned from a break in Krakow that included a harrowing visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau after a focused planning meeting with our schools' team in London with the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. I find myself drawn into a crucible where the growth in xenophobic nationalism is extreme and normalised..... where on and offline hate speech, encouraged by crude uncontested assertions of populist leaders offering 'easy' solutions to complex socio-economic problems, primarily by scapegoating 'the other'. Hauntingly, it is only too reminiscent of previous times, which I've taught at doctoral, post graduate, A level and GCSE level, and can but hope and pray that it has impacted on those in my classes/seminars.

Informed discourse displays symptoms of being a lost art in a world of immediate cyber/ IT developments and instant 'news'. Moral courage in the public square is both needed and affirmed, by our CofE Education Vision : Deeply Christian, Serving The Common Good – and our diocesan commitment to Global Neighbours, which aligns with ++Justin's challenges and theological integration with what we can achieve and influence in our schools.

In this 25<sup>th</sup> year since the Rwandan Genocide, and the imminent anniversary of WW2 atrocities, I weep, but am inspired to ask, challenge and trust that you will join our diocesan initiatives to support your SIAMS work, your OFSTEC SMSC agendas and other drivers, but primarily to be part of transforming society, changing lives and addressing the rise of anti-Semitism, and of Holocaust and Genocide denial in so many places.

The first thing you might consider is to forwarding this newsletter to your friends and family, which celebrates what so many of our schools are doing.

With every blessing

Jeff

# Meeting Our Global Neighbours

Following an inspirational visit to Rwanda by The Director of Education and our Schools Advisor, plans are being finalised for a targeted and sustainable strategy for global school links in the Winchester Diocese.

Jeff Williams and Sue Bowen are working towards deepening reciprocal learning for schools and parishes in Winchester church schools and Winchester's link dioceses in Rwanda, Central Africa. The work is driven by the Church of England's Vision for Education document : 'Deeply Christian: Serving The Common Good'; the requirements of the updated school inspection schedule implemented this year; our diocesan commitment to the Christian Aid 'Global Neighbours' project and the Global Citizenship priorities articulated by Archbishop Justin and Bishop Tim.

Our schools will therefore be well-positioned for inspections that focus on 'the way in which the school encourages its pupils to think globally, as appropriate to context, exploring the Companion Links that exist between the local diocese/world Church and schools internationally.'



We are beginning similar discussions with Portsmouth Diocese's links with Ghana – details to follow!

Although many church schools have a link to a school or church overseas, these can be difficult to sustain and often focus on fundraising to send money or resources overseas. The fresh approach is to adopt a mutually-beneficial lens and approach to such partnerships with schools in both countries learning from each other. Following visits to church schools, churches, parishes and teacher training facilities in Rwanda, it is clear that there is much to learn from the way dioceses there contribute to serving The Common Good.

**In line with the Bishop of Winchester’s plea that training clergy should see first-hand how Christianity is experienced in other countries, the diocesan School of Mission organises overseas placements for clergy to visit Rwanda and other Companion Linked countries. It is hoped that Rwanda can also become the key Companion Link for Winchester schools (notwithstanding links that already exist). The marking of 25 years since The Rwandan Genocide in 2019 provides further educational and ethical opportunities for schools and churches to share the lessons learnt and support the overwhelming movement towards reconciliation in the country’s schools and churches. This also aligns with our 2020 project (very detailed plans to follow.....) focusing on Holocaust Memorial Day and to consider the rise of anti-Semitism and the saddening increase of Holocaust Denial in the UK and world-wide, and how our inter-faith responsibilities can be maximised.**



**Teddy bears from 12 Winchester schools accompanied Jeff and Sue photographed as they visited schools and local projects in Rwanda. On return, Sue has led worship in schools on ‘Serving The Common Good’ and developing Global Citizenship through the Rwandan experience, using the school bears and photographs.**

**Rwandan pupils create a picture to be displayed at Winchester Cathedral for the school leavers services in June.**



Seminars led by the Education Team on the topic of 'Courageous Advocacy in Diocesan Schools: Serving The Common Good' are being offered to schools free of charge (details below). These will give schools opportunities to share some opportunities for colleagues to engage in the Rwanda Companion Link Strategy.

Anyone interested in the summer seminars should contact [Sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:Sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org) Tel: 02392 899680 with your name, school/parish and role.

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May: 1.30pm-4pm at Bransgore Primary School – with tea, pineapple and international cake.**

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June: 6.30pm – 9pm at Old Alresford Place – with wine and nibbles**

(Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> May afternoon at OAP is now oversubscribed – but we are available to come to PCCs/ Churches/ Schools/Deanery Synods – please contact Sam and we'd be delighted to help)

## **EXCEPTIONAL: Gold Award**

### **For Sway, St Luke's Children**

St Luke's Church of England Primary School in Sway has become only the second school in the country to be awarded Gold status in Christian Aid's Global Neighbours scheme.



The accreditation scheme celebrates schools that are helping pupils learn about global poverty and the Christian responsibility to tackle it, as well as giving them the tools to play a confident part in creating a fairer world.

St Luke's headteacher Rachel Goplen said: 'We are thrilled to be recognised for the work we have done as a whole school community to raise awareness of the extreme inequalities across our globe and perhaps more importantly,

**the steps we can take to address these. Pupils in all year groups learn about global issues across a range of subjects each week and gain a deep understanding of injustice in our world. Our Energy Stewards work hard to monitor our energy usage and we are keen to address littering locally, as well as calling for action on global environmental challenges through our engagement with key decision-makers.**

**‘We have a link with a school in Rwanda. Children in both communities have written letters to find out about how life is lived in another part of the world. Pupils have also been learning about examples of people who faced**



**adversity and overcame this to be courageous advocates for change. These stories have challenged the whole school community to think about how each of us can make a difference in our local community and globally.’**

**Caroline Weir, Education Coordinator at Christian Aid, said: ‘The Global Neighbours Scheme was launched in partnership with the Church of England’s Education Office with a vision of helping young people understand more about the inequalities in this world and helping them to become courageous advocates for those who have no voice.**

**It’s wonderful to see how staff and pupils at St Luke’s have taken this to heart and are seeking to tackle injustice. ‘**

# Priory School's Green Team Success



The 'Green Team' at the Priory Church of England School in Christchurch have won support from their local community in a series of action-packed ecology projects.



The children are well on their way to achieving their ultimate goal of proudly flying the green Eco Schools flag above the school, having recently been awarded silver award status.

The school has received help from local businesses in their endeavours which support this year's diocesan focus on ecology and caring for God's world.



The children are designing a new pollination and sensory garden for the school. Their plans will be presented to the Bournemouth in bloom judges, with the chance to win vouchers to use towards its construction.

To show their care for the local area, the children organised and took part in the school's first community litter pick for the Great British Spring Clean, on behalf of Keep Britain Tidy. Christchurch council's community and recreation department loaned the children litter picking safety kits

As well as growing plants for the school's new garden, the children are planning to enter a wheelbarrow into the town's wonderful wheelbarrow competition and are preparing for judging in early June.

Local businesses have been happy to support the children's work. Local firm Stewarts Garden Lands donated gift vouchers that the children used to purchase compost, pots and tools to start growing plants and vegetables. Their sweet peas will be entered into the Bournemouth in bloom competition later in the year.

MacPennys in Bransgore donated spring bulbs and numerous plants, and Haskins of Ferndown provided compost.



The children are also raising their own funds to pay for items on their garden wish list. See the following story for another eco success at The Priory.

## Christchurch Head - Challenged To Be Greener

Last Year 6 pupil and eco campaigner Eva Alacon challenged her headteacher to do more to reduce plastic waste.

Eva, a pupil at The Priory Church of England School in Christchurch, had an idea to provide aluminium water bottles for children. The graphic opposite was her design.



**We CAN turn back the plastic tide together.**



Members of the school's eco-committee, chaired Site Manager Paul Diggins, are now able to make Eva's wish a reality. The school has been able to have reusable bottles produced in each of the four House colours. At a cost of £4.95, the school makes a small profit on each bottle and this money will pay for the installation of a new water cooler. The new water dispenser can be used to refill water bottles during playtimes and lunchtimes.

## Year Six Leavers' Services

Plans for exciting workshops and interactive worship are being finalised to celebrate our school leavers.



More than 2,500 children will pack Winchester Cathedral, Portsmouth Cathedral, Christchurch Prior and Romsey Abbey later this term for the annual Leavers' Services. This year's events will focus on stewardship and our responsibility to care for God's world.

**Please be aware:**

**Schools attending the cathedral services are asked to bring a selection of pollinator plants on the day so that they can be planted around the cathedrals.**

**Schools are also asked to create a canvas picture reflecting the work of bees to be displayed in the cathedrals (see example). The canvas should be approximately A1 size (4xA3) so it can form part of an art exhibition at the cathedrals, or become part of a bee trail of pictures around one of our cities or town.**

Schools who have booked to attend the services in the cathedrals will be contacted individually regarding further details.

## **Hordle - 160 years Easter Celebration**

**Children at Hordle Church of England Primary School have been celebrating Easter for 160 years! To mark the special anniversary, staff at the Lymington school were determined to make this year's service one to remember.**



**Thanks to the help of All Saints Church Hordle, Morris the donkey led the children in a procession through the school and into the church. He was apparently very well behaved and has become Hordle School's latest celebrity!**

**Forty pew ends, an enormous floral cross and an Easter banner left the church a joyful sight for the local community to share.**

**Headteacher Fiona Adams said: 'It is an exceptional privilege to lead a school with such an auspicious history. The children certainly made sure that we marked this particular landmark occasion in style!'**

## **Ropley - Sharing the miracle**

**Ropley Church of England Primary School has embraced the 'Share the Miracle' initiative to build stronger relationships with members of its local community. Children invited local people in their 'Golden years' to come to a fish and chip lunch at their school. Residents of the village were welcomed by Year 6 children who proceeded to wait on their lunch guests. Afterwards entertainment was provided by the Year 1 and 2 children, who sang songs from their recent class worships. Pieces included cornet and piano playing by the children.**



At the end of the lunch, each of the guests were given an Easter Egg which had been donated by the parents of the school in support of the initiative.

Headteacher Sarah Vittle said: 'The children really enjoyed the opportunity to

welcome members of our older community. It was wonderful to see the different generations interacting together. I believe it helped the children to have a greater understanding and appreciation of our community. The children marvelled at residents who attended the school in their youth.' One of the attendees commented, 'It has been a very special way of bringing people together who probably felt that their links with the school were in the past.'

The school are hoping that this will be the first of many events where the children can engage with members of the community. Mrs Vittle said: 'We are looking forward to our open afternoon on 28<sup>th</sup> June as Ropley CE Primary School will be 150 years old this year. It would be fantastic if many of our senior residents could come along and share stories and pictures of their time at Ropley School.'

## Feeling fit and want to help your church?

All church schools are being invited to take part in 'Ride & Stride' – a fun initiative to raise money for historic churches.

Ride & Stride, organised by the Historic Churches Trust, involves children and staff being sponsored to walk, ride, skip or hop through their community to the local church or churches. In fact any means of travelling is allowed. The event encourages healthy activity and there are many ways of doing this, not just what the title suggests!



**Organisers hope that this year church schools will join in the initiative, which has raised more than £1m over the last 30 years. They want the event to bring churches, schools and local communities together. Anyone can sponsor participants, donate, welcome visitors at the church with refreshments, offer information or guides to point out interesting features of the church, or of course participate as a rider or strider. Any other form of fund raising activity to raise money for the cause is of course encouraged.**

**The amount raised in 2018 was a record. Three Portsmouth deanery areas (Petersfield, Havant & the Isle of Wight) raised £22,000 between them. This event raises money for the Trust to give out in grants to churches for the maintenance of their fabric, re-ordering and for anything that will help to encourage more and diverse usage of a church building. It helps to keep some churches alive and viable. Schools are able to nominate a specific church that they would like to benefit from their efforts.**

**Below is a list of suggestions that communities have organised in previous years, along with the website address for more information:**

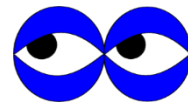
**Walking, biking, running, horse-riding, canoeing, coffee morning, afternoon teacake stall, quiz, treasure hunt, churchyard clean up, grass cutting.**

**[rideandstride@hthct.org.uk](mailto:rideandstride@hthct.org.uk)**

## From My Perspective



*A look at church schools through the eyes of people working in the school community.*



I joined the Portsmouth and Winchester Education Team in January 2017 as a School Buildings Officer in January 2017. Previously, I had worked for West Sussex County Council for over 17 years as a Legal Prosecutor for Trading Standards before moving to the Property Department. I assisted the Strategic Management Team delivering various projects and then moved into the Procurement Team as a Procurement Officer. I enjoyed tendering the various building projects on behalf of the county council and wanted to get more involved in the building side of things, so working as a School Buildings Officer now gives me the opportunity to focus more on preserving, repairing and improving schools within the dioceses to ensure children are taught in suitable, good quality buildings in a safe and effective learning environment.

My main focus is on capital building projects and improvement works to our schools and to ensure that the money assigned to the diocese from the government is spent on the highest priority projects to maintain and ensure the good condition of our school buildings. Over time I have got involved with various projects from toilet refurbishments to large re-roofing projects. A key part of my role is to ensure that all project finances are accounted for and balanced off at the end of each project.

With this job I have found that no two days are the same and it is a constant learning process for me dealing with school insurance queries, DFC payments, project invoices and giving advice on any land related query that crops up. As a School Buildings Officer changing government priorities and initiatives will often have a direct effect on our workload so it's never boring! I have built up some great relationships with our schools and am looking forward to continuing to deliver more extensions, repairs and refurbishments over the next few years. It's lovely when we visit a school and see the positive impact that one of our building or repair projects has had to the school and how this has improved the learning environment for both children and staff.