

Diocesan Education Newsletter

Autumn 2017

Our vision – Deeply Christian, Serving The Common Good



**Welcome back to a new school year and this Autumn edition of the Diocesan Education Newsletter. Inside this edition:
Church support for the first day at school; World Record Attempt;
Wellbeing Initiative; Exam results in our schools – and much more.....**

A message from the Director of Education, Jeff Williams

Mel Gibson for Christian Leaders?

Mel Gibson is not my go-to Director and film-magnet! However, circumstance and recommendation recently combined, so I watched his latest opus. Having resolved to overcome the predictable Gibbionesque gore and guts (though in this instance, wholly accurate and appropriate) I was quickly absorbed and committed to an incredible storyline.

Hardly surprising, given 'Hacksaw Ridge' is Gibson's bio-war drama based on the true story of American army medic Desmond T. Doss (superbly played by Andrew Garfield) who was drafted into what has been described as the bloodiest World War II battle at Okinawa.

What is so compelling is the fact that Doss was the only American soldier to fight on the front lines without carrying a weapon. While believing the war was justified, he nonetheless held that killing was wrong. His bravery, and single-handed actions, minimally saved 75 men and inspired the courage of others to rescue even more from certain death. Doss was the first conscientious objector to be awarded the US Congressional Medal of Honour.

Like us, Doss' faith determined and framed his actions. He believed in justice and doing what was necessary even in circumstances where his own personhood was vilified and his integrity belittled. During his army basic training he reflects 'My values are under attack and I don't know why'.

Profound words and films with deep meaning invariably touch us as individuals, and provide us with contextually different situations with which we might compare our own circumstances. As Christians who champion the Biblical exhortation to seek justice and truth, in our community or even workplace, like Doss, we too may feel our values are under attack, and we don't know why.

On occasion our values-led and Gospel-foundational work and service will sadly expose us to challenge and criticism, despite our commitment to be Deeply Christian : Serving The Common Good. If and when these situations arise, might I encourage you to be prayerful and to stay true to the Biblical values you hold strong and underpin our schools, and perhaps reflect on Goss' words which indicate that the toughest person to lead is yourself: 'I don't know how I'm going to live with myself if I don't stay true to what I believe'.

As we approach Remembrance Sunday, beginning the year of centennial remembrance, I have the privilege of shortly sharing with you a range of opportunities, community engagement and intergenerational activities that you might like to enjoy and seek wisdom for The Common Good. Do seriously consider participating – so we might both individually and together, humbly but boldly, take a prominent place in our communities for the transformation of society.

Best wishes

Jeff

Exam Success Celebrated

Students at our three Church secondary schools have been celebrating exam success. Staff and governors have praised the hard work of students following a change in the way some GCSEs were graded this year.

Hardworking students at **The Bishop of Winchester Academy (TBOWA)** enjoyed a double success this summer. Students achieved the best results ever in both GCSEs and A-levels. This supports the positive Ofsted report that the school received earlier this year which described TBOWA as 'a school that changes lives.'

Principal Paul McKeown said that there was much to celebrate for the school as a whole community and for every student who worked throughout the heat of May and June to get the grades they needed. 'This is a school that really does live out its mission statement from John 10.10, "I came to give life- life in all its fullness." It has been a privilege to share the magic moments when students open their envelopes and shriek with delight that all their hard work has paid off and they have achieved a place at the 6th Form or are now moving on to University,' he said.

This has been a huge year of change in the nature of exams and how they are assessed and reported. Many school leaders say that it is becoming increasingly hard to achieve the top grades. Despite this students at TBOWA have performed well. The



number achieving a 'Standard' pass in English and maths at grade 4 was 76% , with those achieving a 'Good' pass at grade 5 was 50%. Those achieving grade 4 in English was 83% and in Maths was 82%. The highest achieving boy Josh Holes achieved a grade 9 in English Literature, 8 in English, 8 in maths along with 5 other 'A' grades and a Distinction*. Alex Sidney achieved a 9 in Maths, two grade 8's in English, four other 'A' grades and a Distinction*. Grace Barker (pictured above with Paul McKeown) was the highest achieving girl.

The A-level results have ensured that all students who wanted a place at university were successful, with 90% of students achieved grades that secured their first choice. The overall results for achieving the prestigious 'A/B' grades is well above the national average.

The highest achieving 'A' level student was Megan Ryder-Maki who achieved three grade 'A's in Psychology, English Literature and Drama and won a place at the highly regarded Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts.

In Portsmouth, Clive Barnes, Principal at **Charter Academy**, also said that he was pleased with the results of his sixth form students.

'Nearly all of our students have confirmed that they are progressing onto the university and course of their choice. It was wonderful to see the students take the time on results day to thank staff for their support throughout their time at Charter and to sign up to the Alumni network so that we can keep in touch. The AS-Level results were particularly pleasing with our A-C pass rate nearly treble that of the previous year! (now 68%).

'We are thrilled that whilst we have maintained our success with 68% of students achieving a standard pass (grade 4) in English and Maths, nearly half our students achieved the new strong pass in both subjects. We also had 22% of students achieving the EBACC, which given the increased challenge of having to achieve a grade 5 in English and mathematics is a real achievement.

'One of our top performing students, Nabiha, achieved phenomenal results: grade 9 in English Literature and Language, a grade 7 in mathematics, A*s in Triple Science, Geography, Spanish, Media Studies and RE.

'We also had a number of students who showed real determination and perseverance through difficult circumstances. Ashley, who suffered from quite severe exam-related stress and anxiety and at one point was considering dropping out of school, achieved seven GCSEs at C grade or above including grade 6 for English Language, a grade 4 for mathematics, a B for Drama and a C for RE. Louise, who has a life limiting illness and also experienced a bereavement during the exams, achieved ten GCSEs at grade C or above including grade 8 for English Literature, grade 9 for English Language, grade 5 for mathematics and As for Art and RE,' he said.

On the Isle of Wight at the joint Anglican-Catholic **Christ the King College** students also performed well. Principal Pat Goodhead said: 'In an unpredictable and challenging year with so many changes, it is right to be cautious about making judgements and comparisons about overall results. However, one thing is absolutely certain, Christ the King students and staff

have yet again worked relentlessly and determinedly to achieve the best they can. I am extremely proud of them and grateful to all the teachers and support staff who, as always, have gone more than the extra mile for our wonderful students.'

This year marked a significant change for examinations across the country, including the new grading system for GCSE in English and maths, less coursework and the introduction of new and more rigorous content in the exams.

Pat Goodhead said that tribute must be paid to the resilience and determination staff and students who had coped admirably with significant changes. 'The high quality teaching of which the college is proud, combined with the strong work ethic of the students, has resulted in the college exceeding its expectations. Where credible comparisons can be made to last year's results, we are delighted to report another year of improvement. Even in the context of tougher and new exams, English and maths have both improved their performances yet again,' said Pat Goodhead.



More than half of the students at the college achieved at least an A and over a third achieved at least two A's. Another measure with which the college is delighted is the continued increase in the number of students achieving the

English Baccalaureate by another 5%, reflecting the commitment and successful drive to achieve highly in modern foreign languages. The college prides itself on offering a broad curriculum that enables young people to succeed in the creative arts, technology, music and sport in addition to the more traditional academic subjects. Amongst the very high achievers were Elsie Lewis, Finlay Robertson, Elizabeth Martin, Georgina Turner, Tessa Crosbie and Miles Janes who all scooped a full set of 9s, A* and As.

Ewe Still Matter!

As schools have celebrated the end of the diocesan Ewe Matter project, Ewenice our Diocesan sheep is now keen to visit ewe! Ewenice is covered with hundreds of jewels, each of which represents a prayer for a person, place or situation.

She would love to visit your Messy Church, Family Worship, or become a prayer station at your church. If you'd like her to visit, please contact Julie Stirling the Director of Education's pa (Julie.stirling@portsmouth.anglican.org). The Diocesan Education Team has ready-made activities and an interactive fun talk for services that schools and parishes are welcome to use.

Ewenice comes fresh from attending all seven leavers services in Winchester, Portsmouth and Christchurch where she joined the dozens of sheep created by



schools across both the Portsmouth and Winchester Dioceses. The team would like to say thank you again for the huge effort involved in this highly successful project.

Meanwhile the Highfield Primary School sheep has already been out into her community visiting Vintage Adventure; a new church

community in Portswood, Southampton based on the principles of Messy Church.

More than 30 people from the local Church and community gathered to creatively explore The Parable of the Good Shepherd, with craft activities and reflective stations following a Godly Play story. They finished by having photos taken with the sheep! Vintage Adventure is now a regular feature in the calendar for a growing number of local residents.

School Attempts A World Record

A fleet of plastic bottles was launched by more than 300 children to raise awareness about recycling and the pollution of the oceans – and as an attempt for a new world record!

Children from St. James' Church of England Primary Academy in Bournemouth joined together to try for a Guinness World Record, completing 'the Plastic Bottle Boat Challenge' (PBBC) at a lake in Poole Park.



Following lessons focussing on pollution, recycling, conservation, the environment and the circular economy, the children's learning culminated in the dramatic World Record attempt for the largest plastic bottle boat launch in a single venue.

Principal Jeremy Payne said: 'Given the large number of curriculum opportunities for exploring floating, sinking, materials, the environment, local issues, philosophy, design, construction and much more, the PBBC was the perfect opportunity to deliver learning that was relevant to the children and supported the school's ambitions of helping each child to believe that they have the power to make a difference in the world.'

Jeremy Payne described the event as 'magical' when 340 children boarded a flotilla of buses to travel to Poole Park where they played games, sang sea shanties and ultimately launched all their colourful little boats in a carefully choreographed process to comply with the Guinness requirements. With the added pressure of BBC cameras, local radio and press on hand to record every moment, as well as a professional film crew with drones to capture the activity, Poole Park became the sight of a colourful and excited armada – the outcome is yet to be ratified by the Guinness auditors, however St. James' are confident that 330 boats met the specifications and are keenly awaiting the official ratification from Guinness. After the record attempt, all of the plastic boats were recycled into the back of a Poole Council lorry, underpinning the messages the children had learned about in the week.



Having completed the single venue record, the school have their sights set high and are launching a global Plastic Bottle Boat Challenge that intends to give

children and schools across the world the opportunity to take part in the challenge and explore issues that are meaningful to their children and focused on local as well as international learning. The date set for the multi venue challenge is the 27th June 2018 and a website is soon to be launched to officially announce this venture to the world.

Many parents shared positive feedback after the event, with one response summing up the impact of the week: *‘Our children have had the most amazing time this week and have been so engaged in their learning, one has even come home wanting to write every evening! Not only have they learnt about making boats, but also about the wider world and how we need to look after this. Such a joy to listen to them telling us each evening. Thank you so much, St. James!’*

Following the week’s learning, 93% of St. James’ children responded that they would now act differently in their daily lives to prevent some of the damage that plastics are doing to the world and 93% of children declared that they were more passionate about protecting the planet and making a difference for future generations than they had been before the week started.

Schools Invited To Change The World

Christian Aid is preparing to launch a new accreditation scheme for primary schools, in partnership with the Church of England Education Office. The aim is to help church schools inspire their pupils to make a difference in a challenging world. **The charity is hoping that the scheme will:**

- increase knowledge and understanding about why and how Christians want to change the world to one where everyone can live a life, free from poverty
- increase understanding of the root causes of poverty and injustice
- engage and empower pupils as agents of change in the transformation of our world.



Many church schools are already engaged with global learning, while others would like to do more. Wherever schools are on the global learning journey, Christian Aid is offering help to explore, strengthen and celebrate the school’s potential to respond to global injustice in a distinctively Christian way. The accreditation scheme, launching in January 2018, will help schools showcase any work being done to support pupils’ development as courageous

advocates. Any staff thinking that this scheme might suit their school(s), are asked to email schools@christian-aid.org
Anyone wanting more information on becoming a volunteer should email southampton@christian-aid.org

Bishop Christopher's Visit

The Bishop of Portsmouth visited Wickham Church of England Primary School to bless a mosaic installed outside the entrance of the school reception. Budding reporters and Year 6 pupils Esme Prestedge and Beth Parker take up the story...

Our mosaic is full of pebbles and in the centre is a collection of pebbles that are painted blue (the school colour).

They are presented as a cross to represent our Christian school. Years 5 and 6 painted pebbles which had

images of the cross on and images that mean a lot to them. The Activate Club completed the project.

Bishop Christopher also came to bless the new Reception class outdoor area that has recently been built. We asked some Year R's what they thought of the playground: One girl, Nula Brown said, "It is really good and fun and I think that it is better than the old one because there is more to do."

The Bishop led our collective worship outside, under the big oak tree at the front of the school. He talked to us about our Christian Values and in



particular, respect, which is the theme for this term. The Bishop was shown round our school by Jazz Haines and Tyler Kirby and viewed each class. Some children asked the bishop some questions about RE, including incarnation which he answered really well!



It was an honour that the Bishop came to visit our school; we are very grateful for what he did. It helped the Year 6s to understand about Christianity because of the questions they asked him. We hope he can visit again.

Information and advice for schools on creating mosaics in the diocesan booklet 'Intergenerational Projects for Schools and Parishes'.

The nature of mosaics demands coordination and teamwork, making them ideal for an intergenerational projects in schools and parishes . The booklet was provided to headteachers at last term's briefing meetings. If you require a copy of the booklet, please contact

sue.bowen@portsmouth.anglican.org

Tea and Tissues

Recognising that starting school can be daunting for both children and their parents, a Southampton church has come to the rescue.

In order to help parents over this tricky time, Highfield Church in Southampton has hosted its annual 'Tea and Tissues' event for families new to Highfield School. The church hosts the event and the Highfield School Association provides the cakes. The church recognises that it helps to be made welcome, to meet others in the same

situation, as well as to meet some old hands!

Sammy Jordan, Families and Schools Ministry Leader at the church, explained: 'It's a space for families to have a drink, eat some cake, chat and commiserate or celebrate together (we get both!)

We get about 50 people there each year as many of the new families pop in. We also get Highfield parents whose children are already in the school. They come for the cake, but also to answer questions and encourage new families.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher come and so it's an opportunity for everyone to say 'Hello' at the start of term.

I introduce myself and this is always my opportunity to say that I'm 'there for them', whether they come to the church or not.



Scheme to Help Parental Well-Being

Talk Together, a project designed to build and support productive relationships between schools and parents of children with additional needs, is being offered free of charge to schools.



A number of our schools are already receiving help from the Talk Together scheme offered by the charity Hampshire Parents Carer Network (HPCN). The charity works alongside the local authority, education and health services in order to improve provisions and services for children and young people with additional needs. Talk Together helps parents and carers of all children with additional needs, from undiagnosed and mildly challenging behaviours to more complex diagnoses and disabilities.

Parents and carers of these children often say they feel isolated at the school gate. Therefore, Talk Together is a chance for them to meet others in the same position and to share ideas, concerns and information with other parents and school staff. Schools can choose to invite a selection of parents to meetings which are initially facilitated by charity staff before being continued by parent volunteers or support staff.

Ros Pawling of the chair said: 'The Christian ethos is very apparent in the church schools we work with as they seek to improve the welfare of both children and their parents, especially those living with the extra challenges of additional needs.'

'Talk Together therefore offers a free and valued means by which to increase communication and understanding between parents and the school as well as an opportunity for shared learning from key agencies and professionals. To quote one school '*Talk Together provides a fantastically supportive environment for parents to share their experiences*'. It also often helps with early interventions so that a problem does not snowball.' Representatives of the team will discuss the scheme at several of the Autumn Term headteacher/Chair of Governors meetings. All Hampshire parent carers are eligible to join HPCN free of charge. The charity also welcomes groups and professionals with an interest in its work. To register with HPCN and receive

their monthly e-newsletter go to <http://www.hpcn.org.uk/Register-with-us.aspx>, email participation@hpcn.org.uk, or telephone 01962 853 153. Schools interested in getting involved in Talk Together can contact rosalindpawling@hpcn.org.uk.

New members of the Diocesan Education Team

The Portsmouth and Winchester Dioceses Joint Education Team welcomes two new members of staff.

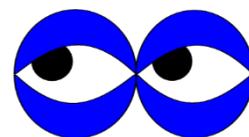


Sharon Brueton has joined the team from Hampshire County Council and brings a wealth of experience in school governance. Sharon will oversee all aspects of school governance and admissions. Her role includes supporting schools with governor vacancies, providing and delivering effective training for Foundation Governors and working closely with schools to develop their governance board. She will ensure that governing bodies and parishes are supporting the vision and ethos of church schools. Sharon is also working with the various local authorities and schools to support the schools admissions process.

Rob Sanders joins the team as Deputy Director of Education – he has experience of leadership in Church schools and introduces himself below.

From My Perspective

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



I started working for the joint Portsmouth and Winchester Diocesan Education Team this September as Deputy Director of Education, which is a new post. I have over twenty years' experience working in primary schools across Hampshire with eleven of those having been in senior leadership posts, most recently as Head of School at John Keble CofE Primary School.

It has been an immense privilege to work with children and colleagues in schools but I felt ready for a change and new challenge. Working for the diocesan team will enable me to use my experience to further develop the Church of England's vision and strategy for education that will benefit a much wider community than I have been able to before; I am looking forward to getting to know many schools and communities across both dioceses and the six local education authorities with whom we work. I have a particular interest in the wider curriculum and how to enable and foster pupil and staff well-being. Academic standards are of course important but schools should also be places of nurture and care that enable our children and staff to flourish as confident, happy people.

I have had the privilege of working with many incredibly talented individuals whose impact on children's lives is impossible to quantify. We need to keep people like this in the profession and I hope that I can in some way help towards achieving that goal.

The Christian distinctiveness and ethos of our schools is something I believe should be clear and evident when you set foot inside the door of one of our schools; my prayer is that the hope and peace that knowing Jesus brings becomes in some way apparent and tangible to those who learn, work and support our schools.

Connecting Classrooms Fund

The British Council's Connecting Classrooms fund is open for applications. Grants of £3,000 are available to enable any teachers (who have completed the British Council's 'Teaching Core Skills' training programme) and a school leader to visit a partner school overseas.

Each visit will involve participating in an event, arranged in country by the British Council. The events will bring together schools from the UK, their partners and other local schools to share experiences and good practice of implementing core skills within the curriculum. To be eligible to apply, the UK school will have identified a partner school in one of the following countries: Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian

Territories, Tunisia, Yemen. Schools engaged in Professional Partnerships with partner schools in the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa) are invited to apply for a fully-funded opportunity to attend a partnership visit in Amman, Jordan in February 2018. The next closing date for applications is the 20th November 2017. More information is available on:

<https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org>

Prayer Spaces Training

Following regular inquiries about setting up prayer spaces in Schools, a joint training course for schools and parish representatives is being organised for the Spring Term.



Prayer spaces enable children and young people to explore faith and spirituality in a safe, creative and interactive way. A range of flexible resources can be adapted to work for participants aged 5 to 18, bringing an experiential dimension to a variety of subject areas and to pastoral aspects of school life.

The courses will be offered in several locations across both dioceses.

Understanding Christianity



More than 70 of our church schools have either completed or booked to attend training for the new Understanding Christianity resource. Understanding Christianity, designed to improve the teaching of Christianity in church schools, has been well received by both children and staff. The Diocesan Education Team continues to work with Hampshire to discuss how the materials can be taught alongside Living Difference III.

The national Statement of Entitlement for RE contains the following statement: ***In Church of England schools the students and their families can expect a religious education curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith: for example through the Understanding Christianity resource.***

The next training for the implementation of Understanding Christianity, details of which has been emailed to schools, will take place at Old Alresford Place on 28th September. It costs £110 which includes a set of the materials. Once RE leaders have attended a training day, the diocesan team will offer follow-up support through the RE network meetings. If you would like to book a place please email julie.stirling@portsmouth.anglican.org

And finally a big, sincere, warm WELCOME to our new Headteachers, who join the Diocesan family of schools this term:

Hilary Brewster
The Dever Valley Federation
Barton Stacey CE Primary School & Micheldever CE Primary School

Alison Timmings
Burton CE Primary School

Crissy Hodgkinson
Catherington CE Infant School

Hannah Inglis
Long Sutton CE Primary School

Joanne Jerrard
Nursling CE Primary School

Kirstie Richards
Pennington CE Primary School

Tim Woodford
Rownhams St John's CE Primary School

Fiona Perkins
St Francis Catholic & C of E Primary Academy, Isle of Wight

Charles Applegate
St Mark's C of E Primary School, Hatch Warren

Kay Pennicotte-Henrie
St Matthew's CE Primary School, Blackmoor