



# Diocese of Shrewsbury

## Department of Education



**NEWSLETTER**

**Summer Term 2024 No. 2**

Dear Colleague,

### 1. INTRODUCTION & EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STAFFING

I hope you had relaxing mid-term break and are refreshed for all that the remaining weeks of the academic year gift you. I have been asked by the Trustees to undertake the role of Acting Director of Schools and have taken up this position from June 3<sup>rd</sup> for the remainder of the term ahead.

### 2. APPOINTMENT AND CHANGES OF HEADTEACHER

The following Headteachers will be leaving the service of the Diocese at the end of term:

Andrea Towey - St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Warrington

Jackie Walker – St James's Catholic Primary School, Tameside

Janet Ward – Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Catholic Primary, Halton

Keith Turmeau – Harrytown Catholic High School, Stockport

Mary Bulmer – St John's Catholic Infant School, Wirral

Simon Duggan – St Anslem's Catholic College, Wirral

We thank them for their service to Catholic education in the Diocese and wish them health and happiness in all their future endeavours. We continue to remember all our Diocesan Headteachers in our prayers and thank God for their continued service and commitment to our Diocese.

### 3. YEAR OF JUBILEE

CAFOD are working alongside the CES and CSAN, with support from CYMFed, on a series of activities to support schools in marking the Jubilee year: **Pilgrims of Hope**. Please mark the following key moments in your diaries:

• **Jubilee Launch Day: Friday 24 January 2025**

• **Jubilee Pledge Day: June or July 2025**

Schools are invited to make a commitment to stand with the poorest communities, sharing hope and challenging injustice.

• **Jubilee Finale: Friday 21 November 2025**

We hope to share more details with schools soon.

For the Year of Prayer preceding this jubilee year the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW) are promoting resources from *Sycamore* that can be delivered as a prayer course which staff may find helpful.

The course has five sessions: The Power of Prayer, Praying with the Bible, How to pray, Prayer in the Mass, and Mercy and Mission. Like all the courses *Sycamore* offers, the sessions are videos with moments of pause for reflection and discussion.

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/the-year-of-jubilee-2025/sycamore-prayer-course/>



#### **4. CONSULTATION ON LIFTING THE FAITH CAP AND OPENING SPECIAL FAITH BASED ACADEMIES**

I am sure that you will have picked up the press reports about a government consultation published by the DfE on lifting the 50% cap on faith-based admissions criteria alongside proposals on opening special faith-based academies. Here is a link to the press release on the DfE website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-lift-cap-on-faith-school-places>

As you will be aware the Catholic Church has been pressing for many years for the lifting of the 50% cap. You will see the response from Bishop Marcus, Chair of the Catholic Education Service, in the DfE press release as follows:

*“These proposals are welcome. Dioceses are well placed to respond to differing local educational demands around the country, including the provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities. Parents can welcome this also. Catholic education not only provides a high performing school sector and promotes the formation of children in values and virtues; it is more ethnically diverse than other schools, educates more pupils from the most deprived backgrounds, and builds social cohesion within our communities.”*

The CES have devised a simple e-action response which enables an email response to be submitted with very little input required on the part of the respondent within a matter of seconds. The e-action response is now available on the Bishops’ Conference website and can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/lifting-the-faith-schools-cap/>

**We would encourage you to complete this e-action response and share the link with governors and staff within your schools so that they can also respond should they wish to do so.**

**The consultation closes at 11:59pm on 20<sup>th</sup> June.**

#### **5. TO LOVE YOU MORE DEARLY – THE PRAYER AND LITURGY DIRECTORY (PLD)**

It was wonderful to see so many colleagues at The Park Royal for our first day of formation exploring the new PLD. We are grateful to Fr Peter McGrail, our keynote speaker and co-author of the directory, who shared with us in an accessible way the theology underpinning prayer and liturgy. We are grateful too to the working party who contributed to the organisation and order of the day.

The working party will meet again before the summer term as we continue to explore together how best to support schools with prayer and liturgy and we plan to offer schools CPDF over the coming year with an in-person meeting and a virtual meeting organised for each of the three terms. More details will be shared in our 2024-25 CPDF offer soon.

## 6. REVIEW OF THE RSHE STATUTORY GUIDANCE

The DfE are seeking views on changes to the relationships, sex and health education statutory guidance. They have released [Draft RSE and Health Statutory Guidance](#) and all stakeholders have been invited to share their views on the proposed changes via an online survey. One of the proposed changes is the introduction of age limits, for example, that sex education should not occur until Years 5 & 6, mirroring the science National Curriculum, and that FGM should not be taught before Year 9 (although they allow an exception to be made where schools have identified a greater risk of FGM at an earlier age or if the school has pupils who have been affected by FGM and need support.)

Please do read the draft guidance carefully and offer your thoughts via the consultation survey, which can be found on this webpage [Review of the RSHE statutory guidance - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

This survey will remain open until **11th July 2024**.

## 7. GENERAL ELECTION 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2024

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> May Rishi Sunak announced that the next general election would take place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July. This provides an excellent opportunity to explore the electoral system and the importance of voting with our children and young people. Indeed, the Catechism teaches us that exercising our right to vote is a moral obligation!

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England, and Wales (CBCEW) has recorded a message encouraging Catholics, particularly young adults, to be "*willing to get involved and vote*" as the opportunity to vote in a general election is a "*privilege*".

*"You want to know what your candidate will think and say on your behalf when that candidate gets into Parliament,"* says the Cardinal. *"I would like to put forward a theme for us all to think about. How do we seek to construct a society in which families can flourish? That's the bedrock – many positive things flow from that."*

In his message, Cardinal Nichols signposts resources that offer guidance on seven key topics of interest to Catholics. On behalf of the Church, he is urging us to consider the principles of Catholic Social Teaching when engaging with politicians on these key issues. The information and guidance can be found on the [Bishops' Conference website](#) and covers the following areas:

- Criminal Justice
- Domestic poverty, family life and taxation
- Education
- Environment
- International relations, human rights and peacebuilding
- Life Issues
- Migration

You can access the CBCEW resources on the key issues for Catholic voters, including Cardinal Nichols's recording, by visiting:

[General Election 2024](#)

In addition, the **SVP and CAFOD** have teamed up to support Catholic voters offering guidance on engagement with local MPs. They say, '*The common good is reached when we work together to improve the lives of people both in our local community, and in the wider world.*

*The SVP's and CAFOD's campaign want to help the Catholic voice be heard in the next General Election, and we want to make sure our politicians make tackling poverty a priority.*

*The Church tells us that "...All citizens ought to be aware of their right and duty to promote the common good by casting their votes...". But in order to arrive at the polling station as well informed as possible, it's important to know our prospective MP's views on the things that matter to us.*

*For this reason, the SVP and CAFOD are inviting parishes to reach out to their local candidates ahead of the next election. This is not about party-political affiliations, but rather about strengthening community participation as a local faith group, and practicing the culture of encounter that Pope Francis talks about:*

*". . . with our faith we must create a "culture of encounter," a culture of friendship, a culture in which we find brothers and sisters, in which we can also speak with those who think differently..."*

Perhaps through this culture of encounter our children and young people may wish to explore the views of prospective local MPs on what matters to us as a Catholic community.

Find out more or sign up here:

<https://svp.org.uk/encounter>

<https://cafod.org.uk/campaign/uk-general-election-2024-a-guide-for-catholic-voters>

## 8. NPQs

As a Diocese we are now a recognised Delivery Partner for NPQs through The Church of England and Catholic Education Service NPQ Programme. Following the very successful delivery of an initial NPQLBC programme delivered through the Corpus Christi Catholic Multi Academy Trust, we are now looking to widen this offer to other Diocesan schools and academies, and further details will be made available to schools in the future.

## 9. RENEWAL OF GOVERNORS' TERM OF OFFICE

All Foundation Governors with expiring terms have now received paperwork to complete, and were asked to return completed papers to the Diocese by the 1<sup>st</sup> June. Chairs and Headteachers have also been contacted by the education admin team to request approval for re-appointments, and also this year, schools are asked to **provide DBS details for each relevant governor before any re-appointment can be made.**

There are still a number of outstanding returns from schools and individual governors, and we would ask that these are progressed as a matter of urgency to allow the Education Team time to renew terms and issue certificates and letters, prior to the summer break.

Thank you to all Heads, Chairs and governors that have responded so far.

Please send governance related emails to the following address:

[governance@dioceseofshrewsbury.org](mailto:governance@dioceseofshrewsbury.org)

## 10. THE APPOINTMENT OF NEW FOUNDATION GOVERNORS

A reminder that the process for the appointment of new foundation governors has been amended. The letter of appointment from Bishop Mark which confirms foundation governor status is now only issued once the Diocese is in receipt of relevant DBS numbers and dates of issue.

As a school you should ensure that all Governors have a current DBS, and we would recommend that the DBS is renewed **every 4 years**.

## 11. SENIOR APPOINTMENTS

A reminder once again that the Diocesan Department of Education **MUST** be involved in Headship, Deputy Headship, Heads of RE and Chaplain appointments. In addition, if schools and academies are seeking to appoint to posts that have a responsibility for Catholic ethos, then again, the Diocese must be involved.

The *Bishops' Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers* also extends Diocesan involvement to all **temporary** positions, including Executive Headships and Heads of School. If schools are making **temporary leadership arrangements**, they must also have these approved by the relevant Diocesan officer and have gone through an approved recruitment process.

Please ensure that the Diocese is contacted prior to any recruitment process commencing.

## 12. FAITH REFERENCES

Having made a significant number of senior appointments again last term it is timely to remind all colleagues of the Diocesan definition of a practising Catholic. When requesting a faith reference the priest is asked to confirm that the candidate attends weekly Sunday Mass and lives their life in accordance with the teachings of the Church. The priest will be asked to confirm practice for at least twelve months, and this will also apply to those who have recently been received into the Church. Guidance on obtaining a faith reference can be found using the link below:

[Faith References Request Form](#)

[Guidance on obtaining a Faith Reference](#)

### 13. NORTH WEST DIOCESES COURSES

The North West Catholic Training Partnership continues to offer bespoke leadership programmes at three levels, middle leader, senior leader and new headteacher. These have proved to be very successful, especially the senior leadership programme that has to date always been oversubscribed. I would ask you continue to give serious consideration to supporting all of these courses as we know how important succession planning is for the future of our Catholic schools. We are seeing the number and quality of applications for senior posts increase with many candidates having completed one of these leadership programmes or aspiring to do so. Details of the programmes for the 2024-25 academic year are available at : [www.nwcdtp.org.uk](http://www.nwcdtp.org.uk)

### 14. CPDF PROGRAMME FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

The following courses are being run over the next few weeks.

All courses are bookable through the Diocesan website by following the link below:

<https://educationshrewsbury.org/formation-development/ed-cpdf-opportunities/book-a-cpdf-course/>

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| 10 June | Support for implementing The Vine & Branches Y3 Teachers- Holy Angels        |
| 11 June | Primary Curriculum Working Party – St John Henry Newman Parish               |
| 12 June | Secondary DADAH CL&M Retreat – St Joseph’s Prayer Centre                     |
| 13 June | Support for implementing The Vine & Branches Y2 Teachers- Holy Angels        |
| 17 June | COAST HUB; Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Manchester                         |
| 17 June | Secondary RSE Lead Meeting – St Nicholas High School                         |
| 19 June | Secondary DADAH Quality of Education – All Hallows Catholic College          |
| 19 June | COAST HUB: Cheshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin                            |
| 19 June | SHORE Conference – Leeds   |
| 20 June | New Headteacher Induction – Park Royal Hotel                                 |
| 20 June | ECT 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year CST – virtual                                       |
| 21 June | Support for implementing The Vine & Branches Y1 Teachers- Holy Angels        |
| 21 June | COAST HUB: Warrington, Halton, Wirral – Cardinal Newman High School          |
| 26 June | Secondary DADAH Personal Development – The Catholic High school              |
| 26 June | Support for implementing The Vine & Branches Y4 Teachers- Holy Angels        |
| 26 June | Chairs and Vice Chairs Forum – St Mary of the Angels Primary, Ellesmere Port |
| 28 June | Understanding Scripture with Margaret Carswell – Holy Angels                 |

#### 5<sup>th</sup> July

The celebration of **Holy Mass of Thanksgiving** and **Mini-DASH** with our secondary schools at St Columba’s RC Church, Chester

(Schools should have already received information about this date)

### **17<sup>th</sup> July at 4.30pm**

The celebration of **Holy Mass to give thanks for this academic year** at All Saints RC Church, Sale. Bishop Mark will be presiding, and **all are welcome**.

### **15. MASSES FOR THE START OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-25**

We are planning to hold 3 Masses to mark the start of the 2024-25 academic year on the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of September at differing locations across the Diocese. We shall confirm venues, dates and times with you as soon as we can before the summer break.

### **16. CPDF PROVISION 2024-2025**

We met with representatives of DASH and DAPH prior to the half term break to take feedback on our CPDF programme for the current academic year which has informed our planning for 2024-25. We are now finalising the programme, and following feedback we will not be compiling a booklet for next year, but instead will be detailing all events on the [education website](#).

### **17. GOVERNOR TRAINING DATES 2024/2025**

The programme of governor training for 2024-25 can be found below. We also intend to run our annual Governors' Conference in the Autumn Term on 9<sup>th</sup> November at Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College

#### **New Governor Induction Training:**

##### Autumn Term 2024

|                                    |             |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> September | 2 – 3.30 pm |
| Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> September | 6 – 7.30 pm |

##### Spring Term 2025

|                                   |             |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> January | 2 – 3.30 pm |
| Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> January | 6 – 7.30 pm |

##### Summer Term 2025

|                                  |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> April | 6 – 7.30 pm |
| Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> May     | 2 – 3.30 pm |

#### **Future Governor Briefings:**

##### Autumn Term 2024

|                                   |             |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> October   | 6 – 7.30 pm |
| Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> October | 6 – 7.30 pm |
| Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> October | 2 – 3.30 pm |

##### Spring Term 2025

|                                  |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> January | 6 – 7.30 pm |
|----------------------------------|-------------|

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2 – 3.30 pm  
Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January 6 – 7.30 pm

Summer Term 2025

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 6 – 7.30 pm  
Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2 – 3.30 pm  
Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 6 – 7.30 pm

**Chairs and Vice Chair Forum:**

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 6.30pm-8pm**  
**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 25 6.30pm-8pm**  
**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June 25 6.30pm-8pm**

With every good wish and blessing for the remaining weeks of the term.

Richard