



Archdiocese of Westminster
Education Service
Dedicated to Lifelong Growth of the Whole Person in Faith
BULLETIN

March
2004
2/04

To: Head Teachers and Chairs of Governing Bodies

Items marked do not apply to independent schools*

Diocesan Education Commission – a Change of Name

In a recent review of its work, the Education Board proposed to the Archbishop revised Statutes governing their work. After discussion at the Archbishop's Council, the new Statutes were agreed by the Archbishop. The new Statutes have changed the name of the Board to the "Education Commission". Although schools and others in the diocese have got used to the term "Education Board", the term was increasingly causing problems in our relationships with external bodies. Many external agencies confused our Education Board with a "Diocesan Board for Schools" (a statutory body which only exists in Anglican dioceses, and whose legal equivalent in a Catholic diocese is the diocesan bishop). It is felt that the new term, used in many other Catholic dioceses, will help us to make that distinction clearer. *(For further information, please contact Paul Barber: 020 7798 9005 paulbarber@rcdow.org.uk, or look on our website for a copy of the new Statutes)*

Review of the Service Level Agreement

Three years ago, with the agreement of schools, a Service Level Agreement was introduced to assist the diocese in maintaining support for schools at the level they required. Half of the service charge goes to the Department of Schools and half to the Department of RE and Inspection. It was envisaged that the charge would provide between one-quarter to one-third of the costs of each Department. It was agreed at that time that the level of both the service provided, and the service charge, would be kept the same for the first three years, and that there would be a review of the Agreement at the end of that period. It is now time to carry out that review. You will shortly be receiving a letter from the Bishop, together with a report and questionnaire from each Department. We request your help in the Review by filling in and returning the questionnaires. *(For further information, please contact Paul Barber, Rita Price or Anthony Clark: 020 7798 9005)*

Update on arrangements and new Inspection proposals.

Just as we adjust to the new OFSTED framework we are greeted with new consultation proposals (including shorter, more frequent, inspections at shorter notice). The emphasis on school self-evaluation is stronger and we will keep schools informed on the Section 10 changes from the training. The implications for Diocesan and Section 23 inspections are being considered in the light of these proposals. *(For further information contact Rita Price or your Religious Education Adviser)*

At the end of February, we said a fond farewell to Mary Mullarkey who has been co-ordinating Section 23 inspections in the diocese. For the time being, Mary's work will be covered by Mike Pittendreigh. Schools should notify him as soon as they receive notification of an inspection (*the brown envelope*) rather than wait until an exact date has been agreed. Your assistance with this will be much appreciated. *(Contact Mike Pittendreigh on 020 7798 9190 – direct line with voicemail; or email: mikepittendreigh@rcdow.org.uk)*

Update on Capital Funding*

In addition to the moratorium referred to in the previous bulletin, the DFES has restricted the 2004/05 LCVAP allocations to LEAs to 50% of the originally indicated amount. This has created serious problems in that there are a number of projects spanning two financial years and for which there is therefore a substantial existing commitment in 04/05. The outcome of this is that for a number of LEAs we have not been able to approve any new minor works projects at all for 04/05 and this will undoubtedly be a disappointment to many schools. We have been informed that the final allocations for 04/05 will be released towards the end of March at which point we may be in a position to approve a few new schemes. Further information will be provided in the next bulletin.

Contact Sally Livesey on 020 7798 9005 or e mail sallylivesey@rcdow.org.uk

Admissions*

Thank you to all those schools that have sent in their **2005 –2006** Admission Policies. A response to each school's policy, received thus far, will be sent to the Governing Body for consideration, as soon as is possible. Comments will be made in the light of Diocesan Guidance and The Code of Practice for Admissions.

The Consultation deadline for 2005-2006 admission policies, in the 'relevant area', was Monday March 1st. Governing Bodies must now determine their admission arrangements by 15th April and notify all those consulted, within 14 days of determination.

Please could all schools, who have not already done so, send a copy of their proposed 2005-2006 Admission Policy to Maureen Roe, as soon as is possible. Maureen will then try to ensure that those received by Monday March 15 will receive a response by Fri 2nd April (Governing Bodies will be notified if this is not possible)

Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions*

School entry for **2005- 2006** is the first year of Co-ordinated Admission arrangements for Secondary Schools across the diocese. A Diocesan Officer sits on each LEA'S Admission Forum so it is vital that we are kept up to speed with any 'local' issues that may arise for both schools and parents. A copy of each secondary school's Admission Policy for 2005 - 2006 would be a good start (see above).

Contact Maureen Roe 0207 798 9005 or email maureenroe@rcdow.org.uk

Self - Evaluation and Catholic Schools

The focus on self-evaluation is high on the education agenda and the tools for review are becoming more sophisticated. Every Catholic School and College across the diocese is expected to engage in the process of self review in line with Diocesan guidelines. The development so far is encouraging. The framework so far is in line with the key questions of inspection and the findings thus inform the school/college improvement plan. In addition, schools preparing for inspection have the basis for completion of the C4 document (i.e. 'Catholic', as distinct from S4). This form is required at the start of the Section 23 inspection and a copy is enclosed for information. All of the materials are under review.

As members of a diocese engaged in reflection, every school and college is asked to review one area of its Catholic life in more depth. By the end of the summer term (Trinity) this will have covered the provision for spiritual and moral development. Last year, the focus was on the prayer life of the school and it had a special impact. New initiatives and good practice were shared in several ways across the diocese. Governors, head teachers and staff are reminded here of the current focus. The steering groups will be meeting shortly to review and update the work in the light of Catholic School Self-evaluation. *(For further information please contact Rita Price or the school's Religious Education Adviser)*

'At Your Word, Lord', Season 2

Schools and colleges are receiving the materials for Season 2 on CD directly from Fr. Stuart's Office. They have been sent via the religious education departments and via primary co-ordinators. Every school is asked to find ways to share the readings over the six weeks: for example, during assembly and to link with the period of Lent. Leaders are asked also to encourage small numbers of people to come together for a short time each week and to share their faith around the readings. During Season 1 there were good examples across the schools of parent groups, staff, sixth form, and younger pupils, holding short meetings. *(For further information please contact Rita Price or the AYWL office)*

"Six Term Year" proposals*

Over the past year or so, many LEAs have consulted on these proposals, originally put forward by the Local Government Association. Quite a few seem to favour a move towards this, but only if their neighbours were to do the same. Most do not seem to have taken on board that, in voluntary aided schools, this is a decision for the governors. Should there be a diocesan or national Catholic view on this? Are we content for LEAs to take the lead as is currently the case, or should Catholic schools take this as an opportunity to assert their distinctiveness? Are you happy to see term lengths fixed, or do you want to keep a major break associated with (movable) Easter? What about the length of the Summer holiday? There are practical and other issues to be considered. A brief discussion document will shortly be on the website – we would like your views. Please do respond. *(For further information, please contact Paul Barber: 020 7798 9005 paulbarber@rcdow.org.uk)*

CCRS Study Day

The next study day for the CCRS is on Saturday 8th May 2004 at Vaughan House, starting at 10am. The Module is on Christian Morality and the main speaker will be Anna Abrams from Heythrop College. Teachers, catechists and interested adults are welcome. The fee for attending the day only is £6.50 while the cost for the full CCRS unit is £15.00. Participants can register on the day but prior registration is appreciated. Full details on the LILAC page at www.rcdow.org.uk/lilac *(Contact Moira Wilson on 020 8202 3611 or by e-mail moirawilson@rcdow.org.uk)*

Diocesan Catechists Conference

The title is 'Celebrating Catechesis'. During the conference we will be looking at how we celebrate in liturgy what we do in catechesis. The conference is at All Saints, London Colney from the evening of Friday 7th May to Sunday 9th May 2004 and will be led by Fr Perry Gildea. The price is £65 non residential and £95 residential. Contact Mary Crowley at 020 8202 3611 for further details and an application form. *(email marycrowley@rcdow.org.uk)*

Citizenship Materials: Catholic Social Teaching – useful website

In Bulletin 1/03 we gave details of a very useful publication by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace entitled *The Social Agenda of the Catholic Church: A Collection of Magisterial Texts*. This sets out extracts from all the most important official Church documents on Catholic social teaching arranged by topic or theme. The same collection of texts is now easily accessible via a useful website: www.thesocialagenda.org. This means that material on any aspect of the Church's social teaching can instantly be found and downloaded by students and teachers alike.

Governor Training

Performance Management Training for Governors: Saturday 8th May at Our Lady and St John's RC Primary School, Boston Park Rd, Brentford, Middx TW8 9JF, repeated on Saturday 19th June at The Niland Conference Centre, Bushey, Herts. Flyers are enclosed with this bulletin for both courses, which are aimed at governors who are responsible for (or could be responsible for) reviewing the performance of the headteacher .

Contact Maureen Roe on 0207 798 9005 or e-mail maureenroe@rcdow.org.uk

Planning for the Autumn (good practice)

Some secondary schools arrange to have prayers printed in the pupils' journals and planners and to leave space for the pupils' own reflections. Several schools also ask that their new pupils bring their own Bible to treasure and to keep throughout the school. The school will recommend the version or translation but 'The Good News' and the new 'Jerusalem Bible' are popular and accessible to young people. Bibles need to be portable! In addition, some schools have their own school hymn and school prayer both of which are shared with the wider community. These contribute well to celebrations such as the Patronal Feast and, often powerfully, to Awards Evenings. *(For further discussion, please contact Rita Price or your Religious Education Adviser)*

Proposals for a new National Framework for Religious Education - Institute of Public Policy Research.

Recent pronouncements have attracted a good deal of publicity. The Catholic Education Service is currently participating in a national working group on the proposed framework and doubtless the Catholic sector has much to contribute to the development. The framework is not applicable in Catholic schools because of our statutory rights to determine our own Religious Education. It is unlikely that there will be a change of title for the subject but may I use this as a reminder to schools to try to give the subject its full title and not 'RE', particularly in school documentation?

(<http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk>). (Enquiries please contact Rita Price /Religious Education Advisers)

Connections Strategy (including Connexions)

Secondary schools recently received a mailing from the CES to feedback on successful initiatives between Catholic schools and Connexions, and possible links with Catholic agencies. A reply has been sent also from the Diocese to the CES. There are some concerns still about the access of pupils to advice and literature; for example, about their personal and sexual well-being. Schools need to remain vigilant and to ensure that PA's are clear about the Catholic Church's beliefs and values regarding the dignity of young people. Please see the relevant CES correspondence September 2003. This also encourages Catholic educators to apply for vacancies on such partnership bodies.

(Enquiries please contact Rita Price, Paul Barber or Anthony Clark.) (<http://www.catholiceducation.org.uk>).

Telephones at Vaughan House – Getting through

Some schools have told us about difficulties in getting through to Vaughan House. Their experience is that the telephone simply rings and rings. There are normally two secretaries answering the telephone during working hours. If both of these are busy, you should automatically be transferred to a voicemail which lets you know that all the lines are engaged and takes a message. However, there would seem to be only a finite number of entry points into the voicemail system. So, if you try to call and you only get a ringing tone, this does not mean that there is no-one here! It means that everyone is on the telephone and the voicemail system is currently full with callers. If this happens, we ask for your patience. Please ring again later, e-mail or fax if urgent. Please also let us know if this happens to you: we are working with the telephone company to find a solution to this problem.

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Enclosed with this Bulletin:

Headteachers will find enclosed with this bulletin the latest **list of potential recruits** for our Catholic Schools.

Contact Maureen Roe on 0207 798 9005 or e-mailmaureenroe@rcdow.org.uk

Would **secondary** heads and **college** principals please complete the enclosed **Questionnaire on the Appointment of Chaplains and on the Recruitment of Religious Educators**, which asks for specific information. Thank you for your help.

For further information please Contact Fr Vlad. Feltzman or Rita Price

Please find enclosed the adjusted **programme from the Department of Religious Education and Inspection** as a reminder of **courses remaining** for 2003-2004

(For further information please contact Rita Price or the school's RE Adviser)

Also enclosed: the **programme** for the **Primary Headteachers' Conference** in April **and** a **'flyer'** for a **conference organised by the Diocese of Hallam**.

Good News Slot

Well done to **St Mary's**, Hillingdon on achieving **Investors in People**.

Congratulations to **The Holy Family Catholic Primary School** in Tower Hamlets for their double success in gaining The Active Mark for Physical Education (Sports England) and also the Eco-Friendly (European) Award for their work in ecological awareness.

Congratulations to **The Douay Martyrs School**, Hillingdon, where David Lewis, Director of Training, received a recent award for his paper on the MA and CPD, the first prize given by the International Professional Development Association (IPDA). This is a tribute to the work done on the MA at the Douay Martyrs School, in partnership with St. Mary's College.

More **national praise** for our schools in this year's **Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools**. Among those schools designated as "**particularly successful**" are: **Loreto College**, St Albans; **Our Lady of Muswell Primary School**, Haringey; **St Cuthbert Mayne Junior School**, Hemel Hempstead; **St Margaret Clitherow Primary School**, Stevenage; **The Annunciation Junior School**, Barnet.

Also celebrated for their **significant improvement** are **St Anselm Primary School**, Ealing; **St Edmund Primary School**, Tower Hamlets and **The Blessed John Roche School** also in Tower Hamlets.

Well done to them all.

Please keep the good news rolling in to Liz Duffy.

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