



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

June
2006
3/06

To: Head Teachers and Chairs of Governing Bodies

Items marked do not apply to independent schools*

From the Director of Education

We all breathed a sigh of relief at the end of last term, when we won a comprehensive victory in the High Court in the Bishop Challoner case. Within days work had re-started on this long-awaited flagship project to provide 21st Century Catholic secondary education in Tower Hamlets, and the trial which had tied us up for months was over. The relief was, however, short lived. Within a few weeks, Hertfordshire County Council launched a consultation to abolish home to school transport for “faith schools”. This proposal threatens the future of Catholic education for many families in our diocese, and risks putting the viability of some schools in jeopardy. Neither is this just a local issue: similar proposals are becoming fashionable across the land, so this is very much a national issue, too. We have joined with other churches and faith groups to oppose the Hertfordshire proposals vigorously. At this point I must pay tribute to the untiring efforts of our head teachers, schools, parents, and parish priests and parishioners in Hertfordshire, without whom the strength of response shown would not have been possible: as the consultation closed, 17,200 responses had been received – many of them individually composed letters.

Home to school transport is also one of the many issues dealt with in the Education and Inspections Bill, currently in the House of Lords. The Bill is now being piloted by a different Education Secretary to the one who introduced it. It is always difficult to assess which way the wind is blowing when a new ministerial team takes over, but early indications are good. The CES has already had an initial meeting with the new Secretary of State (something which seemed impossible to arrange with the last one). Archbishop Vincent Nichols reported a very encouraging meeting with substantial progress on a number of important issues, including home to school transport. We hope to have more details soon.

Earlier this term we held a very useful one-day Conference with Secondary Schools on the issue of Admissions. A frank, open and, at times, challenging discussion took place, and a strong consensus emerged on many issues. A number of ways forward were agreed, and the deliberations will inform future progress in the debate. A similar Conference will take place with Primary schools at the beginning of next term (see inside for details).

Meanwhile, a warm welcome to Helen Andrews, who has now joined our Primary Advisory Team and also Kate McKeever who has joined the Service for this current term.

Paul Barber

Foundation Governors and Re-Appointment following Re-Constitution*

We repeat here guidance that was sent to all schools as part of the re-constitution process. Some additional guidance has been added.

If schools are in the trusteeship of the diocese the Ordinary will automatically re-appoint all foundation governors to serve out their existing terms in full (unless an individual governor has requested otherwise). Individual notification of these re-appointments will not be sent out, because the re-appointments will match the governors' existing documentation. Where necessary, religious orders may wish to operate in a similar way.

Those governors whose term of office finishes on the 31st July 2006 will **need to be re-appointed** (unless a governor requests otherwise). All governors included in this category will receive a pre-populated form with their details. This form will act as the re- appointment form and will request amendments and additional information to that included on the form. We hope that this will speed up the process considerably.

Any foundation governor who has served twelve years or more on the same governing body will be required to include additional information, for the Ordinary's consideration. If they wish to continue to serve that particular governing body, the information given with the request needs to be supported by the views of the Chair, Head Teacher and priest on the governing body.

Contact Maureen Roe on 020 7798 9005 or e-mail: maureenroe@rcdow.org.uk

School Chaplains

Whenever the appointment of a chaplain is being considered, headteachers are asked to contact Mgr Vladimir Felzmann, the Diocesan Co-ordinator of School Chaplains. Guidelines for the appointment of chaplains is to be found in the Guidance document on the appointment of chaplains which is included in the list of documents on the diocesan website (Go to 'School Support' at the following address www.rcdow.org.uk/education)

Contact Mgr Vladimir Felzmann on 01727 829206

CCRS Study Day

'Old Testament' Saturday 16th September 2006, 10-4pm (registration/tea + coffee from 9.30am) at the Jesuit Centre, Mount Street, London W1.

Contact Mrs Moira Wilson on 020 8202 3611 or e-mail: moirawilson@rcdow.org.uk

'On The Way to Life'

'On The Way To Life' workshop with James Hanvey SJ to be held on 14th October 2006.

Contact Maria Leondiou on 020 8202 3611 or e-mail: marialeondiou@rcdow.org.uk

Religious Education Levels of Attainment

The existing National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA) Levels of Attainment were prepared some years ago before any comparable QCA religious education levels were produced. These have recently been reviewed by NBRIA following the October 2004 publication of new QCA levels as part of the national non-statutory framework for religious education. NBRIA took the opportunity to ensure full coverage by including P levels and Foundation Stage goals together with established Levels. Following a successful pilot across the country, it is planned to publish them, with exemplar material, for the beginning of the new academic year. Training in their use will be available throughout 2006-7. Subsequent quality assurance will form part of regular school Adviser visits to the Religious Education department.

Contact Peter Ward on 020 7798 9005 or e-mail: peterward@rcdow.org.uk

Sixth Form General Religious Education

1 Future Funding* No doubt you have received the letter from Fr Joe Quigley at the CES, dated 5 May 2006, concerning future funding of Sixth Form General Religious Education. This stated that the CES and LSC have 'agreed that existent arrangements for funding for sixth form general religious education will remain in place for 2006/7. Therefore, courses that have gone through the National Accrediting Board of Studies (NABS) approval process or are on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) will continue to receive funding. There has been some confusion over whether NABS courses would continue to attract funding after earlier published advice from the LSC'.

'On a related matter you may be aware that some members of the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA) in collaboration with teachers have been working with Edexcel to write and design a new sixth form general religious education course entitled '*Religion and Contemporary Society*'. Currently, this is going through the final stages of accreditation with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).' Further information is available from your school Adviser.

2 Certificates of course completion Certificates to present to students who have completed the sixth form general religious education course and are leaving your school or college are again available. Please advise the number required, taking note of the quantity that you may have in stock carried forward from last year.

3 Auditing of General Religious Education* The CES has informed us that some schools have reported problems with the auditing of Sixth Form General Religious Education Provision by KPMG. This has proved to be due to a misunderstanding. If any school experiences such a problem, please contact us so that we can help to clear up any confusion.

Contact Peter Ward on 020 7798 9005 or e-mail: peterward@rcdow.org.uk

Religious Educators' local meetings

In response to many requests, the opportunity for senior Religious Education teachers to meet with colleagues in neighbouring Catholic schools is being reinstated next year. Planned to complement the regular Heads of Department conferences in November and July, the local afternoon meetings will be held in the weeks beginning Monday 9 October 2006 and Monday 5 February 2007. It is hoped that by holding meetings on different days across the diocese that all schools will be able to release staff to meet to discuss the development of Religious Education for the benefit of all pupils.

Contact Peter Ward on 020 7798 9005 or e-mail: peterward@rcdow.org.uk

14-19 Curriculum*

Major developments in the 14-19 curriculum are taking place, not least the introduction of the Specialised Diploma with the first courses on offer from 2008. There is also the introduction of the 'common prospectus'. At KS4 this will generally be LEA-wide, but for 16+ students it will London-wide, co-ordinated by the LSC, with Hertfordshire and Surrey LSCs each producing their own. Schools and colleges interested in collaborating in the delivery in the 2008 Specialised Diplomas were asked to submit statements of interest to their LEA by 30 June, after which the 'Specialised Diploma Gateway' process starts. These and other developments raise issues for all schools but particular issues for Catholic schools, some of which are universal while others will be unique to specific schools. The diocese is a member of several London-wide 14-19 groups, working to ensure that the distinctive contribution and requirements of Catholic schools are fully appreciated. In order to best support the Catholic sector in general and individual Catholic schools as appropriate, it would be helpful if each school shared significant developments and any challenges with their Adviser or direct to Peter Ward.

Contact Peter Ward on 020 7798 9005 or e-mail: peterward@rcdow.org.uk

Open the Doors - Resources available

Please have a look at the website: www.rcdow.org.uk/openthedoors for ideas and resources that are available for schools who are invited to plan an event or activity for Open the Doors: Festival of Faith. The event can take place in your school either on the weekend of 14th to 16th July or in the week preceding. If your school is finishing term before these dates, it could take place earlier. This is a great opportunity for your school to celebrate its strengths and reach out to the wider community, as well as being a chance to link in with the plans of the local parish.

Contact Frances Ryan, Diocesan Events Coordinator: e-mail: francesryan@rcdow.org.uk or on 020 7931 6077

Admissions*

A Conference for Primary Schools on Admissions is planned for Monday September 12th at the Pastoral Centre London Colney (flier attached). Topics for discussion will include Primary Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements and the Admissions Code of Practice. The Conference will also look at a Catholic Secondary School's Prospectus for our Catholic Community for school entry 2007. This is in draft process at the moment.

The early in the term date has been planned so it is possible to review the 2006 co-ordinated admission arrangements, and the emerging issues, before we begin the new cycles for 2007. It is expected that all schools will be represented at this conference by the Chair of Governors or the Chair of the Admissions Committee and the Headteacher.

A questionnaire is included which will help us gather evidence as to how the co-ordinated scheme has worked this year. Please fill in and return this form as a matter of urgency. It is essential that we have figures (even if estimated) in order to back up our arguments, rather than relying on anecdotal evidence. If schools do not reply, we can only conclude that you are entirely satisfied with the co-ordinated admission arrangements and how they are working!

Contact Maureen Roe on 020 7798 9005 or e-mail: maureenroe@rcdow.org.uk.

Education Service Training Schedule 2006 -2007

This will be published before the end of term and will contain The Education Service Training Programme for 2006-2007. Schools will be sent two copies.

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

School Improvement Partners*

One of the roles of the SIP is to advise governors on the performance management of head-teachers, providing the function previously performed by an External Adviser. When this was the process, the governors of Catholic schools could select an External Adviser with both the knowledge and experience in and of Catholic Schools. At national level the CES has met with officials at the DfES to lobby for people with appropriate experience to be appointed as SIPs for Catholic Schools. As this initiative rolls out with a final roll out for Secondary Schools in September 2006 and the Primary roll out, phased between September 2006 and April 2008, we know that the reality is and will be, that the Catholic leadership dimension is likely to be ignored. We would be grateful therefore, if head teacher colleagues who have trained as SIPS, could inform us of their training experience and also whether they have been assigned to Catholic Schools. It would also help us if you would tell us of any SIPs known to you who are Catholic because many former External Advisers, we would presume, would be appointed as SIPs.

Contact Maureen Roe on 020 7798 9005 or e-mail: maureenroe@rcdow.org.uk

Good News Slot

(Please note: this section of the bulletin consists of pieces of good news which have been sent in from schools around the diocese. It may well be that others schools have achieved similar awards or success and, if so, we congratulate them too!)

Congratulations to **St Adrian's, Hertfordshire** who have achieved a 'Healthy School' award; **Vita et Pax School, Enfield** has just had their 'Investors in People' recognition renewed as have **Sacred Heart Primary, Ware**; **St Joseph's School, Harlesden**, are the first London school to be awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark – in the same month they also received the Basic Skills Quality Mark; **St Mary's Priory Infant School** in Haringey have been awarded 'Quality Assurance with Investors in Children'; **Salvatorian College's** Design and Technology Department have, once again, won first prize in a national architecture competition; **St Teresa's, Borehamwood**, have been awarded a national ICT mark from BECTA, an Early Years Kitemark and a Healthy Schools award; **St Michael's Catholic High School, Watford**, have appeared in the OFSTED list of Particularly Successful schools and have been awarded Humanities College Status; **Pield Heath School, Hillingdon**, were also listed amongst OFSTED's Particularly Successful schools; **John F Kennedy School, Hertfordshire**, have recently received an 'oustanding' OFSTED report as have **St Joseph's Junior School, Barnet**; two headteachers of schools in St Alban's, Yvonne Hawkes, **St Adrian's**, and Maire Lynch, **Loreto College** attended a reception given by the Prime Minister at Downing Street to recognize the achievement and success of those schools.

Well done !

Please send your 'good news' to Greeny Longville E-mail: greenylongville@rcdow.org.uk

Vaughan House 46 Francis Street London SW1P 1QN Tel: 020 7798 9005 Fax: 020 7798 9013

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