



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

**Diocese of St Edmundsbury  
and Ipswich**

**DBE (20)M3**

**DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Minutes** of a meeting of the Diocesan Board of Education held on Wednesday 16 September 2020 at 4.00pm via Zoom.

**Prayers:** The Rt Revd Dr Mike Harrison led the opening prayers.

**Present:**

Mrs Jane Addis	Mrs Mary Lewis
The Revd Penny Brinkley	Mr Guy McGregor
Mr John Dixon	Mrs Gillian Mitchell
Mrs Jane Eccleston	Mr Pete Mumford
Mr Tim Fairbairn	Mr Hugo Parker
The Ven Jeanette Gosney	Mrs Frances Parr
The Rt Revd Dr Mike Harrison (Chair)	The Revd Sharon Potter
Mr Nicholas Jardine	The Revd Toby Tate

**Apologies:**

Mr Tom Brooke	Mr Drew Quayle
Mrs Elaine Burdiss	Mr Paul Ryle
The Revd Carl Melville	

**In Attendance:**

Mrs Karen Harman	Deputy Diocesan Director of Education (DDDE)
Mr Daniel Jones	Diocesan Buildings Officer
Miss Gemma Kingston	Diocesan Schools' Adviser
Mr Phil Knowles	Diocesan School Effectiveness Officer
Mrs Jane Sheat	Diocesan Director of Education (DDE)
Miss Jacqui Studd	Administrator (Education)

**In attendance for items 20.32 - 20.36:**

The Revd Canon Dave Gardner      Diocesan Director of Mission and Ministry

**WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting including the Revd Canon Dave Gardner.

**20.32 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2020 were approved and signed.

**20.33 MATTERS ARISING**

**20.29 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The DDE suggested that a school survey, as proposed by Tim Fairbairn, to look at areas for improvement in the support to schools offered by the DBE, be discussed later in the meeting, under her report.

## **20.34 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

None.

## **20.35 GROWING FAITH/GROWING YOUNGER**

The Revd Canon Dave Gardner introduced Paper A, outlining the aims of the Growing Younger Task and Finish Group. This initiative was presented at Bishop's Council in February, and brings together a number of teams in the Diocese to form a coherent structure towards the Growing Younger priority and how it can be resourced.

The Growing Younger initiative aims to embed Growing Younger (0-25 year olds) in the diocese. Such a focus will be one way of growing younger congregations so that they more accurately reflect the age profile of the population. Dave noted the importance of looking at every decision and activity through the lens of what it means for children, families and young people. Proposed activities include: creating beacon areas to achieve significant growth in numbers of 0-25-year-old disciples; facilitating youth orientated congregations modelled on the "Sorted" approach in Bradford.

Although work has been put on hold due to the coronavirus and the furloughing of staff, there has been much creativity during lockdown by Children and Family Ministers working with schools and families. Dave expressed his thanks to the DDDE for the idea of holding a Growing Younger Sunday, led by young people themselves, which will take place on 31 January 2021.

The Chair asked what the DBE could do to facilitate Growing Faith and the work of the Task Group. Dave recommended regular communication so that learning, support and signposting could be shared between the education and mission teams.

Archdeacon Jeanette suggested that deanery plans were a good starting point. The Chair advised that these were not currently available to the DBE or education team.

Mary Lewis asked if the Discovery Centre is still involved. Dave advised that plans for the Discovery Centre are currently on hold but that he will be meeting with the Revd Sarah Geileskey to discuss this.

The Chair thanked Dave for his report.

## **20.36 GROWING FAITH CASE STUDIES**

The SEO referred to Paper B, five case studies representing good practice between churches and schools in the Diocese. The SEO explained that as part of the Growing Faith Task Group, he is looking at how to build relationships between school and churches and is creating case studies to capture the good work which is going on in the Diocese. Four of the case studies had been approved and one was still in draft. The SEO noted that the case studies will be made available on the Diocesan website and invited comments and ideas for raising awareness.

The Chair thanked the SEO for the ideas captured in the case studies.

John Dixon asked for an amendment to be made to the St Peter's Church case study and highlighted the need for sensitivity around community schools and membership of governing bodies and to ensure that information was accurate and up to date.

The SEO confirmed that the amendment would be made and that case studies would be checked before being made available. He noted that the ongoing work between churches and schools was constantly changing. The Chair suggested a caveat for each case study and the SEO advised that the case studies will be dated.

The Revd Sharon Potter advised that a Children's and Families' Minister is to be appointed at Cockfield which would mean changes to the Cockfield Benefice case

study. Jane Eccleston agreed that these should be circulated and that these would be excellent examples of practice for Children's and Families' Ministers and those in training. Jane suggested an introduction to the case studies to add context.

Gillian Mitchell felt the case studies provided useful ideas and would also be beneficial for schools.

The SEO advised that these would be sent to clergy and schools.

**Action:** The SEO to write an introduction for the case studies, to amend the case study as requested, to review and then circulate to schools and clergy.

*Dave Gardner left the meeting at 4.35pm*

## **20.37 LOCAL AUTHORITY UPDATE**

Pete Mumford referred to Paper K, which provided an update on local authority issues arising since the last meeting.

The Chair asked how busy the wellbeing helpline for school leaders had been. Pete advised that contact had been high when schools had been open for keyworker children and during holidays but that he did not have data for this term. John Dixon expressed concern for Headteachers' wellbeing especially with the national issues around testing, the pressure on school leaders around school planning and anxiety among staff.

Pete advised that the local authority are escalating these issues to government and suggested that if members have any issues they would like raised to let him know.

Gillian Mitchell advised that the role of a Headteacher now involves dealing with the logistics of staff and children who are ill and in bubbles rather than teaching.

The Chair thanked Pete Mumford for the local authority update and the DDE thanked Pete for the LA's support for schools.

## **20.38 DIOCESAN DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION'S REPORT**

The DDE referred to Paper C, which provided an update to DBE members on issues arising since the last meeting. The DDE paid warm tribute to church school Headteachers for all they are doing in schools at this difficult time. The DDE advised that support is being offered by the education team, visiting schools as appropriate, and that zoom calls continue with Heads and Chairs of Governors.

The DDE noted that:

- DDDE interviews will take place on Tuesday 29 September in the St Nicholas Centre and that DBE members are warmly invited to attend the presentations from shortlisted candidates
- the training programme for 2020-21 is available and courses running in the Autumn term will be delivered online
- SIAMS inspections will not take place until January 2021
- the Children's Society recently published the annual Good Childhood Report which highlights the fear of failure as a cause of anxiety for young people in Britain
- a surveyor has been appointed to provide professional advice on options for disposal of the St James site, Bury St Edmunds. The DDE was grateful to Hugo Parker and Tim Fairbairn for their help with the tender process.

The Chair highlighted the finding in the Children's Society report concerning fear of failure. The DDE felt that children need to develop the ability to take risks and that

our schools are good at encouraging this. Frances Parr highlighted that this is a strength in church schools, with an 'I can do' attitude focused on wellbeing. Gillian Mitchell agreed that church schools embed a Christian ethos and associated values in pupils.

Frances Parr and Gillian Mitchell raised concerns about requests for data from the local authority during this difficult time. The DDE advised that the team are aware of the issue of data but that schools' recovery curriculums will be about building on foundations rather than data.

Mary Lewis suggested circulating the Good Childhood report to clergy involved with secondary schools.

The DDE referred to Tim Fairbairn's request for a school survey and the list of draft questions which had been circulated. The DDE asked for comments, particularly given the workload for Headteachers at present. Jane Eccleston recommended that the survey be sent at a later date due to the current pressures on schools. Discussion followed on expanding the question about links with the local church to ask for further detail.

The DDE thanked members for their suggestions and would send the survey out at a later date.

**Action:** The DDE to circulate the Good Childhood report in e-news.

*Pete Mumford left the meeting at 5pm*

### **20.39 DBE STRATEGY ACTION PLAN APRIL 2019 – MARCH 2022**

The DDE referred to Paper D, the updated DBE Strategy Action Plan for April 2019 – March 2022 which is reviewed by the DBE twice a year. The DDE advised that due to Covid-19, some of the work had had to stop but would be revisited in due course.

Frances Parr asked whether the strategy should mirror the language used by Ofsted. The DDE advised that whilst the strategy included intent (objectives) and implementation (actions) , she could add impact, although difficult to measure.

**Action:** The DDE to look at including impact in the DBE Strategy Action Plan.

### **20.40 RESPONDING TO RACISM**

The DDE introduced Paper E, a resource from the Diocese of Coventry which provides a thoughtful guide for schools on responding to racism. The paper has been adapted for our use and will be sent to church schools. The DDE asked for any comments.

The Revd Sharon Potter recommended the book 'We Need To Talk About Race: Understanding the Black Experience in White Majority Churches' by Ben Lindsay. The Chair advised that all ordinands are encouraged to read this book.

Archdeacon Jeanette felt that the Responding to Racism paper was very useful and suggested that it could be adapted for use by adults as well as schools.

Frances Parr felt the Schools Anti-Racist Audit Tool provided in the paper could be used by PCCs.

The Chair thanked the DDE.

**Action:** The DDE to include the resource by Ben Lindsay in the resource section of the Responding to Racism document which will then be circulated to schools and clergy.

**Action:** The DDE and Archdeacon Jeanette to adapt the paper for use by PCCs.

#### **20.41 ADMISSIONS**

The DDDE referred to Paper F, which provided details of a recent national requirement for a formal variation for every individual Admissions policy in the country where attendance at worship was part of the oversubscription criteria.

The DDDE outlined the work which had been done for 32 of the church schools in the Diocese. The DDDE noted that 37 voluntary controlled schools in the Diocese have oversubscription criteria relating to church attendance and recommended the DBE's consideration of this.

The Chair thanked the DDDE and administrator for the work on the admissions variation. The DDE advised that the Admissions Authority for voluntary controlled schools is the local authority and therefore any amendments would need to be discussed with them. The DDE suggested that further discussion on this could take place at the next meeting and that data would be obtained from the local authority to help the discussion.

The Board agreed.

#### **20.42 DEVELOPING A CHRISTIAN VISION FOR YOUR SCHOOL**

The Schools' Adviser referred to Paper G, a guide for schools to help with developing a Christian vision.

The Chair congratulated the Schools' Adviser on the guide, particularly the working examples. Discussion followed on the usefulness of the guide for schools, clergy and governing bodies.

**Action:** The Schools' Adviser to circulate the guide to schools and clergy.

#### **20.43 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

The Schools' Adviser referred to Papers H and I, guides for schools on providing collective worship. The Schools' Adviser highlighted that schools are unable to hold assemblies and that these guides aim to help schools by relieving the pressure on planning collective worship. The guides provide weekly plans for the first half of this term on the themes of hope, courage and endurance, and provide an opportunity for children to take the lead.

Gillian Mitchell expressed her thanks for the guides which are being used at East Bergholt CEVCP School.

The Chair referred to the aims of collective worship (Paper I, page 2) and asked how providing an opportunity for children to worship God and enabling children to explore their own beliefs are reconciled. The Schools' Adviser felt that collective worship was about enabling both.

The Chair advised that the guides had already been sent to clergy and thanked the Schools' Adviser for her work.

#### **20.44 SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: OFSTED / STATUTORY INSPECTION OF ANGLICAN AND METHODIST SCHOOLS (SIAMS) RESULTS**

The SEO introduced Paper J providing the latest Ofsted outcomes for church schools.

#### **20.45 CONFIRMATION OF FOUNDATION GOVERNORS**

The DBE ratified the appointment of Foundation Governors listed in Paper L.

