

This newsletter, from the Diocesan Education Team, is sent to Church school Headteachers, foundation governors, chairs of governors and clergy.

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Education newsletter



December 2024



News from the Diocese

Dear colleagues,

As we near the end of term, I do hope that you are able to celebrate the joy of Advent and Christmas as a church school. I hope that you find the Church of England's Advent and Christmas resources, [Follow the Star](#) helpful.

I am so glad we are able to support Headteachers and senior leaders with wellbeing. I am grateful to our two speakers at our wellbeing session on 11 October: Revd Laura Mumford and Jonathan Gray, head at Acton CEVCP. Please don't hesitate to ask if we can help you in any way.

It was a joy to meet together in person for our annual church school leaders' conference on 6 November. We met at the Salvation Army building in Stowmarket.



Cathy Priest from the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion spoke about Integrating science and religion in the classroom in a highly participative and thought-provoking opening session. Click [here](#) for resources and ideas.

Revd Dr Tom Wilson, Director, St Philip's Centre, Leicester was our other main speaker who led a really helpful session on Refilling the Reservoir of Hope. This enabled us to think about the various ways in which we resource ourselves so that we

Forums spring and summer terms

For Headteachers

Tue 14 Jan, 1.30pm

Thu 1 May, 1.30pm

Admissions

Thu 16 Jan, 4pm

For Small Schools

Tue 25 Feb, 4pm

Mon 9 Jun, 4pm

For Chairs of Governors

Wed 19 Mar, 4pm

Thu 26 Jun, 4pm

The Forums are free, via Zoom. For queries or to book, please email: [Jacqui Studd](#)



Enable children and young people, of all faiths and none, to explore life questions, spirituality and faith in a safe, creative and interactive way. Further information available [here](#).

can lead others effectively. Feedback was very positive. As one attendee wrote,

"Thank you for organising an amazingly useful and uplifting day. These conferences are always a highlight of the year and provide an excellent opportunity for reflection, development and strategic thinking. Thank you to you and all your wonderful team. I feel incredibly privileged to be part of the diocesan family."



It was good to celebrate ten years of school chaplaincy at Felixstowe School recently. Josh Hunt's post is funded by Boost, a local charity. Please see Boost's resources [here](#).

The budget on 30 October outlined additional investment in breakfast clubs, school-based nurseries and early years. Additional investment of £2.3 billion for the core schools budget, which includes £1 billion earmarked specifically to support high needs, was also announced.

The government has further committed to addressing the state of school infrastructure with £1.4 billion for the ongoing School Rebuilding Programme and an increase in condition funding allocations for schools.

Following the budget, the government has confirmed that academy conversion grants of £25k will cease on 1 January 2025. This makes it less likely that schools will convert voluntarily. It does not affect schools judged Inadequate which have to convert. The government has also confirmed that there are currently no plans to introduce future rounds of the Trust Capacity Fund (TCaF). It is now advertising for expert advisers to join its Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence (RISE) teams to provide school improvement to schools.

We have created a short film about becoming a governor as part of our efforts to encourage more people to serve as foundation governors- which can be viewed [here](#). Please feel free to use this in schools and churches as you wish. I am grateful to those involved in the filming.

It is always a pleasure to visit schools, and good to see Christmas celebrations across the diocese. In the midst of the busyness, I love this Advent season and the run-up to Christmas itself. May I offer this Christmas prayer:



*May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ child
be yours this Christmas.*

On behalf of all the team, may I wish you all a very happy Christmas when it comes?



Training programme spring term 2025

Our training programme is available on the Diocesan [website](#). Courses next term include:

Leadership/Governance

- * Assessment for Governors
- * Being a Governor
- * Headteacher Recruitment
- * Monitoring for Governors
- * RE and CW for Governors
- * SEND for Governors

RE/CW

- * New to Teaching RE
- * Spiritual development in primary schools

SIAMS

- * SIAMS: are you ready?

Wellbeing

- * for Administrators

and

*** New to church schools**

To book, or for any queries, please contact [Jacqui Studd](#)



Big Sing - after the success of last year's pilot with Christian Aid, we are already looking forward to next year's Big Sing. This will be held on **Tuesday 1 April 2025** at 10.30am at the cathedral.

With all good wishes,

Jane Sheat

Jane Sheat
Diocesan Director of Education

News from Schools

A school chaplain has been appointed at **Debenham High School**. Revd Keith Ringert will start work in January 2025.

Congratulations!



Congratulations to **Bedfield CofE Primary School** which recently celebrated a special birthday. Imogen Wallis, Executive Headteacher writes: "On 24 October, Bedfield CofE Primary celebrated its 160th Birthday! Celebrations started in the morning when staff and children arrived to school dressed in period costume. There were chimney sweeps, maids and school children and school mistresses As in Victorian times, the children started their day using blackboards and chalk.



The children read a bible story and played Victorian games such as hoops, stilts and Hopscotch. In the afternoon the children congregated at St Nicholas' Church to sing hymns from the period and perform poems.

They were joined by ex-pupils from the school, previous heads and parents who were former pupils. The service was led by Revd Chrissie Smart.

Cathedral service - our annual service for all church schools will take place on **Monday 23 June 2025** at 1.30pm.

If schools would like to take part in either event, please contact [Jacqui Studd](#).



School Visits - Cathedral

The Learning Centre at the Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds has a dedicated team who work with all schools when they visit. For more information about visits, please click [here](#). To contact the Learning Centre please [email](#).



Archbishops' Young Leaders (AYLA) Award webinars are a great way to find out how the AYLA works. Just 45 minutes, the twilight sessions help you think about how you might develop courageous advocacy in your school and equip the next generation of young leaders. The session will unpack how the Award helps learners grow and develop in key leadership skills and character virtues and the kinds of social and environmental action projects which schools get involved in within their communities. For dates of

Everyone returned to school in a procession, just as their forebears did 160 years ago, led by Iris (Year 4) on her pony with her mother and sister in attendance. At school we had a Victorian high tea of cucumber sandwiches, scones with jam and cream and Victorian sponge cake which was greatly appreciated by all."



sessions next term, and to register, please click [here](#).



Collective Worship

For ideas for CW planning, based on Christian seasons, including Epiphany, Lent and Easter, please click [here](#).

Congratulations to Year 5 and 6 pupils at **Chelmondiston CofE Primary School** who thoroughly enjoyed taking part in a 'beach clean' on the banks of the River Orwell at Pin Mill in October. Pupils scoured the shore line to retrieve almost 20 bin bags full of debris! For more, please click [here](#) for the East Anglian Daily Times (EADT) article



Dates of interest....



Congratulations to the Collective Worship Council at **Elveden CofE Primary Academy**. Anna Syer, Head of School writes: "This half term at Elveden, we have been really proud of our Collective Worship Council. They have come together to plan and help plan our Remembrance Service at our beautiful church. One of our Collective Worship Council wrote their own poem about the lives lost in the war, which was extremely poignant.

Epiphany

6 January 2025

[Big Schools Bird Watch](#)

7 January-14 February 2025

Holocaust Memorial Day

27 January 2025
(please see below)



The children also presented their Remembrance Art work and we took the time to consider the impact of the World Wars.

Chinese New Year

29 January 2025

[National Storytelling Week](#)

1 - 9 February 2025

We are also very excited to be beginning a Spirituality Project with Victoria Bush and our Collective Worship Council are presenting some new values that all stakeholders will then get the opportunity to vote on. Elveden will then have two more values to add to our four values of: Hope, Respect, Trust and Forgiveness. We will also be looking at our Spiritual journey and are hoping to develop further within school."

Candlemas

2 February 2025

[NSPCC Number Day](#)

7 February 2025

[Children's Mental Health Week](#)

3 - 9 February 2025

[Safer Internet Day](#)

6 February 2025

[National School Governors' Awareness Day](#)

13 February 2025

Congratulations to Y5 pupils at **Risby CEVCP** and **St Edmundsbury CofE Primary**, who took part in a production of 'Flooded!' at St Edmundsbury Cathedral in November. St Edmundsbury CofE Primary writes: "It was a proper production with an orchestra, stage lighting, real opera singers and 250 children from local schools. The children were nervous to begin with, but they needn't have been - they really shone! We were complimented on our attitude and behaviour which was wonderful." For more, please see the Suffolk News article [here](#).

Valentine's Day

14 February 2025



Congratulations to Beech Class at **Rattlesden CofE Primary Academy** who responded to an appeal to send a World War II veteran in Stowmarket a birthday card for his 100th birthday.

Congratulations to **Stoke by Nayland CofE Primary School** which will celebrate its 175th anniversary on Thursday 19 December with a church service followed by a tea party. More to follow in the next issue.

Congratulations also to **St Edmundsbury CofE Primary** which celebrated Harvest Festival this term. Kim Bramley, Head of School writes: "The picture shows children from our school with a collection of donations for Harvest Festival. The school also created a tree-each leaf represents a child and shows something they are grateful for.



The children brought in a range of store cupboard foods which were distributed by St John's Church to local foodbanks. Our school council members were involved in the service, presenting the donations and our Year 6 Prefects read the prayers. We were overwhelmed by the number of parents and carers who came to support us at the service."

Congratulations to pupils at **St Gregory CEVCP School, Sudbury** who decorated the local church with poppy artwork for Remembrance Day. Also to Rory and Tilly for representing the school and laying the poppy wreath at the Remembrance Service.



The school was also visited by James Cartlidge, South Suffolk MP, who joined pupils on their Daily Mile, an initiative where children spend 15 minutes each day running, jogging, or walking with their friends. For more on this story, please click [here](#).

Random Acts of Kindness Day

17 February 2025

Shrove Tuesday

4 March 2025

World Book Day

6 March 2025

Red Nose Day

15 March 2025

World Water Day

22 March 2025



Holocaust Memorial Day is on 27 January 2025, and schools can get involved. There are lots of free resources online to help lead assemblies, activities or lessons with students. Please click [here](#) for the website.

For HMD 2025, there is a competition for secondary school students to learn about the 30th anniversary of the genocide in Bosnia by designing a memorial. Find out more and download the competition pack [here](#).



We are encouraging schools to apply for an award from Christian Aid's Global Neighbours Scheme. For more information, please click [here](#).



Congratulations to pupils at **St Matthew's CofE Primary School, Ipswich** who helped to keep the memory of World War I alive by taking part in a creative community project at the Buttermarket Centre in Ipswich with other local schools. The remembrance display featured hundreds of unique, handcrafted poppies pupils for this beautiful remembrance display. For more on this story, please click [here](#)



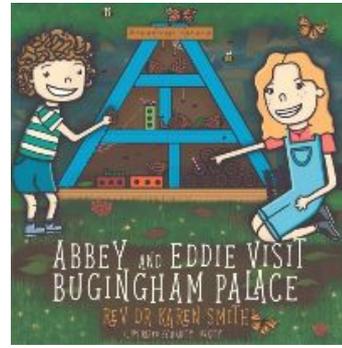
Congratulations to **Thurston CofE Primary Academy** on the opening of its new reflective area. Collective Worship leaders in the school led the ceremony and were joined by representatives from each class to hang a leaf on the new reflection tree to represent each of the school's Christian Values.

Reverend Ben closed the ceremony by blessing the new reflection area. For more, please click [here](#) for the school website and [here](#) for the feature in Suffolk News.

Congratulations to **Trinity CEVAP School, Stowmarket** which was featured in the Suffolk Headlines Spotlight on Suffolk Schools in October. For the feature, please click [here](#).

Congratulations also to pupils at the school who collected food and toiletries that were donated to Stowmarket Foodbank. The Harvest Festival service took place at St Mary's Church, in Combs, which was a joyous occasion filled with song, poetry, and gratitude. For more please click [here](#) for the Suffolk News article.

Congratulations to pupils at **Tudor CofE Primary School, Sudbury** who have taken part in Art curriculum days this term. Liz Campbell, Headteacher writes: "Each year as a school, we choose a painting to study in depth. We dedicate three timetable days to exploring the actual painting and the artist, the technique behind the painting and then we respond to the painting. We are studying the painting called 'Flower in a Portuguese landscape' by Cedric Morris.



Abbey and Eddie visit Bughingham Palace

This engaging new Eco picture book written by the Revd Dr Karen Smith, encourages children to care for the natural world around them. .

Karen is available for school visits to read the story to a class or an assembly, help you make a bug hotel or lead a painting/drawing session. For further details, please click [here](#).



Free Trees for Schools

Trees are amazing! They offer vital homes for wildlife, help fight climate change and much more. Planting and caring for trees can be rewarding and character building too! The Woodland Trust is taking applications for free tree packs to be delivered in spring 2025. The packs come in different sizes and species mixes to accommodate every project, and there are plenty of exciting ways for everyone to contribute and work together - check out [Tree Tools for Schools](#) for lots of advice to help you plan, plant and look after your trees. To apply and for more information, click [here](#).



We were very fortunate to see the original painting (above) at The Gainsborough Gallery in Sudbury this term. The school walked down to the gallery and enjoyed seeing an original painting.



Children in EYFS enjoyed making a huge representation of the original painting (above) and they have hung it outside their classroom and are very proud of their work.

To see the amazing artwork by KS1, LKS2 and UKS2 please click [here](#). At the end of the year the school hold an art exhibition and invite parents, carers and people from Sudbury to enjoy the art work.



Congratulations to Wilby CofE Primary which has raised over £1k for the New Hope Orphanage and Primary in Mombasa, Kenya.

Roisin Wiseman, Headteacher writes: "Wilby has been working closely with the charity Hand in Hand, who support the New Hope orphanage and Oakridge Primary School in Kenya, for a number of years now by organising events such as cake and crafts sales. On 27 September Wilby school was delighted to meet Anne Chege who founded the New Hope Charity in Kenya. The children were inspired by Anne's story. Anne is the mum of New Hope Children's Centre. She started this home 20 years ago and has provided a home and education to over 1,000 children. Her story began with taking in just one orphan into her personal home and then eventually she took in ten and then over the years it expanded to over 100 and Anne decided she needed a centre to help raise the orphaned children of Kenya. Anne quit her job at Barclay's Bank and with her husband they began New Hope Children's Centre - Uplands, Kenya. She has selflessly dedicated her entire life to this initiative. Anne shared the stories of some of the children who have had their lives transformed by New Hope. The school council members asked Anne what she would like them to fund raise for and she explained that the children in the primary school have never had a school trip. In response to this the children decided to organise a sponsored silence to raise funds in November. They are so grateful to the children and parents of Wilby school for the incredible support that they have received.

We are a small primary school, with a big heart and we are so proud that we are able to support the children of New Hope in this way. Not only is it wonderful to be able to support our Kenyan friends but it is so important for our children to develop a sense of equality with others around the world. This helps them to understand the challenges faced by others in our global community and to understand that they can make a



The Great Big Small Schools INSET Day

Monday 6 January 2025
Online event

Join colleagues working in small school settings across the country, for a day of thought-provoking discussion about evidence, research and education through a small school lens. This is a joint venture between the Church of England (CEFEL) and the Chartered College of Teaching, open to all types of small schools.

Speakers so far: Dame Alison Peacock, Mary Myatt, Andy Wolfe, Danielle Lewis-Egonu, Dr Cat Scutt, Chris Such, Cassie Young, Mike Sheridan, Elizabeth Olulari, Kate Smith, Jade Pearce, Alex Pethick. Tickets: £14-£20. To book, please click [here](#).



NATRE's Spirited Arts Competition 2025

Get creative through this cross-curricular competition! Entries can be submitted in (almost!) any art form including:

- Art (painting, drawing, sketching, etc)
- Poetry
- Photography
- Dance
- Music
- Drama
- Sculpture

The competition runs from the beginning of the school year to 31 July 2025. For more information, please visit the [NATRE website](#)

difference and improve the lives of others. We think the money raised will be a wonderful present for the children of New Hope."

Ofsted inspections

	Outcomes
Elmsett CofE Primary	Good
Boxford CEVCP	Good
King Edward VI, Bury St Edmunds	Good
Bedfield CofE Primary	Good
Wetheringsett CofE Primary	Good

SIAMS inspections

	Outcomes
Wetheringsett CofE Primary	J1
Sir Robert Hitcham CEVAP, Debenham	J1
Boxford CEVCP	J1
Cockfield CofE Primary	J1
Whatfield CEVCP	J1

Headteacher appointments

Congratulations to Rebecca Leek who has been appointed Interim Headteacher at Kelsale CEVCP from January 2025 to August 2025.

For the Attention of Headteachers

If you are retiring or resigning as Headteacher, please do let us know. Jane, Sue or Phil will attend meetings with your Governors to advise on the headship appointment, alongside the Local Authority. We can be in contact with your Chair of Governors and make sure that we are available for dates for shortlisting and interviews. Many thanks.

News from the Church of England

Flourishing Leaders, Flourishing Schools: National Conference

Wednesday 22 January 2025

Saint Church, Hackney, Lower Clapton Road, London E5 0PD

Speakers include: Sir Hamid Patel, Leora Cruddas, Sufian Sadiq, Sonia Thompson, Ed Vainker, Amjad Ali, Haili Hughes, Kathryn Morgan, Jonny Uttley.

For more information, please click [here](#).

Flourishing together: A collection vision for the education system

This paper sets out a joint vision from the Church of England,

Train to Teach with NESTT

Teaching is an incredibly rewarding career – and it is important to have the best quality training to start you on your professional journey. To find our more and book into a recruitment information event visit <https://nestt.org.uk/>



Spring's Dance Company workshops in the spring term include:

Creation Project introduces the Genesis narrative of creation in a fun, inclusive and engaging way through dance;
Parable is a curriculum based interactive performance and workshop that reimagines religious stories, based on the parables that Jesus told; and
The Easter Project provides a fresh and exciting way to explore the Easter story. Further details on all projects can be found [here](#).

News from DfE

Managing asbestos in your school

This guidance aims to help schools and colleges understand their duties in relation to asbestos management.

For the guidance, please click [here](#).

Generative AI in education

Insights from teachers, leaders and pupils on the potential uses of generative artificial intelligence in education. For the report, please click [here](#).

the Catholic Education Service and Confederation of Schools Trust. For more details, please click [here](#) for the CofE website.



Our Schools, Our World (OSOW) programme for primary schools

The OSOW Suffolk Hub is looking for 20 schools to start this two-year journey.

Free training is provided, and support will be available from the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership. The programme will enable schools to learn effectively about sustainability, climate change and the environment and to develop skills and understanding about how to address local and global challenges. If any schools are interested, they can sign up for more information [here](#).

Schools are also welcome to join Suffolk's Sustainable Schools Network which has now opened up to primaries. Sign up is [here](#).

News from YOUR School

If you have any stories you would like highlighted, please do send us details and we will include in our next newsletter. Please send photos, short articles, web-page references, etc. electronically to Jacqui and we'll be pleased to include them.



RISE Theatre's New Interactive Primary Day

is an exciting performance and workshop for the whole school exploring themes around the environment, climate change, God's love for each of us and how we can care for God's amazing planet! For more, please click [here](#).

From the Diocesan Education Team

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