

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



October 2025

News from the Diocese

Dear colleagues,

I hope that term has started well and that the summer holidays aren't too distant a memory! This year (among other things) I really enjoyed a week in the Lake District with my husband, my three brothers and sisters-in-law. This has become an annual event, when we spend time enjoying each other's company in a large self-catering cottage somewhere in the UK. This year I was struck by the family likenesses, the shared memories, points of reference and sense of humour, and by all the ways in which we reflect aspects of our parents' characters- gentleness, faith, creativity, musicality, practicality- the ability to fix anything, love of language and literature, poetry writing, love of cars, sending letters to national newspapers (not me, I hasten to add)...they are an impressive bunch! It occurred to me that we are each gloriously different and are each made in God's image, wonderfully reflecting different aspects of His character. When things are difficult, I hope you can see others as gloriously different and made in God's image.



One of my favourite flowers at this time of year is dahlias. What a wonderfully varied range of different shapes and sizes they (and we!) come in.

It was good to read widely over the summer and one of the books I enjoyed was "Teach like Finland" by Timothy Walker. Finland is widely admired internationally for its education system and one of the successes of its core



Emmanuel Project 2025

All of the Emmanuel Project resources are now available online via a subscription model. Each school will receive their own log in, which they are free to share with staff in their school setting. Links and accompanying resources will be checked termly by the Diocesan Education Team. Over a three year cycle, each individual unit will receive a full update so that they are in line with the latest research: starting this year, the Early Years units have been rewritten.

For more information, including sample units, and to subscribe, please visit the Emmanuel Project [website](#)



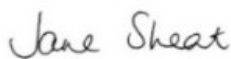
For the latest RE and CW newsletter, please click [here](#).

curriculum framework is its focus on joy and joyful learning. The book outlines the importance of wellbeing, belonging, autonomy, mastery and mindset, and the benefits to pupils and teachers.

I am carrying this theme of joy with me into this new school year. The theme for our annual conference this year is "Leading a church school with joy and hope". We have a great line-up of speakers, including Clare Lamb, Headteacher at All Saints' CEVCP in Lawshall who will speak about metacognition. Over the past year we have listed several organisations in our newsletters and we have invited some of these to our conference- Springs Dance, iSingPOP, Care for the Family and Kick. There will also be time to network and discuss with colleagues in groups. For the programme, please click [here](#). We look forward to seeing you there.

Now that the new Ofsted framework has been published -see below- we are offering training for Headteachers and governors on 27 November at 1.30pm. For further details and for all our training, please see our [website](#).

Wishing you joy this term. With all good wishes from all the team



Jane Sheat
Diocesan Director of Education

Phil Knowles retires at the end of this autumn term. It has been a pleasure to work with Phil over the past 11 years and I know how much schools have valued his advice and support.

Phil writes: "I feel that I have been blessed to have held a truly wonderful and unique role during the past 11 years, which has involved working with Headteachers and many others associated with our church schools across Suffolk. During this time, I have been privileged to have worked with some truly amazing people in some exceptional educational settings."

I know you will join me in wishing Phil a very happy retirement.

We plan to make temporary arrangements to cover for the rest of this school year.

Appointment of new bishop - The Rt Revd Dr Joanne Grenfell

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

Forums 2025-26

For Headteachers

Tue 20 Jan, 1.30pm

Thu 30 Apr, 1.30pm

For Small Schools

Mon 20 Oct, 4pm

Tue 24 Feb, 4pm

Thu 21 May, 4pm

For Chairs of Governors

Tue 25 Nov, 4pm **(new)**

Thu 19 Mar, 4pm

Tue 23 Jun, 4pm

RE Network

Tues 25 Nov, 4pm

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



Conference

Our [annual church school leaders' conference](#) will take place at Ipswich on **Thursday 13 November 2025**.

Big Sing

Our next Big Sing, in partnership with Christian Aid, takes place on **Monday 23 March 2026** at 10.30am at the Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds. For information about the Big Sing, click [here](#).

Cathedral service

Our annual service to celebrate the work of church schools will take place on **Monday 15 June 2026** at the Cathedral at 1.30pm. Our theme will be Educating for Dignity and Respect. iSingPOP will lead workshops in schools before the service to teach the children the songs.

For queries about our events, please contact [Jacqui Studd](#)



Collective Worship on Loving our neighbours

Useful resources for primary and secondary schools about loving our neighbour. For more, please click [here](#).

Latest Grove Booklets

We are pleased to be sending Headteachers and foundation governors recently published booklets from the Grove Book series. This series is designed to offer and promote Christian thinking rooted in practice for all involved in schools and churches. The latest booklets are available to download from the links below:

[Educational Purpose and Diversity: A Theological Rooting](#)

The curriculum and religious diversity are themes which come to the fore in seeking to address the requirements of the 2023 SIAMS framework for a theological rationale for education. Those themes are the primary concern of this book. Drawing inspiration from the educational vitality of early Christian schools, this book offers a fresh theological approach to the curriculum and religious diversity apt to schools' needs today.

[SEND Matters: A Vision of Inclusion for Pupils with Additional Needs](#)

With an increasing number of children being identified as having additional needs, how can schools ensure that all are fully included in school life? What does 'life in all its fullness' look like for children who find some elements of life more challenging? How can we best prepare these children for life both in and beyond the classroom? This book presents how one church school has chosen to address the potentially overwhelming SEND challenges faced by schools today.

News from Schools

Daniel Woodrow, Headteacher at St Gregory CEVCP School, Sudbury has a blog with reflections on starting out as a primary Headteacher. For his latest post, "Our Differences Are Our Superpowers – Having A Specialist Unit In A Mainstream School", please click [here](#).

Congratulations!



Congratulations to [Bentley CEVCP](#) and [Copdock Primary Schools](#), [East Bergholt CEVCP School](#) and [Wilby CofE Primary School](#) which have all been featured recently in the Suffolk Headlines Spotlight on Suffolk Schools. Please click on the school name for the report.

Schools Forum

There is a vacancy for a Diocesan representative on the [Schools Forum](#). Please contact [Jane Sheat](#) if you are interested or to find out more.



Training programme

Courses for the autumn term include:

Leadership/Governance

- * Leading a church school
- * Monitoring for governors on pupil premium

Ofsted/SIAMS

- * Ofsted
- * SIAMS: are you ready?

RE/CW

- * Knowledge webinar: Islam
- * CW in our church schools
- * REfreshers
- * Spiritual development

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



School Visits - Cathedral

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



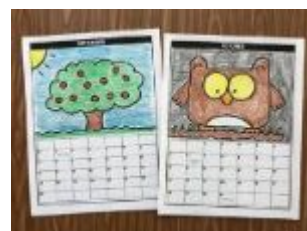
Congratulations to pupils at **All Saints' CofE Primary, Newmarket** who celebrated the last day of the summer term by meeting the King and Queen. For more, please see the [East Anglian Daily Times](#).



Congratulations to pupils at **King Edward VI School, Bury St Edmunds** who have been involved with a National Lottery Heritage funded Offshoot Foundation project - Deaf Perspectives: Past, Present, and Future. The project aims to spread deaf awareness and provide tools which can help all make society more deaf friendly. For more, please see the Offshoot Foundation [website](#).



Congratulations to pupils at **St Gregory CEVCP** who met the Princess of Wales when she visited Sudbury Silk Mills last month. For more, please see [Suffolk News Online](#) and for footage from ITV Anglia and BBC Look East, please see [St Gregory twitter](#).



Dates of interest

Black History Month

October 2025

All Saints Day

1 November 2025

see also

[CW planning](#)

Children's Book Week

3 - 9 November 2025

Inter Faith Week

9 - 16 November 2025

see below

Anti-Bullying Week

10 - 14 November 2025

Nursery Rhyme Week

10 - 14 November 2025

Remembrance Day

11 November 2025

see also

[CW planning](#)

World Kindness Day

13 November 2025

Children in Need

14 November 2025

Road Safety Week

16 - 22 November 2025

Universal World

Children's Day

20 November 2025

UK Parliament Week

24 - 30 November 2025

St Andrew's Day

30 November 2025

Advent

1 December 2025

See

[Advent padlet](#)

Christmas Jumper Day

11 December 2025

Congratulations also to pupils at **St Gregory CEVCP** who took part in a harvest service at the local church. The school writes: "Thank you to everyone who sent in a donation or came to our Harvest Service, where we found out about Harvest traditions around the world and celebrated the kindness that we see from the children every day. Well done to Ash Class for reading their poem, prayer and psalm so well."

Congratulations to pupils at **St Mary's CofE Academy, Mildenhall** who celebrated Harvest. The school writes: "At the start of October, St Mary's C of E Academy enjoyed a fantastic whole school Harvest service at St Mary's Church with Rev. Sue.



This was a time for us to give thanks to God for the food and good things that he provides. It also provided us with the time to reflect on being generous to others. We are so grateful to our fantastic families for all their generous donations. We had a very impressive collection, which has been shared between St Mary's Church emergency supply boxes and the King's Project food bank in Mildenhall. We wish you all a very happy Harvest!"



Congratulations also to the school on achieving the OPAL Platinum Award. OPAL said: "The Award puts you in the top 1% of UK primary schools for the quality of your play offer. It is an absolute credit to the entire team, school, the children, community, and the work that you've put into improving your playtimes at St. Mary's.

It was brilliant to see your playtimes in action. The site has so much natural potential for play and it's brilliant that you are now making full use of it for the children's benefit. It's clear that children have been competently developing their approach to risk, particularly with the dens that are built across the site. When I first visited you were already a forward thinking school when it came to play and it set the foundation for developing the play offer to what it is today. I am really looking forward to hearing about how your playtimes continue to develop!"

Congratulations to **St Peter and St Paul's CofE Primary, Eye** which was featured in the SIAMS Annual Report 2024-25. "At St Peter and St Paul Church of England Primary School in the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, there is a 'deep, consistent understanding of spiritual growth.' Leaders have engaged in a thoughtful process to understand what is right for their context and have supported staff to have



New Updated KS2 Archbishops' Young Leaders Award

A **brand-new** version of the **KS2 Award** for use by schools is available which will enhance pupils' leadership journey and support schools further to create a **culture of justice and responsibility**.

The unit topics and much-loved central character Archie remain, but a brand-new design threads through the resource, with a wide range of new activities organised under the headings **Spark, Discover, Act** to help explore local, national and global communities. If you already run the AYLA, you don't need to do anything, the team will be in touch as usual before your renewal point.

Information Webinars for schools new to the AYLA

If you've not run the **AYLA** before, you can find out more about the programme through free online sessions. For more information and sign up for a session, please click [here](#)



News from the Bible Society

For further information about Christmas resources, please click [here](#).

the appropriate language and planned opportunities to talk about spirituality. As a result, 'intentionally planned moments of awe and wonderment feed pupils.'



Congratulations to pupils from **Stonham Aspal CEVAP** who took part in a pottery competition, held at the beginning of the summer holidays. The competition organised by Stonham Barns Park in collaboration with Carters of Suffolk asked children to design a mug that captured what they loved about their village or the wider county. A big well done to the winners. For more, please see [Suffolk News Online](#).

Recent Ofsted outcomes

There have been no inspections since the last newsletter. Inspections will resume in the week commencing 10 November 2025.

Recent SIAMS inspections

JI= The inspection findings indicate that the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school, and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Creeping St Mary CoFE Primary
Great Finborough CEVCP
Morland CoFE Primary, Ipswich
St John's CEVAP, Ipswich
St Christopher's CoFE Primary, Red Lodge

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.

Headteacher Performance Management Reviews

Phil and Sue are able to help governors to have external advice on their Headteacher's performance management. They can offer support, at £350 per review, to include preparation, the review itself and write-up. If you would like support with a mid-year review as well, this optional extra is available at £150.



Inter Faith Week

9 - 16 November 2025

Provides an opportunity to:

- * Strengthen good interfaith relations at all levels
 - * Increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
 - * Increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs.
- To find out more, particularly how schools can get involved, please click [here](#)



Springs Dance Company

Workshops include:

Nativity brings to life the traditional, much-loved scenes of the Christmas story, then continues the story after the birth of Jesus, highlighting the importance of showing hospitality to others;

Refugee through learning, creating and performing movement children will

explore themes of welcome and showing kindness; and

the Easter Project provides a fresh and exciting way to explore the Easter story. Further details on all projects can be found [here](#).

SIAMS: annual report 2024-25

The report outlines key recommendations to support continuous improvement in Church schools. For the report, please click [here](#).

SIAMS inspectors

The National Society for Education will be recruiting SIAMS inspectors for the east of England in November/December, to train in June 2026. Please look out for further details in November.

Leaders Like Us

This programme is for UKME/GMH teachers and leaders which develops knowledge and skills over 18 months in preparation for headship in the next 5 years. This year, the CofE is also welcoming mentors in the following capacities:

- Headteachers from primary schools
- Heads and deputy Headteachers from secondary schools

For further information, please click [here](#). For ease of access, please see application links below:

- Participant application form: [Leaders Like Us Cohort 4 \(2026-27\) Participant Application Form](#)
- Mentor application form: [Leaders Like Us Cohort 4 \(2026-27\) Mentor Application Form](#)

Applications close on **Friday, 21 November 2025**.

News from DfE

School-based Nursery Capital Grant 2025 to 2026

Information for eligible schools about the School-based Nursery (SBN) Capital Grant for 2025 to 2026 is available [here](#).

Identifying and supporting the needs of children with SEND in mainstream settings

Findings from a series of rapid evidence assessments on what works to identify and support the needs of children and young people with SEND in mainstream and early years settings. For more, please click [here](#).

Parental complaints

New policy and guidance to support schools with parental complaints are in the process of being developed, and the DfE would like to hear of some 'real' examples from your schools' experiences.

- Firstly, they are looking for schools in which high quality parental engagement has led/leads to a low number of complaints. Details such as how the school sets its culture and how this translates to engagement with parents would be particularly pertinent.
- They would like to hear about any parental complaints that either are legally vexatious or that the school considers having been so. These would be completely anonymised, but the DfE



The Archbishop of York's Trust is inviting schools to join in The Joy of Christmas this Advent.

The free collective worship resource for Advent 2025 is aimed at KS2 and KS3 learners and will look at

- * Mary's Story
 - Joy in Connection
- * Mary and Joseph's Story
 - Joy in Trusting
- * The Shepherd's Story
 - Joy in Sharing
- * The Wisemen
 - Joy in Following.

For KS1 pupils there is a brand new version of the book 'The Grumpy Owl' and 'The Joy of Christmas', which tells the story of Jesus' birth through the eyes of an owl who seems determined to miss all the excitement.

To sign up and for more information, please click [here](#).



Fostering and Adoption - Open Your Heart, Change a Life

Suffolk Fostering and Adoption Service is reaching out with open arms—we're looking for kind-hearted individuals and families who can offer a safe, loving home to children in need across Suffolk. You don't need to be perfect—just willing. Whether you're considering weekend fostering or adoption, what matters most is your commitment to nurture, support, and care. Every child deserves a place to feel safe and cherished, and you could be the one to make that difference.

Come discover how you can help shape a brighter future. Visit www.fosterandadopt.suffolk.gov.uk to learn more and connect with

would like to increase and improve its guidance to schools on how to manage such complaints. Providing some case studies will enable them to do this. Details such as the main content of the complaint, how the school dealt with it, ways in which others, such as the DBE or church, supported, the impact of the complaint on staff and leaders, and any changes made subsequently to school policy would all be helpful.

Please send any case studies to [Jane Sheat](#). These will be forwarded to the National Society for Education for the DfE.

News from Ofsted

Education inspection framework (EIF)

The renewed education inspection framework has been published and will replace the current framework from November 2025. For more, please click [here](#).

School inspection: toolkit, operating guide and information

Guidance for inspectors and schools on inspecting maintained schools and academies in England under the renewed education inspection framework, available for use from 10 November 2025. For more, click [here](#).

Registering and inspecting school-based early years provision: what the updated guidance means for you

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



News from the Diocesan MAT

National Society for Education NPQs cohort 9

The St Edmundsbury and Ipswich MAT will be delivering the NPQSL and NPQSEN as well as working again with the Diocese of Norwich to deliver the NPQH. Applications close on 3 December 2025. These are open to both church and non-church schools. DfE registration is now open, to register for a place click [here](#).

Funding Arrangements for Cohort 9

As in previous cohorts, there is limited funding available. The courses eligible for universal funding for Cohort 9 are NPQH and NPQSENCO. These are funded (until places are all filled) for participants in any maintained school or FE college. Places for NPQSL are funded for those working in disadvantaged schools. The DfE is defining this as those settings on the DfE PP50 list or those who are working in schools on the RISE targeted intervention list. In practice, many of the schools on the RISE list will likely also be on the PP50 list. An updated PP50 list has been released and is available [here](#). The latest published RISE list is [here](#). If you require any further information, please contact [Heather Hann](#)

our friendly, supportive team. Together, we can build a community where every child feels at home.



News from Christian Aid

Christian Aid has just printed an update of a well-loved resource with a slight change in the title - Fume Free Futures. It includes a board game with accompanying teaching ideas, assembly material and poster all of which help inspire pupils to make their voices heard on the most pressing issue of our time: climate change. These, like all Christian Aid's resources, are FREE! and can be ordered by emailing christianaid@mosaic-fs.co.uk quoting ref F5028.



News from Scripture Union

Resource to help shine the light this Halloween.

Shine Your Light for Children is designed for use with pupils aged 8 to 11 to help them share their faith.

Shine Your Light -Teens explores the importance of the peer-to-peer approach – young people reaching their peers with the good news of Jesus.

To download these free resources, please click [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.



News from Suffolk Mind - For the latest news, please click [here](#)

From the Diocesan Education Team

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