

Meet the team



Our mission is to serve and support schools and churches. We constantly strive to do more, so that through and with you, the distinctive Church of England character of your schools will continue to be developed.

Please contact us if there is anything you might like us to do or if you have a query about anything. We would love to hear from you.

Dr Rex Pogson



Chair of the DBE

Mrs Linda Wainscot



Diocesan Director of Education

Mrs Rachel Williams



PA to the Director & Clerk to the DBE

Mrs Chris Mulley



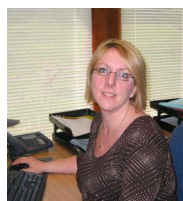
School & Governor Development Officer

Mrs Lizzie McWhirter



RE, Spirituality & School Officer

Mrs Joanne Evans



CPD Administrator

Mr Jonathan Warren



YMD Boon—VA Schools Property/Buildings Consultants

Mrs Helen Barnwell



Consultant Governor Support Officer

Mrs Alison Farnell



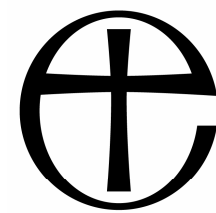
Consultant DBE Training Manager

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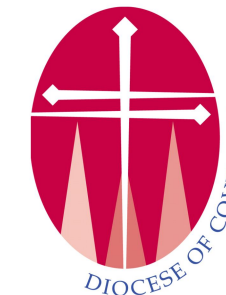
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THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND



Supporting and Serving School and Church



Fellow Governors,
Happy New Year!

As we start this spring term, I pray that 2010 will be a great year for you—both personally and professionally.

We're also at the start of a new decade, and there's much talk in the media of the search for personal happiness taking centre stage rather than the drive to acquire things or do stuff. In schools, the Every Child Matters agenda is now well embedded, and our Church schools are communities which place the wellbeing and happiness of every child at their very heart...

Over Advent, I read Margaret Silf's book, "Lighted Windows", subtitled "An Advent Calendar for a World in Waiting". With a newsletter to write, I was startled to read this verse from the Bible:

2 Corinthians 3:3

You are a letter of Christ...written not with ink but with the Spirit of the Living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts



The thought that you and I might be letters of Christ, whom He is sending to the world makes me wonder what kind of letter we'll be...Will we be of the routine variety - easily discarded and not making that much of a difference or will we be a welcome personal communication, with a shared history and aspirations for the future.?

2 Timothy 3:16

All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching.

In employing the gifts and skills you do, day in day out as a governor in Church of England school, have you ever considered that God has called you to be a living Christian witness in your community? He sent you to be His message—a message of love and commitment, continually seeking to empower and equip others in His name to be the best they can be. There's no room to settle for less than the best! So, in rolling up your sleeves and looking at the school budget or in monitoring and evaluating science, in seeking views from parents and communicating back to them what the school is doing, in being an extra adult on a school trip or being involved in the redesign of the school building—it's what you are and who you are, as much as what you do, that makes the difference.

However much you know about school governance, there is always more to learn and more to do. The critical thing is to approach the task with humility, humour and not a little stamina! We hear a lot about the "raising of the bar" for school governance—requiring ever more of governors as a distinct part of the leadership and management of the school, especially now that governance is reported on in its own right as part of a school's Ofsted inspection. The grade descriptors for governance and the guidance questions for Ofsted inspectors on pages 4 & 5 respectively are a good place to start when evaluating the impact of the governing body as a whole—underpinned by our own individual effectiveness, of course. Do please have another look at this, and consider an agenda item at your next governors' meeting (if you have not already done so) with a view to conducting a governors' self evaluation exercise. After all, we monitor and evaluate the performance of the staff team in terms of school improvement, so it's only fair that we should be just as accountable for our own effectiveness too!

One thing's for sure, life in school governance is never boring. With so much snow around this winter, perhaps we should now also monitor and evaluate the snowball fights in the playground?

Only joking (but don't tell the DCSF)

Chris Mulley



DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION
Governor Newsletter January 2010

A GOVERNOR WRITES...

When Chris Mulley asked me if I could produce a few words for "A Governor writes..." I have to say my initial reaction was "not another thing to do!" I have to say that it is something I have to admit to feeling on more than a few occasions when the latest DCSF newsletter or Local Authority missive arrives in my overflowing email inbox. It seems there is always some new initiative or policy to be considered, and trying to discern what requires attention, and how urgent any particular item is, is not always straightforward. However it all means being a Governor is rarely dull and is generally extremely rewarding.

This first term of the 2009/10 academic year has been a particularly full one at Blue Coat. We have had the great joy of welcoming a new Head Teacher, Dr Julie Roberts. As Chair of Governors I have found it a real privilege to play a part, alongside other governors, in providing advice and guidance, and enabling Dr Roberts to take up the reins as effectively as possible. This has been against the background of preparing to deal with a new OFSTED inspection framework, producing a new SEF and reviewing the School Development Plan.

The unexpected has played its part during this period of transition to a new Head Teacher. Shortly after Dr Roberts arrived, the school community had to come to terms with the sudden, tragic death of one of our students. In the midst of grief and shock, the way that students, staff and chaplains drew alongside one another to offer mutual support, and to reach out to the family, was a clear demonstration of some of the best aspects of a Christian school. There can never be an adequate preparation for such an event, but traumatic and difficult experiences highlight the importance of developing strong working relationships between governors, senior staff, the local authority and DBE.

Of course a new Head Teacher brings a fresh pair of eyes to the running of the school and presents all sorts of opportunities for revising and renewing the way in which things are done. For us as Governors, amongst other things, this has spurred us into a series of training sessions to develop our levels of understanding and equip us to be even more effective as a part of the school leadership structure.



As we look forward into the remainder of the school year I have no doubt that being a governor will continue to bring its challenges and excitement, its joys and sorrows.

Canon Rev'd Tim Pullen

**Chair of Governors
Blue Coat Church of England School**



CPD Corner

Heads will shortly be receiving a letter outlining the amount of money that remains unspent in your Diocesan Service Agreement for this financial year, assuming you are in one of the 82% of subscribing schools. We want to make sure you get best value from your subscription, so consult the current GREEN CPD booklet which outlines the courses planned for this spring term and decide how best to use up your allowance. There is currently space on the following courses (although one or two are nearly full, so don't delay applying):

- 19th January 2010 Being a Governor in a Church school – an essential introductory session for governors
- 28th January Introducing the new SIAS Toolkit – if your school has not already attended one of these courses, you will find it very useful
- 2nd February Confidently and Appropriately Distinctive – for heads and governors to consider what it really means to be a distinctive Church school
- 24th February Churches working in partnership with schools – exploring different ways to make this essential partnership effective
- 25th February Sparking up your RE! – lots of creative ways to improve the way RE is taught

Special events in Spring Term 2010

For VA schools

- 9th February 2010 Visions for the Future – Developing VA School Buildings and Realising Potential

For staff who aspire to leadership in a Church school

- 3rd March 2010 Stepping Up and Standing Out! – A day to explore whether they might step up to leadership in a Church school, and maybe consider applying for the 2011 Post Graduate Certificate in Church of England School Leadership (see below)

Post Graduate Certificate in Church of England School Leadership

In 2010, Coventry Diocese is running the national Church of England pilot of this one year course, validated by Liverpool Hope University. We have 12 participants enrolled for the pilot course; the major planning is complete, mentors for most of the participants have been trained, and we will soon be approaching Heads in Diocesan schools to act as host schools for visits by the participants. Please encourage your headteacher to offer your school as a host school if at all possible. The course kicks off on January 12th. Please also pray for the course leaders, speakers, mentors, school visit heads and participants throughout the year. And be considering now, which of your staff might apply for the course in 2011. Information inviting expressions of interest for those places will be sent out in the summer term 2010.

For all Governors in a Church school—Coventry Diocese's First Governors' Conference

- 6th March 2010 In response to requests from governors, we have arranged the first Diocesan conference specifically focussing on the governors' monitoring role in relation to the distinctive Christian character of the school (see page 3)

Do please support this if you can - it will be an enjoyable and practical time for all.

Prayer

(based on a Children's Society prayer, with grateful thanks)

Lord, your Son taught us that to welcome a child is to welcome Him.

We pray for the children in our care and also for those who are homeless, at risk, vulnerable and fearful

Through your Holy Spirit, help us to see all children through your eyes

To find ways for them to be heard, understood and loved

And to work to bring them the hope of a new and better life today.

Amen



Did you know...?

- You are one of over a thousand governors serving children and their families throughout Coventry Diocese every day — thank



Totals	Number
Number of governor positions in 63 Church of England schools in Warwickshire	885
Number of governor positions in 9 Church of England schools in Coventry	135
Number of governor positions in 2 Church of England schools in Solihull	30
Number of governor positions in 74 Church of England schools in Coventry Diocese	1,050
% Foundation Governor positions vacant in Warwickshire	9.7%
% Foundation Governor positions vacant in Coventry	2%
% Foundation Governor positions vacant in Solihull	0%

*--News Flash!--
Conference topic changed
from that previously advertised
following consultation with governors...*

Coventry Diocesan Schools First Annual Governors' Conference

For all governors in Church of England Schools in Coventry Diocese

Saturday March 6th 2010
9.30am-12.30pm (Coffee at 9.00am)

Woodside Conference Centre, Glasshouse Lane, Kenilworth, CV8 2AL



you!

- Appointments or reappointments of Foundation Governors are usually made by the PCC **with DBE approval**. The Foundation Governor Nomination Form needed by PCCs initially for this can be downloaded from the DBE website at www.coventry.anglican.org using the Education tab.
- Safeguarding - the DBE should routinely be informed of your governor CRB number when you are appointed or reappointed
- Ex-officio Foundation Governors (normally the vicar) do not need to be reappointed every 4 years.
- Clerks - please continue (or start) to send your full governing body minutes by email to Helen Barnwell at Helen.Barnwell@CovCofE.org - she reads them all!**



Compulsory training for Chairs of Governors on the way?

Before the end of this school year, we will be the other side of a General Election. Whatever the outcome, being a school Governor will continue to be vital, especially given the financial outlook over the coming years.

The current government's document "Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system" sets out a number of changes impacting on school governance—improved training for governors, compulsory training for Chairs of Governors, all governing bodies to have a trained clerk, and greater flexibility of the composition of governing bodies. Consultation is promised and new regulations giving effect to these changes are proposed for September 2011. Also expected for then is a requirement to consider shared leadership **and governance** when a Headteacher vacancy arises. Watch this space...

A personal note

I will be running my first ever marathon, the Virgin London Marathon on April 25th 2010. I've started the training, am strangely excited about it and would love to raise as much money for The Children's Society in the process as possible. If you would like to sponsor me for this worthwhile cause please visit www.justgiving.com/chrismulley

I'd really appreciate it.

Chris Mulley



Developing the Distinctive Christian Character of a Church of England School

The role of governors in supporting and monitoring the development of the distinctive Christian character of Church of England Schools

The new inspection regime for OFSTED has raised the bar for governance and SIAS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools) inspections put significant emphasis on the distinctive Christian character of Church of England Schools. Governors need to understand what this might mean, how they can help develop it and monitor what is actually happening in school.

This relates to:

- The impact of collective worship
- Meeting the needs of all learners
- Effective RE
- Key Christian values in the life of the school
- Effective leadership and management
- Responsibility for the wellbeing of the Head and staff

Keynote Speaker: **Mike Simmonds**, Christian School Governance Consultant
With Coventry DBE Officers

This conference will enable governors to understand more about their role and responsibilities, become familiar with both OFSTED and SIAS requirements and create space to share examples of excellent practice in many of our Diocesan schools. Maximum benefit will be gained if several governors from your school attend.

Cost for one governor: £40

Cost for up to three governors: £100

NB. Your subscription to the Diocesan Service Agreement can cover this cost

Ofsted Grade Descriptors for School Governance

Under the new grade descriptors for governance issued to Ofsted inspectors in September 2009, the key issue is “**the effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met**”.

This places a greater emphasis on the challenge provided by governors to the school’s senior leadership team in driving forward school improvement. Support is still important, but challenge is more important than it was previously.

1 Corinthians 12:27

Outstanding (1)

Now you are the body of Christ and each one of you is a part of it

Governors make an exceptional contribution to the work and direction of the school. They have high levels of insight and are extremely well organised and thorough in their approach. They are vigorous in ensuring that all pupils and staff are safe. In discharging their statutory responsibilities, they have very robust systems for evaluating the effectiveness of their implementation, keeping the work of the school under review and acting upon their findings.

Governors are innovative, flexible and adapt to new ideas quickly, supporting the work of the staff in improving outcomes for all pupils. They are confident in providing high levels of professional challenge to hold the school to account.

Governors engage very effectively with parents, pupils and the staff as a whole and are well informed about users’ views of the school. They use these views to inform strategic priorities for development.

Good (2)

The governing body has the capacity to meet the school’s needs and is influential in determining the strategic direction of the school.

Governors are rigorous in ensuring that pupils and staff are safe and discharge their statutory duties effectively. They are fully and systematically involved in evaluating the school. Their relationships with staff are constructive and they show determination in challenging and supporting the school in tackling weaknesses and so bringing about necessary improvements.

Governors have clear systems for seeking the views of parents and pupils and mechanisms for acting on these.

Satisfactory (3)

Governors discharge their statutory responsibilities and ensure that pupils and staff are safe. They are well organised, are visible in the school community, and support staff and pupils.

Most governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, understand the challenges it faces and are directly involved in setting appropriate priorities for improvement.

The governing body holds the school to account for tackling important weaknesses.

Governors engage often with parents and pupils and respond quickly to their views and any significant concerns they may have.

Inadequate (4)

Either: The governing body has too little impact on the direction and work of the school.

Or The governing body does not challenge the school to address weaknesses and bring about improvement.

Or The governing body’s negligence in failing to meet its statutory requirements places the pupils’ achievement or well-being at risk.

Guidance questions for Ofsted inspectors on School

Governance

The following is a series of questions taken from the Annex to “The effectiveness of the Governing Body”, which is a briefing paper for Section 5 (Ofsted) Inspectors, dated September 2009. The questions *are examples only* and inspectors are asked to tailor their questions to the individual school, linked to the pre inspection briefing.

If you don’t already know the answers to these questions, please consider how you might collectively address them. Do you have an agreed framework for evaluating the effectiveness of your governing body? Which one of these new grades (1-4) would you give yourselves?

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how do governors know?
- What are the strengths and areas for development of the governing body?
- What are the main barriers to learning and what action has been taken to overcome them? How successful have the actions been?
- What contribution does the governing body think it has made to improving provision, especially teaching, and outcomes for pupils?
- To what extent is the governing body involved in the school’s processes for self-evaluation and improvement planning?
- How do governors monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school improvement plan?
- Can governors give examples of how they have supported and challenged the school?
- What are the procedures for safeguarding pupils and how have training needs been met?
- How are governors involved in the life of the school?
- Do governors have specific areas of responsibility and/or links with school classes/form/tutor groups/subjects/departments? What is the impact of these links?
- How do governors consult parents/the local community?
- Can governors give examples of when parental/community views have been sought and acted on?
- How are the training needs of governors identified and addressed?
- What training have governors undertaken recently and what has been the impact of this training?

Help is at hand(no pun intended)

Either the DBE or your LA Governor Services Team can help you with this.

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