

DIOCESE OF COVENTRY

DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

VISITORS TO CHURCH SCHOOLS

Information for Schools and Governors

WHO ARE VISITORS?

Visitors are appointed by the Diocesan Board of Education to visit church schools as representatives of the diocese. They will have an educational background and their mission is to foster relationships between the Diocese, its schools and their local churches. In essence they will be a friend to the school.

A FRIEND KNOWS YOU WELL

Each visitor will be linked to a small number of schools that they will get to know well. They are naturally interested in the religious education and worship that the school is providing but their focus is on the whole ethos and life of the school and the quality of relationships among pupils, parents, staff, governors and the church community.

A FRIEND IS NOT JUDGEMENTAL

Visitors are not inspectors! They will be familiar with the educational issues facing schools and in particular with the requirements for RE and worship and will be able to discuss these things with you. They will want to share with you in accepting what cannot be changed, in having courage to change what should be changed - and in having wisdom to know the difference! In all they do they will have the best interests of the school at heart.

A FRIEND ALWAYS HAS TIME

Building such a relationship takes time. Visitors will contact the school each year to spend some time talking to the headteacher and seeing the school at work. Visitors would like to share in other school activities such as special services, sports days etc. They would like schools to invite them to such functions.

A FRIEND ACCEPTS YOU AS YOU ARE

When teachers are faced with pressures from many sides it's good to know the visitor is someone who understands and cares. They will not want to waste any of your time, but will be prepared to listen sympathetically and share your concerns - and also celebrate your joys and successes.

A FRIEND KEEPS CONFIDENCES

As the relationship grows so will mutual trust. The visitor will make brief written notes on those items agreed with the headteacher and will send a draft of those notes for approval. The notes are confidential and copies will only be sent to the visitors' coordinator and the diocesan director of education. Any issues requiring action will be brought to the attention of the appropriate diocesan officer.

WHAT DO VISITORS AIM TO DO?

Encourage and support the expression of Christian beliefs and values upon which the school is founded

Further good relationships within the school and between the school and local church and wider community

Promote the link between the school and the diocese

Encourage the provision of high quality education for all pupils

HOW WILL THEY DO IT?

Every year the visitor will agree a date with the headteacher for a visit of approximately one hour duration. The visitor may be invited to share an act of worship as well. The headteacher should let the incumbent and the chair of governors know as a matter of courtesy. Perhaps they might like to meet the visitor at some time?

On the first visit to the school a visitor would appreciate a brief tour of the site.

The visitor will also try to attend other school functions.

Within a few days the visitor will write their notes outlining the issues discussed. The tone will be honest, positive and encouraging.

WHAT ELSE DO VISITORS DO?

Visitors meet regularly with the Diocesan Director of Education and other officers to exchange relevant information and be updated on current educational developments.

FURTHER INFORMATION

This is only a brief outline of the role of DBE Visitors. If you have any questions or comments please contact the Visitors' Coordinator

Mrs Sybil Hanson

c/o Diocesan Board of Education

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YOUR VISITOR IS "A FRIEND FROM THE DIOCESE"

WHO ARE OUR CURRENT TEAM OF VISITORS?

Mrs Helen Barnwell

Canon Margaret Sedgwick

Mrs Sybil Hanson

Mrs Margaret Sheldon

Mrs Eileen Leech

Rev. Beth Smith

Mr Heath Pratt

Ms Hazel Smith

Mrs Yvonne Rose

Mr Dick Withington

Would you be interested in becoming a visitor? We are always looking for new colleagues to join our team.