

Footprints

Step-by-step together

Your newsletter from the Diocesan Board of Education

October 2018



Paul Dunning
Diocesan Director of Education

Growth & Change

One thing is certain in the 21st century and that is life keeps changing. Often change leads to growth, sometimes planned, sometimes thrust upon us, much good but some unhelpful.

It is interesting that our Footprints contributors, having been given the subject of 'growth' as the starting point for their contribution, have also focused on the changes that growth enabled for the benefit of the pupils in their schools and academies. They've used and enabled growth and change in a positive way.

Growth and change are key aspects of life. We're in the harvest festival season and many will have celebrated how the growth and change of a small seed leads

to a bountiful harvest. The worldwide web has led to growth and change that we could never have imagined a generation ago. As a Diocese we see growth and change as people join schools and churches whilst others move on. And of course, at a personal level we grow and change not just physically but emotionally, spiritually and educationally.

So, are growth and change good things? Even if there was a simple answer there is not space here to unpack it! What I would contend though, is that it is our attitude that is important and that is what will enable positive outcomes. In his letters in the New Testament Paul talks about his personal journey of growth and change from being someone who originally persecuted Christians to becoming a passionate advocate for Jesus. His desire was to change and be more and more like Jesus - there couldn't be a much more positive outcome than that! In his letter to the Ephesian church he encourages them 'to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness'.

As we deal with growth and change I hope such things can be harnessed to enable our school communities to flourish as demonstrated overleaf!

LISTEN

CELEBRATE

IMAGINE

EMPOWER

...MORE THAN WE CAN IMAGINE



Richard Cranmer
Interim CEO
St Benet's MAT

Growing your MAT

I feel both privileged and excited to have been appointed as Interim CEO of St Benet's Multi Academy Trust (MAT), following in the footsteps of Lee Stevens who has done an excellent job in establishing the MAT since its conception. It has been his pioneering work that has brought together Diss Junior School, Dickleburgh and Harleston Primary Schools and Archbishop Sancroft High School, where I have been Headteacher since 2008.

My love of working in Church schools started in an ecumenical school in Oxford, followed by a move to Notre Dame High School in Norwich and then on to Harleston. Each step along this journey has provided me with a different perspective of the role of Church schools and the incredible and increasingly important impact that a distinctively Christian community can have on shaping young people's lives. Those of us who work in schools such as these are also aware of course of the encouragement and freedom that we feel to grow in our own spirituality and as such are refreshed

and challenged to continue to strive for further improvement.

Not so long ago my understanding of the word 'mat' would have been limited to a rectangular piece of fabric found either side of a door. How times have changed! The Five Year strategic plan published by the Diocese of Norwich Board of Education in April 2018 clearly sets out a vision where all Diocesan schools are encouraged to be working together in MATs.

The commitment to working collaboratively as a MAT, engaging leaders in developing systems and ways of working, lies at the heart of this approach and culture. It aligns with that of Robert Hill (former DfE ministerial adviser) who says: "The whole point of a MAT is to grow a teaching and learning model where schools are continually and ever more deeply engaging with, learning from and supporting each other. That requires a shared purpose, shared leadership, shared systems, shared resources and shared accountability."

We've seen the Diocese's first MAT (DNEAT) establish itself as a successful organisation improving schools based on strong Christian values. As the second MAT to be set up by the Diocese St Benet's MAT has as one of its unique features core Christian values that serve, implicitly and explicitly, as the foundation

for everything that happens in our academies. These key values are:

- Responsibility
- Hope and aspiration
- Dignity
- Love
- Respect

Another key feature will be the emphasis placed upon academy to academy support as a crucial component of academy improvement and development as well as individual staff development.

In trying to distil these values into a concise vision statement, the Trust's vision of "Faith in success" recognises the enduring links the Trust has with the Diocese of Norwich. However, it also sets a clear focus on the MAT being a centre of excellence in learning and leadership. The Trust's vision recognises that each of our academies, supported by the MAT, will provide the pupils and students with a secure, stimulating, caring and ambitious environment in which each individual will be given every opportunity to fulfil his/her potential.

As well as maintaining a strong focus on school improvement, St Benet's MAT has plans to grow and I would welcome conversations with schools that are keen to explore the benefits of working with and learning from a growing group of schools who are stronger together in all that they do and aspire to achieve.

Rachael Greenhalgh
Executive Headteacher
Middleton & Gayton Primary Academies

Growing your federation

Since starting as a Headteacher in January 2012 I have been involved in 'growing' Gayton Primary School. When I started, the school had 66 pupils and had just converted to full primary status. We were also looking at the exciting prospect of a rebuild! Now, almost seven years on, we have grown to around 150 pupils and we are still looking forward to, not just a rebuild, but a new build. Over six years ago we were told that our mobile buildings were all 'temporary'. Two years maximum. However, here we are still trying to get planning permission. This could have been a very frustrating and problematic few years. Where do you put an additional 85 children in a school built for 66? Yet within that time period we have built up a fantastic staff, our children are flourishing and our site is challenging but full of charm. We have also just entered into a very exciting partnership with Middleton Primary Academy.

In January 2012 we made a decision



not to stand still at Gayton Primary and wait for the new build. Back then we were promised something within 18 months. Instead, we started to bring about change on our current site. We completely transformed the Reception outdoor area, opened up the woodland, converted an old pond into an accessible wildlife garden and created dragon and castle tree sculptures. We also worked with NCC to improve our indoor space. We desperately wanted to increase our number of classes from five to six. To this end we took what seemed like a risk and converted a very old and dingy mobile into a bright and welcoming classroom. We recruited additional staff and started on a thorough programme of high quality CPD that included all staff. I always liked the quote from Sir Richard Branson, 'Train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don't want to.' I certainly don't always get it right but this is something, through all the growth

and change, I have aspired to.

With all of the change that Gayton Primary has gone through it has remained strong. Staff have stepped up to the challenge of the growing pupil numbers and year groups, of being involved with plans for a new school, of converting to become an academy with DNEAT and of entering into a partnership with Middleton Primary Academy. The constant change and growth of the school has created excellent opportunities for staff and staff, in turn, have given a wonderful energy to the school.

Now working across two schools, one that was in special measures until July 2018, I find that I am still learning and growing as a Headteacher. Middleton Primary has wonderful potential, having moved out of special measures, and is ready now to grow into a thriving school. We have only been in partnership for ten months but we are already seeing the benefits and enjoying the challenge!

Gayle Platt
Headteacher
Dersingham VA Primary and Nursery

Growing your building

The pupils, parents, staff and governors are delighted to celebrate the growth of our school building, putting a fresh image on our tired structure, developing beautiful classroom and nurturing spaces.

The new rooms and expansion of learning space have been developed over a period of months under the guidance of the fabulous Spire team. The building work gave school staff the opportunity to reflect on our learning environment and give pupils some degree of control and choice; developing higher order thinking skills and ownership.

Staff have taken a holistic approach to education and how we can create



a positive learning environment to secure supportive relationships. The environment is characterised by a clear sense of belonging and connectedness, enhancing children's readiness to learn and wellbeing. The opportunity to create multifunctional learning spaces with areas for concentration and contemplation was central. We wanted to provide both peaceful and reflective areas for pupils and inspirational classroom spaces for our growing pupil numbers.

The demand for increased classroom space, enabled our school to capitalize on the benefits of building work. Spire helped us look at unused space as an

opportunity to think creatively, resulting in a fresh approach to active learning and physical space. Classrooms feel welcoming and approachable, without compromising on performance. There is flexibility and choice embracing the value of community and collaboration.

This is such a positive moment for our school and it is a delight to celebrate the building works with fellow church schools in this article. It is making our school rethink all our spaces with a critical, creative eye. I am thankful for the support of the Diocese in helping to provide such a beautiful renovation. I am sure our pupils will enjoy this stunning space in the years to come.

Governor & Clerk update



Jill Wakefield

Grow your own Governing Body!

Best practice states you should carry out a skills audit of all your governors so that you can identify what skills are lacking and the kind of people you would like to recruit to your governing board. However, in Norfolk and Suffolk we tend not to have people queuing up to become governors, so it is worth remembering that it may be easier to recruit someone with the right attitude rather than with a specific skillset. You can always train for the skills later. Look for people who are willing to commit, are confident, curious, questioning, have

common sense and will be supportive of the values of your school.

The direct approach works best when trying to find potential new governors. Try approaching local employers (especially any with which your school does business), or organisations like the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, PCC, University of the Third Age, Women's Institute. Talk to your local incumbent to see if they know of anyone who might be interested. Contact other schools and further/higher education establishments – it can be very good professional development for middle leaders to volunteer as a governor at another school. Failing that, you could try advertising on the two national volunteer banks for school governors: Inspiring Governance (www.inspiringgovernance.org) and Governors for Schools (www.governorsforschools.org.uk).

Once you've recruited governors, you need to make sure you hold on to them so think about their induction. Arrange introductory training so that they understand what being a governor is all about, arrange for one of the other governors to be their mentor, provide them with any documents which will

help them get up to speed with the school and its priorities, make a point of having a 'How are you getting on' chat at regular intervals, make them feel valued.

Don't forget about the longer-serving members of the board. Make sure everyone undertakes some form of professional development each year, take time to think about what can be done to address any weaknesses on the governing body, delegate responsibilities – for example, ensuring that fellow governors take the chair of other committees so that you are growing new leadership talent.

Further information:

- DfE Governance Handbook 2017, Section 4 People, looks at how boards can build an effective team of the right kind of people
- Diocese of Norwich's brochure Working with Schools and Academies 2018-19 has information regarding governance training courses.

Jill Wakefield can be contacted by email: school.governance@dioceseofnorwich.org or call 01603 881722

DNEAT

Converted on:

Hopton VA Primary	01/08/18
Little Snoring Community Primary	01/08/18
Sandringham & West Newton VA Primary	01/09/18
Gayton VC Primary	01/10/18

Reminders

Headteachers' Forum

Monday 26 November, 09:30 - 15:30
South Green Park, Mattishall
with Paul Dunning and headteachers

Annual HT Conference

Tuesday 30 April 2019, 09:00 - 16:00
Keynote speakers: Professor Dame Alison Peacock, The Very Revd Matt Thompson (Dean of Birmingham Cathedral) and Mary Hawes (National Children & Youth Adviser)

Places still available on the remaining 2018 training courses

Better Together: Becoming an outstanding subject leader of RE
Thursday 15 November
09:30 - 15:30, Diocesan House
with Kathryn Wright

Improving writing through RE (KS2)
Tuesday 27 November
09:30 - 12:30, Diocesan House
with Kathryn Wright

Preparing to teach statutory RSE
Tuesday 11 December
09:30 - 12:00, Diocesan House
with Josie Rayner-Wells

Introduction to Embedding and Monitoring Statutory RSE in a Church School or Academy
Tuesday 11 December
19:00 - 21:00, Diocesan House
with Josie Rayner-Wells

Tackling Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying and Language
Wednesday 12 December
09:15 - 16:30, Diocesan House
with Sam Hardwick, Stonewall

RE Curriculum Design Surgery
Thursday 13 December
13:30 - 16:30, Diocesan House
with Kathryn Wright

Understanding Christianity: Initial Training
Thursday 13 December
09:30 - 12:30, Diocesan House
with Kathryn Wright

To book your place please contact:
holly.davy@dioceseofnorwich.org