

Footprints

Step by step together

Your newsletter from the Diocesan Board of Education

January 2022



Pastoral Care



Paul Dunning
Diocesan Director of Education

Thank you, thank you, thank you to all you have contributed to your school community during this interminable pandemic. I hope you managed some rest and relaxation over the Christmas period. As staff in schools look to serve and support children and young people it is important you look after your own wellbeing too.

Starting 2022 with a Footprints edition focused on pastoral care is timely. The varied examples included show the success of church schools in proactively and innovatively caring for the whole child and seeking that all may flourish. It is also encouraging to see the great examples of churches and schools working together for the common good.

One of the four pillars in our national Vision for Education is *Educating for Dignity and Respect*. It gives some examples of what fullness of life (flourishing) includes and one element is "Blessing" I quote:

Blessing is a central biblical activity, forming what might be called a dynamic ecology of blessing: God blesses human beings and creation; creation and human beings can bless God; humans can bless

each other; and the dynamic crosses generations and peoples. Like other ecologies, it can go terribly wrong, but the vision is of God-given fullness of life in which each person is both blessed and a blessing. Education can be one of the greatest blessings in anyone's life, and our commitment is to help this happen for as many as possible.

I love the concept that we are both blessed and a blessing. I hope that is your lived experience in our schools as we all seek to care for one another.

The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed; those who help others are helped (Proverbs 11:25 The Message)

Headteachers please note we will pick up the theme of educating for dignity and respect at our annual conference. Make sure it is in your diary – Tuesday 29 March 2022!



Nebula
where stars are born

Natalie Brown
Pastoral Manager
Nebula Federation

The vision for the Nebula Federation schools is that they are a place for children to flourish. Pastoral care is integral in ensuring we meet the needs of all children, and that we create an environment where everyone has the opportunity to be the best that they can be.

Children struggle with a wide range of issues including anxiety, negative self-image, bereavement, neurodiversity, lack of confidence and dysregulation. Many children have experienced significant trauma. We have therefore designed a varied pastoral offer within our schools, which includes 1:1 tailored support, Positive Play, Nurture Groups, Forest School, Sensory Circuits, Play Therapy, Counselling and Family Support.

We identified the gap in provision and extensive waiting lists for specialist



services, leading to an escalation in children's behaviours and needs. Consequently, our Pastoral team have worked alongside agencies to develop a pilot intervention offering Parent-led Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) to our families. The project has been extremely successful and the intervention is now part of our core offer of support. If you would like further information, please take a look at the article printed in the UEA's Annual Review by following this link and going to page 64-65: www.issuu.com/ueahscp/docs/annual_report_2020-21

As a result of the pastoral provision, we create an environment that allows children to feel safe and able to process and make sense of their world. We are proud to have highly skilled, experienced, qualified practitioners working alongside our children and families, ensuring they have access to holistic support to best meet their needs.

Every child is individual and should have self-belief and a sense of belonging. All children should feel valued so we create personalised and diverse opportunities for children to be themselves and to celebrate who they are.



Caroline Hutton
Chair of Governors of Earsham VA Primary School & Schools and Families worker for the Earsham Benefice

Stop, look, listen – This well-known slogan for road safety has become a valuable tool in helping support schools pastorally. School life is very busy. We often fly from one issue to the next. The problem is that we can then often miss the small things that indicate a pastoral issue.

This is where "stop, look, listen" can be

useful. It is about making time in our work in schools to stop, look and listen, instead of just swooping in for collective worship or that quick phone call. Take time to stop, look and then listen (you can even do this on zoom!) Looking at body language and listening with presence to people who may just need to talk. Solving the problem may not be possible, but you can listen. We have found that listening has become an important part of wellbeing in schools.

Pastorally supporting our schools can take many forms. Showing God's grace, gifts

of food, affirmation of a job well done or even just for surviving, smiling at all those you meet, standing with the Headteacher on the school gate welcoming the school community in for the day. There are many more, and each school community is different and requires a different approach. Pastoral care goes beyond kindness; it comes from a Christian love and compassion that drives us to reflect what Jesus did. Jesus took time to stop, look and listen to all. I encourage all those involved in supporting schools to do the same.



Mat Tuckwood
Headteacher
Whitefriars Primary Academy DNEAT

When you look back at the past 18 months and consider all of the hurdles and different demands that we have overcome, we should be super proud of ourselves. It really has been a “bonkers” and exhausting time which has required the whole school community to continually adapt, be flexible and work harder than ever.

As a major part of our school community, our local chaplains have also had to acclimatise to the ever-changing landscape. They have done this really successfully which, for our school, has made everything just a little bit easier. Working with the school to provide: online worship (it was amazing to see how much these progressed – some even had special effects), pastoral provision for staff and support for some of our families really made a difference.

Early during the Autumn term, we hosted a curate for a week’s placement, allowing him to immerse himself in the life of a school to see just how crazy the daily life in a school is (even more crazy during a pandemic). Working with each year group throughout the school was eye-opening for him, allowing him to see the daily barriers and battles. It was also inventive as it started a discussion about support and how the Church could further care for its community; it not only raised questions but also provided some answers.

Since September, it has been great to start working with our chaplains face to face again – having over 500 people at King’s Lynn Minster for our Harvest service (our first church service all together for over 18 months) was truly wonderful, as has been welcoming our chaplains back into school to lead collective worship and deliver our weekly Mass services. They are such a core ingredient of our school communities – we are lucky to have them!



Jonathan Richardson
Children, Youth and Families
Development Officer

There is a growing recognition that children and young people are struggling to find their place in the world. The need to provide listening spaces and people who can journey with young people has been responded to through various initiatives such as Prayer Spaces in Schools and the more recent trend towards appointing school chaplains. Many schools benefit from local Christians running collective worship, Godly Play and Open the Book, but their engagement is limited to the time within

the specific context.

The incarnational model of chaplaincy has an emphasis on building relationships and coming alongside young people. In the same way that Jesus became flesh (Philippians 2:6-8) and lived life alongside his disciples, Christian chaplains can “be” Jesus to young people, embodying the life and character of God so that young people can see Jesus in us.

St Benet’s Multi Academy Trust has been working, with the Diocese of Norwich and Integrate Youth for Christ, to appoint Amy Cossey as a lead chaplain to the Trust. As well as being the chaplain in Archbishop Sancroft High School, Amy is working with local clergy and volunteers



to provide a coordinated chaplaincy programme across the Trust. The aim of this is to provide a regular presence in all schools, as well as pastoral and wellbeing support to teachers, pupils and families. Along with mentoring and drop-in chat sessions, lunch clubs and reflective prayer spaces, this will help support journeying with children as they transition into secondary schools. Amy can be contacted by emailing amy@integrateyfc.org.uk

A similar scheme is being developed in the Synergy Multi Academy Trust. Chaplains are working in both Reepham and Litcham high schools and are developing links with feeder schools!

Governor focus



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If you Google “Pastoral Care” Wikipedia will tell you that “Pastoral care is an ancient model of emotional, social and spiritual support that can be found in all cultures and traditions”.

Working and governing in schools and academies in the Diocese of Norwich family we are particularly fortunate that this model for pastoral care is especially prominent. Jesus said, “I have come that you may have life in all its fullness” (John 10:10) and this is the very heart of the Church of England Vision for Education.

It is important for governors to keep in mind the Department for Education’s three core functions of effective governance:

1. Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
2. Hold executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the

3. Oversee the financial performance of the organisation and make sure its money is well spent

At the time of publishing, Covid19 will have been with us for two years and the toll that the pandemic is continuing to take on the emotional and social wellbeing of not only the children but everyone in our schools is becoming more and more evident. It is therefore important to remember that “fullness” of life and how everyone governing in schools can support their pupils, staff, and the wider community to achieve it.

Some questions that those governing might like to consider:

How can governors balance challenge and support during challenging times?

For example, is there a way that governing body meetings can be adjusted so as not to increase the workload and pressure on colleagues in the school but still include that focus on holding to account? Governors on one governing body I know submit their questions to the headteacher in writing before the meeting so that they can prepare in advance. They use the Noticeboard on GovernorHub so that all governors and the clerk can see the questions and not duplicate or overload the headteacher’s inbox.

What’s the best way to monitor pastoral challenges without

traditional school visits?

Is the governing body carrying out effective remote monitoring with key members of staff and is that monitoring being well recorded? The governing body can delve deeper into pastoral issues such as attendance, pupil resilience and school support for spiritual development by using “why” and “how” based questions to achieve a level of assurance that any support being put in place is the most effective course of action.

How can governors practically support teacher and headteacher wellbeing?

Headteachers are rightly very focused on the wellbeing of the pupils in the school when presenting to governors. So, take the initiative in your meetings and ask how the staff are doing, what support is in place and whether it is sufficient. Consider how, through your governing role, you can ease some of the burden during this challenging time by making sure that any monitoring is arranged well in advance and that you are well prepared for meetings and monitoring so that they do not become over long.

Overall, I think Ephesians 4:32 says it well “Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” For we may not be all in the same boat exactly, but we are definitely all in the same stormy sea.

Welcome

Headteachers starting

Matthew Walker – Tas Valley Church Schools Federation
Kellie Egleton – Hopton Primary Academy DNEAT
Kirstin Sutherland – Flourish Federation

Farewell & thanks

Headteachers leaving

Lesley Payne – Tas Valley Church Schools Federation
Judith Jones – Forncett and Carleton Rode Federation

REQM congratulations

Silver Award November 2021

Dereham Church of England Infants and Nursery

SIAMS Outcomes

Good

Rudham Primary Academy DNEAT