

Footprints

Step by step together

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Norwich

Your newsletter from the Diocesan Board of Education

September 2023

Showcasing Support Staff



Paul Dunning
Diocesan Director of Education

Welcome back!

My prayer for the new academic year for all our schools, pupils, staff and governors is inspired by the new document 'Our hope for a flourishing schools system' (www.DofN.org/fss) which builds on the Church of England's

2016 vision for education. It explains that the word translated 'life' as used by Jesus in John 10:10 is the Greek word 'ZOE'. It means far more than simply being alive. ZOE life is the full, abundant, broad, deep, rich sense of living together through all the ups and downs, twists and turns, joy, pain, elation, depression, dancing, weeping, singing and mourning that we experience as human beings. I pray that your school community reflects such reality and enables everyone to feel loved, valued and truly flourish as precious children of God.

This edition of Footprints celebrates the roles of support staff and governors in schools and the Diocese (how would I

manage without the wonderful Holly!) and refers to the fantastic lunch and afternoon we had at the Bishop of Norwich's Schools Champion awards. If your school didn't get involved in 2023 look out for this biennial event in 2025.

The stories that follow are great examples of the dedication and commitment taking place across the Diocese. So many people go the extra mile (or more) and I thank you for that. You are living as Jesus suggested: *If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you (Matthew 5:41-42).*



Lucinda Mayhew
Extended Schools Lead
Brooke VC Primary

I have worked at Brooke Primary School for over 15 years, starting off with just doing lunchtimes, then breakfast club and now afterschool club. This will be my second year of doing holiday club.

I find my job very rewarding, helping the children and watching them grow from the first day of school to the very last. I always try and make the children's time with me as enjoyable as possible. For some it is too enjoyable as their parents struggle to take them home as they want to stay. For me this is reassuring as it tells me that I must be doing something right!



Alex Griffiths
Headteacher
Brooke VC Primary

Lucinda is just one example at Brooke of our fabulously devoted and dedicated support staff.

She works at the school three times a day five days per week, the first to greet the children at Breakfast club in the morning, a friendly face for them at lunchtime and the last to see them out of the door at the end of the day from After School Club.

We really value and invest in our support staff and have seen in recent years staff members join us as extended school assistants, apprentice teaching assistants, teaching assistants, and higher lever teaching assistants and move along a career pathway to promotions, in some cases qualified teachers supported and guided by the school.

This investment in staff is as valuable to us as seeing progress in children. A happy and forward thinking staff team makes for a happy and forward thinking school!

I have several different colleagues that assist me at various times of the day and they are a real help to me and together we make a great team.

Brooke Primary is a small village school with around 140 pupils and has always had a family feel about it. I'm amused sometimes when I walk in the city and ex pupils approach me to say 'hello' some of which are now adults and some even have their own children!

The breakfast and after school club can be quite challenging as the ages can range from 4 to 11 year olds. I try to keep them all entertained, some of the older children seem to enjoy engaging and helping the younger ones with activities. I love my job and the main reason for this is the children.

John Neenan
Executive headteacher
St Michael's VA Primary
& Nursery

Sharon is a shining light for our children, staff and community.

She is selfless and places the needs of others before herself. She goes above and beyond to understand the concerns our young people face, ensuring she has up to date knowledge to best support them. Every school community needs a Sharon.

Sharon McCann
St Michael's VA Primary & Nursery

I have a variety of roles at St Michael's School including nurture lead, parent support advisor, child mental health champion, draw and talk practitioner and deputy designated safeguarding lead.

They all work in harmony with the Christian ethos of our school. So we show love and care to our children and their families, which gives them the tools to flourish during their time with us.

Pastoral care for our children happens throughout the school, but often, especially since the pandemic, the children require a little extra support. Whether it's building self-esteem or resilience or recognising emotions and expressing them in a safe way, the nurture room is always busy.

Our children know that there is always a



listening ear at school. What may seem like a small problem to some, is valued by everyone and is validated without judgement.

I hope that through our strong nurturing beliefs at St Michaels, children and their families feel welcome and know we are always there to support them when they need it.

I genuinely adore my job and even on the trickiest of days, it is still a privilege to work with our young children and their families.

Keith Pilgrim

Caretaker, MSA and works with the school's PTA and wider community
Ditchingham Primary Academy

I enjoy working at Ditchingham Primary Academy, especially as I'm a resident of the village.

It makes me feel proud to be part of the team, and to hear the children calling me Mr Pilgrim outside work whilst I'm walking our dogs. It always makes me smile.

I feel very honoured to receive the Schools Champion Award. Myself, my wife and my daughter had a lovely afternoon at the awards, held in the amazing Bishop Gate Gardens. Since joining the school as caretaker 5 years ago I have also taken on the role of midday supervisor and joined the Ditchingham Academy Friends as a volunteer.



Rachel Mellor,

Trust appointed Governor for Gayton & Middleton Federation

I was delighted to be asked to write this article, following on from receiving my schools champion award at the recent bishop's lunch. I have been a governor since October 2006 and have been part of these two lovely things in recent weeks. What is the saying about buses! ...

My daughter was in Reception when I decided to become a school governor. There have been many times along the way when I have thought, "Why am I doing this?" I had 2 small children, I was working and there were other family pressures. As I look back though, it's clear that "Why shouldn't I do it?"

I became Chair of Governors in May 2010 and almost immediately I, and the whole school community were tested. We had a period of time with uncertainty regarding head teachers, we were working towards campaigning to become a through primary and the new build that would take years to come. From January 2012 all started to settle when Rachael Greenhalgh became our head teacher.

I remember when she was interviewed and subsequently appointed – so



impressive, and her interview presentation assembly to the children was about being special, however small or insignificant we may feel we are.

During those very difficult times, including the loss of two of our lovely children

from school, I tried really hard to provide stability and consistency for the governing body and the school community.

We are now in our beautiful new school at Gayton and are continuing to support and guide at Middleton.

Governor focus



Holly Davy

PA to the Diocesan Director of Education and support to the RE Advisor

I joined the Diocese in 2008, firstly working as PA to the Chief Executive before moving to be PA to the Director of Education in 2015.

My role is busy and interesting as well as very varied and includes:

- PA work which includes diary management, processing invoices, arranging meetings, minute taking, producing contracts, analysing information, data entry
- Supporting the RE Advisor, with

- training, invoicing and administration
- Planning and organising of the Annual Headteachers Conference, Education Celebration Service and other events for schools and academies within the Diocese
- Overseeing the production of the annual training booklet, which is a large job, including co-ordinating dates and the facilities
- Being the point of contact for our Diocesan School Support Officers (DSSO's) and support their roles, booking and attending our regular review meetings together as well as minuting the meetings
- I arrange the DSSO's availability to attend schools and academies Ofsted feedback sessions and SIAMS feedback sessions, often at short notice.

- I co-ordinate the Diocesan Board of Education meetings and committee meetings and minute these

The above are just a few elements of my role. I enjoy the variety of my role as not one day is the same. I like having to deal with issues which are often urgent and at times sensitive.

Much of my work also requires liaising with headteachers, PA to the Bishop of Norwich, Cathedral staff, Diocesan staff, governors, clergy, and my colleagues in the Academy Trusts, helping and supporting as appropriate.

Outside of work I enjoy spending time with family, friends and my two dogs Mario and Macey as well as travelling.

Welcome

Headteachers starting

Laura Watts – Lighthouse Federation

Zoe Warren – Dersingham VA Primary

Chris Edwards – Blundeston VC Primary

Alex Boothby – (Assoc. Headteacher) Beacon Federation

SIAMS congratulations

Congratulations to the following schools that have had their SIAMS inspections this term.

Excellent

Blundeston VC Primary

Good

Pulham VC Primary

Gillingham Primary Academy

Newton Flotman Primary Academy

Sutton VC Infant

Requires Improvement

Docking Primary Academy

REQM congratulations

Gold Award

Dereham Junior Academy

Corton VA Primary School

Silver

Whitefriars Academy

Farewell

Headteachers leaving

Maureen Burns (interim HT) – Lighthouse Federation

Sophie Stevens (Co-HT) – Harpley & Massingham Federation

Emily Sacre – Blue Sky Federation

Staff leaving

Anne Cottingham
Diocesan School Support Officer

Federations

Cawston/Trinity Federation name to be **Eden Federation** from September 2023

Global Neighbours

Bronze award

Blundeston VC Primary