



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON
EDUCATION SERVICE

ABLAZE

The A&B Newsletter for Primary & Secondary
RE Subject Leaders & Heads of Department



SPRING 2024

WELCOME

'The mission of schools is to develop a sense of truth, of what is good and beautiful.'
Pope Francis

Welcome again to the Spring edition of the Ablaze newsletter for Primary and Secondary RE Subject leaders and Chaplains.

As the days begin to lighten and lengthen and we see Easter on the horizon, we offer our Spring edition of the Ablaze newsletter - to support you to build school communities with Christ at the centre. As always, we try to include ideas, resources and information to help support you in this work. Please do not hesitate to contact us if there is any way that we can be of further support to you.

With our very best wishes and prayer,
The Education Team.

Anna Flood - Primary Catholic Life and RE Adviser

E: anna.flood@abdiocese.org.uk

Emma Sharp - Primary Catholic Life and RE Adviser

E: emma.sharp@abdiocese.org.uk

Dave Legrand - Secondary Catholic Life and RE Adviser

E: dave.legrand@abdiocese.org.uk

DIOCESE OF ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON PASTORAL PLAN

Bishop Richard has issued a new Pastoral Plan for the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton. The publication *The Word Who is Life: The Call to Mission* marks an important new stage in the development of diocesan parish structures, creating new pathways for apostolic mission and meeting the challenges of an increasingly secular society with renewed confidence and openness to the Holy Spirit.

In the coming months, the present eleven deaneries will be re-configured as parishes; priests and deacons will work together with one of the priests appointed Moderator. Speaking about *The Call to Mission* Canon Kieron O'Brien, Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Planning said: "By creating a 'community of communities' people across our diocese will have the opportunity to live out their faith in a way that is resilient, sustainable, and adaptable. Parish teams of priests will be able to cooperate more closely and serve the life-giving sacramental needs of their communities in a flexible way, bringing their many gifts to the service of the Church in mission. Each parish community will continue to have its own identity with each exercising their particular gifts and the whole becoming greater than the sum of its parts."

You can download the full and abridged versions of the Pastoral Plan below:

[Full version >>>](#)

[Abridged Version >>>](#)

Bishop Richard asks that every parish provides times of Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, leading to monthly Holy Hours. To support this, the diocesan Formation team is providing regular resources - including suggested scripture readings and intentions. Schools might like to consider how they may also use these resources and further support regarding Adoration will be shared at both the Primary Heads Conference and in the Prayer and Liturgy Directory training. The resources for January can be found below:

[Click here >>>](#)



THE
WORD
WHO
IS
LIFE

The Call to Mission

POPE FRANCIS' “PILGRIMS OF HOPE” JUBILEE & A YEAR OF PRAYER



Pope Francis is seeking to usher in a new era of hope as he invites the faithful across the world to participate in the 2025 “Pilgrims of Hope” Jubilee.

The 2025 Jubilee began in Advent 2023 and will run until the Feast of the Epiphany in 2026. Although this is a global celebration, Pope Francis invites dioceses throughout the world to mark the Jubilee in their own unique way. A Jubilee is a special year of grace, in which the Catholic Church offers the faithful the possibility of asking for a plenary indulgence – a remission of sins for themselves or deceased loved ones.

Year of Prayer In preparation for the 2025 “Pilgrims of Hope” Jubilee

Pope Francis has designated 2024 as a Year of Prayer. During this year, we are encouraged to deepen our commitment to prayer and to accompany others in their own prayer life, as well as going back to basics to reflect on why we pray. The year will have a special focus on the Our Father.

To support the year of prayer, as a diocese, we invite our schools to particularly focus on the Lord’s Prayer. This will be the focus of our Good Shepherd Celebration and we invite our schools to celebrate the Our Father Prayer by reproducing the Prayer in some of the different languages spoken by the pupils in your school community. We invite schools to create artistic representations of the Our Father

prayer in some – or all – the different languages spoken by their communities. You could create a laminated prayer card, small poster, a tapestry, clay tile etc. Be as creative as you wish and please bring one example along with you to the Good Shepherd Celebration to bring up as an offering in our Liturgy.

Some other ideas that you may wish to get involved with: Hold a regular prayer service in your school during the Year of Prayer • Organise a Walk for Creation in your school grounds. • Pray the Rosary as a school community, with each class praying a different decade. • Learn a sung or signed version of The Lord’s Prayer. • Create a Board of Hope: Ask pupils in your school to draw or write about what their hopes are for the future and put these on display to pray over during the Year of Prayer. Perhaps you could base it on the words of Pope Benedict XVI who said, “The one who has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of a new life”.





CATHOLIC SCHOOL INSPECTIONS

Please see the following from Philip Robinson, CSI Chief Inspector

Ofsted, the Prevention of Death order, and the Catholic Schools Inspectorate: Letter for schools

As many of you will be aware, the coroner concluded that the Ofsted inspection was a contributory factor in the tragic death of Ruth Perry. As a consequence, they have been issued with a Prevention of Future Deaths order. The report is available [here >>>](#)

Ofsted is obliged, in light of this, to state what actions it will take to prevent future deaths. It must do this before 7 February 2024. Ofsted has responded initially by suspending inspection and by providing all of its inspectors with mental health awareness training before inspections resume in the week beginning 22 January 2024. It has also committed to provide a full and detailed response to the coroner's recommendations by Friday 19 January. As well as the coroner's report, a number of other reports have been published in the last month or so that make recommendations for the future of school accountability systems, and of Ofsted in particular.

Three of the most significant are:

1. The NEU report, Beyond Ofsted, available [here >>>](#)
2. The Institute for Public Policy Research report, Improvement through Empowerment, available [here >>>](#)

3. The Institute for Government report, How could Ofsted and the Department for Education reform school inspections in England? [available here >>>](#)

This last report in particular is realistic about the complexity and extent of any reform to the accountability system for schools, but all three reports provide different and important perspectives on the future of accountability and statutory inspection of schools.

In this context of big questions about the future of inspection, we have been asked how the Catholic Schools Inspectorate should respond to all of this. First, it is our view that dioceses should not postpone scheduled inspections for this term, especially as the Ofsted pause is of a limited duration. Of course, individual dioceses may make their own decisions about the timing and scheduling of inspections over the next two terms, as long as they ensure that no school falls outside of the statutory window for inspection.

Second, as an inspectorate, we are confident that all of our inspectors already approach school leaders during inspection with compassion, humility and sensitivity. This is certainly part of the training they all receive, and we, and diocesan officers, will be reminding them to remember the pressures school leaders are under, especially during inspection. Of course, they must always report without fear or

favour, but honest and impartial inspection can and should still be carried out with empathy, respect and love.

Third, as an inspectorate, moving forward we will:

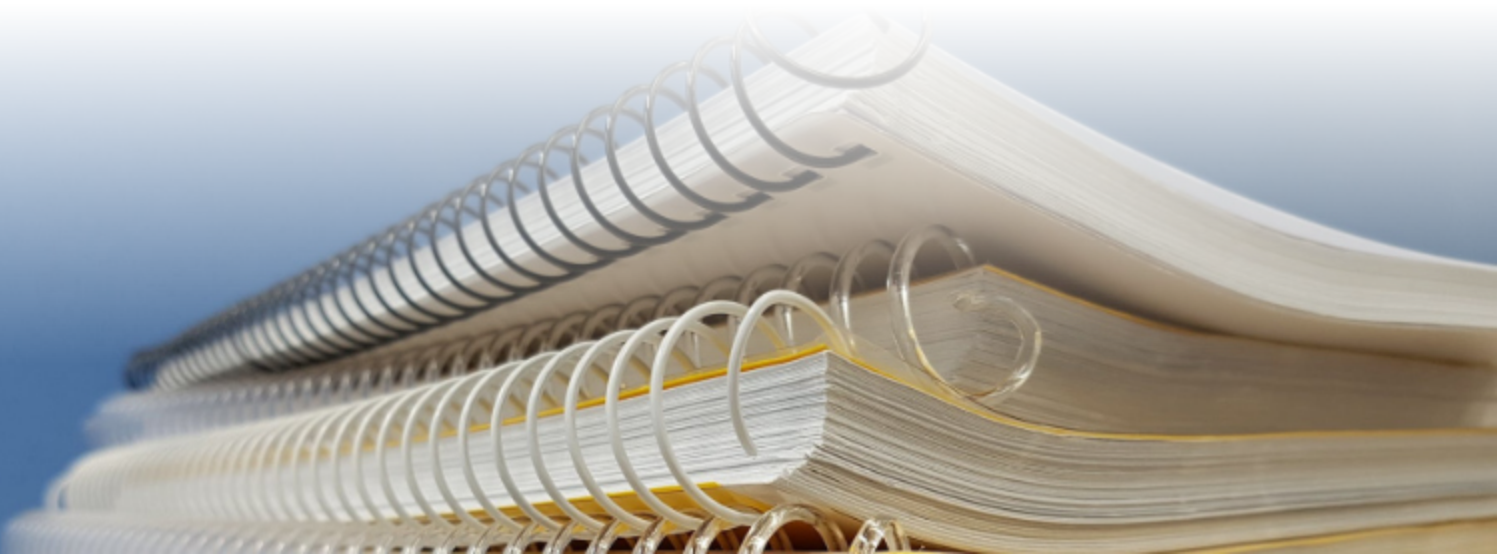
1. Explore, with Ofsted, the training they are providing for inspectors on recognising and supporting school leaders who are experiencing debilitating levels of stress during inspection and use it as the basis for future training we will provide for Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspectors nationally.
2. Amend future editions of the handbook to make clear that school leaders can share provisional inspection outcomes in confidence with those who are part of their wider support network, even if they do not work in the school, before the final report is shared with parents, as is the approach now with Ofsted. We already allowed the head teacher to share provisional outcomes with governors and relevant staff, but these additional allowances will be part of the training we provide for inspectors this term.
3. Extend all inspections, even inspections of small schools, to two days from September 2024 to ensure a greater reliability in inspection outcomes and to allow all schools to provide additional evidence on the second day of inspection, reducing the pressure on both school leaders and inspectors.
4. Attend carefully to the outcomes of the parliamentary enquiry into the work of Ofsted and to the response the DfE and Ofsted make to the reports already published while we discern – with diocesan officers and school and system leaders – what future iterations of our framework will look like. The outcome of the parliamentary enquiry will be published [here](#) as soon as it is available.

Please be assured that inspection is an act of service not of power and is an expression of the commitment of all those involved to ensuring the best education possible for the pupils in our Catholic schools. As an inspectorate we are deeply aware of how crucial Catholic school leaders are to the educational mission of the Church and inspection should always support, and not hinder, this vital apostolate.

**Message from Catherine Burnham,
A&B CSI Coordinator**

In light of this letter, we have made our own decisions about the timing and scheduling of inspections over the next two terms, which is permissible provided that no school falls outside of the statutory window for inspection. We have added an additional briefing for diocesan sponsored Inspectors – which took place on 23 January. This was mandatory for all inspectors and was recorded, to allow them to access this again ahead of their next inspection. This training had a focus on supporting the wellbeing of school leaders, and inspectors have also been directed to access the OFSTED training, which is in the public domain.

Catherine will also be attending the Primary RE Coordinator's Day on February 7 – to give feedback on Catholic School inspections in our Diocese.





PRAYER & LITURGY DIRECTORY

We have changed the delivery of the Prayer & Liturgy Directory training from in-person briefings to a webinar and we hope this news will be well received.

We recognise that coming out of school at the end of the day adds a further pressure to staff workload and we are confident that we can effectively deliver what we need to through a webinar. Anyone who had signed up for one of the four briefings has been notified and monies refunded.

The webinar will take place on **5 March** from **4.00-5.30pm** and it will be recorded so that anyone unable to attend can view it afterwards. Bishop Richard will also speak about the new Pastoral Plan and the opportunities this presents to schools. There will be the facility to submit questions beforehand which we will then seek to address during the webinar. The webinar is for Heads, Governors, Heads of RE and RE Leads, Chaplains, and Prayer & Liturgy Coordinators, as well as Clergy.

Sign up is on ChurchSuite using [this link >>>](#)
The link for the webinar will be sent out 24 hours in advance.

The Prayer and Liturgy Directory is available to download [here >>>](#)

Further and more extensive training on the Prayer and Liturgy Directory will also take place this academic year and will be for Prayer and Liturgy Coordinators. It will be held at Ladywell on **3 July 2024** and more details about this will be outlined in the webinar. [Sign up is open here >>>](#)



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DIRECTORY (RED)

The roll out and training for Years 1, 6 and 8 continues and we are delighted with how well the training has been received and continue to be so very impressed with all the hard work that schools have put into its implementation. A huge thank you to those schools who have generously shared ideas, work examples and resources – we will continue to share these through our RE Share Point.

The next training dates are as follows:

[Year 1 Branch 5 - Tuesday 5 March](#)
Cottesmore Golf and Country Club

[Year 6 Branch 5 – Wednesday 13 March](#)
Cottesmore Golf and Country Club

[Year 8 RED Meeting – Wednesday 13 March](#)
SPHC Crawley

[Year 1 Branch 6 - Wednesday 8 May, 9.30am -12.30pm](#)
Roffey Park

[Year 6 Branch 6 - Wednesday 8 May, 1.30-4.30pm](#)
Roffey Park

[Year 8 RED Meeting - Wednesday 8 May, 9.30am-12.30pm](#)
Roffey Park

[Year 2 Branch 1 - Wednesday 19 June, 9.30am-3.30pm](#)
Roffey Park

[Year 5 Branch 1 - Wednesday 19 June, 9.30am-3.30pm](#)
Roffey Park

[Year 8 RED Meeting - Wednesday 19 June 9.30-12.30pm](#)
Roffey Park



RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION

To continue to support our schools with RSE, we are again running our annual **RSE conference** on **7 March** at Cottesmore Golf and Country club. The day is open to RSE/PSE leads, headteachers, senior leaders and governors – or any other team member with responsibility or seeking support in this area. This year Ten:Ten are leading the morning session and will look at their approach to RSE: 'Created, Loved, Chosen'. We will review progress with the implementation of RSE in schools and share examples of best practice and strategies for resolving common issues and difficulties around the delivery and monitoring of the subject.

[Booking link here >>>](#)

LENT & EASTER



This year **Ash Wednesday** falls on **Wednesday 14 February** – coinciding with Valentine's day – and for many schools this falls in half term. Be sure to try and find time to discuss this important day and its meaning with children either before or after the break. There are some fun ideas and activities for you to try with the children or to share with parents on the [Catholic Toolbox blog](#) – including the idea of playing Lentopoly!

You may also wish to share some stories to help the children to understand the importance of the season:

Giving:

The Wordless Weaver by Claudia Cangilla McAdam is a beautifully illustrated legend about a young mute girl who weaves a beautiful gift for Jesus – to express the words she cannot say.

Prayer:

Listening to God by Katie Warner is a wonderful story to help young children learn to deepen their prayer lives in Lent by learning to listen to God's voice.

Repentance:

The Legend of the Thief who Stole Heaven is a beautifully told story of the thief who was crucified with Jesus and his story of repentance and the beautiful reward he receives for his faith.

You could also create a Lenten tradition of sending a Lenten journey bag home with different families each day of Lent – filled with a holding cross, a Lenten Journey diary, Easter stories, stations of the cross and prayer books – inviting them to share some Easter story books and share reflections of how they tried to live out their Lenten journey together. You could link it to one of the Catholic Social Teaching Principles that you are learning about in school e.g. Preferential option for the poor.





CAFOD

Cafod continue to produce excellent resources to support our schools – including their invitation to join them in their Big Lent Walk, Lent Liturgies and their Catholic Social Teaching resources:

[Click here >>>](#)



MISSIO AND MISSION TOGETHER

Missio and Mission Together also have excellent resources to support schools with Lent and Catholic Social Teaching and lots of prayer resources and videos for you to use with the children. A reminder that Missio and Mission together is our official Diocesan Charity for Lent.

[Click here >>>](#)





GOOD SHEPHERD CELEBRATION

Looking ahead to the summer and our annual Good Shepherd Celebration, this year it will return to **Worth Abbey** and take place on **Thursday 27 June** at 11.30am. As a result of this, we can return to our previous less restricted policy for numbers attending from each school – as we are not as limited in this larger celebration space.

You can book onto the Celebration [here >>>](#)

As mentioned above, the theme for this year will be the 'Our Father' prayer in response to the Pope's invitation for a year of prayer. As explained before, we ask all schools to explore the 'Our Father' prayer and celebrate it expressed in some – or all – of the different languages spoken by your school community. This could be in the form of illustrated prayer cards, posters, clay tiles, embroidery, graphics etc. and we invite you to bring along one of these versions of the prayer to bring up as an offering at our Good Shepherd celebration. We will share more details about the celebration with schools shortly – and also in the Summer edition of A Blaze.



Ten:Ten
Resources

Ten Ten Resources provide the diocesan recommended resources for the teaching of RSE. They also offer packages that include prayer and liturgy resources and also a comprehensive CPD programme for your staff and also some sessions for parents too. Find out more [here >>>](#)



THE MARK 10
Mission

Mark 10 Mission produce high quality, engaging, free weekly liturgies based on the Sunday Gospel that are suitable for use with young people and also Little Liturgies for KS1 children.

They have also produced some beautiful **Stations of the Cross** that could be used with the children or with families in Lent. [Click here >>>](#)



MARY'S MEALS

Mary's Meals is a wonderful charity that has one simple idea:

Mary's Meals' vision is that every child receives one daily meal in their place of education and that all those who have more than they need, share with those who lack even the most basic things. Working together with people who share our ideals, we believe that this vision can be achieved in this world where there is enough food for everyone.

Why not invite children to find out more about this Charity and maybe inspire them to do some fundraising of their own to support this wonderful charity. Find out more about them and their history and vision [here >>>](#)

Steve White from the Mary's Meals charity is going to speak at our Primary RE coordinators' day on 7 February to share some of the ways that supporting Mary's meals can help our children to live out Catholic Social Teaching principals.



OSCAR ROMERO AWARD

Working towards the Oscar Romero Award will support your school in realising and living the unique calling of a Catholic school to become an evangelising centre by empowering young people and staff to become true agents of the change they want to see in the world by putting their faith into action. It is an excellent way to evidence the impact of the Catholic life of the school and to support Catholic Social Teaching. Find out more [here >>>](#)

ACTRE

The Association of Teachers of Catholic Religious Education (ACTRE) serves those teaching RE in Catholic schools by providing high quality professional development and numerous opportunities for networking and collaboration. ACTRE are running their annual conference on Saturday 2nd March in London – with the theme 'Rethinking Catholic Social Teaching -with Keynote speakers Susan Elderfield and Raymond Friel. Book your place on the conference and find out more about ACTRE and what they offer [here >>>](#)



The God who Speaks project is a creative spiritual partnership between the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales and the Bible Society. "Each month a range of new resources are released for your Bible engagement – whether individually, as a family, an online community, parish or school, to share the scriptures wherever you are," says Bishop Peter Brignall, Chair of the God Who Speaks campaign.

KS2

Inspired by World Poetry Day, Bible Society and The God Who Speaks have created a poetry challenge for Key Stage 2. Engage your pupils with the Bible and develop their literary, scriptural and artistic gifts. Personification is a powerful poetic device which is used in 'Let the Scriptures Speak' to inspire the use of creative imagination in writing poetry. Used since ancient times, this device allows readers to understand philosophical concepts in an accessible and creative way. It draws us in, provides a hook and brings to life the words on the page.

'Let the Scriptures Speak' offers examples of Bible-based personification poetry where Scripture itself speaks! Pupils are encouraged to explore the poems to inspire their own personification poems based on the same stories and on a selection of other Bible stories. They are inviting schools to submit up to five poems and they will post them on their website and their social media channels. They also hope to create a book out of the best contributions. Please send the five best poems by your pupils to: poetrychallenge@biblesociety.org.uk

More information for teachers can be found [here >>>](#)

They also have a range of free downloadable posters to support schools with lots of different areas linked to scripture – including Citizenship in scripture. Find out more [here >>>](#)