



BRENTWOOD DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE

*“Supporting Catholic schools to provide excellent education where pupils flourish,
and Christ is made known to all.”*

Chairs News – Autumn term 2 November 2024

Dear Chair

Welcome back to the second half of the autumn term – always such a busy but joyful one as the Christmas season approaches.

This twice termly chair’s mailing is part of our commitment to support you and keep you up to date with education developments and good practice both locally and nationally. I hope you find this summary useful.

Diocese of Brentwood news

Prayer and Liturgy Resources

Missio-Mission Rosary-<https://missiontogether.org.uk/the-mission-rosary/>

Mark 10 Mission-Rosary Challenge <https://www.themark10mission.co.uk/the-little-liturgies>

CAFOD Season of Creation National Assembly

<https://cafod.org.uk/education/primary-teaching-resources/primary-school-assemblies/season-of-creation-assembly-for-ks2>

OFSTED

Inspections in the Diocese have now started where there is no single word overall grade of effectiveness. Section 8 and Section 5 inspections have taken place. There will be no deep dives for section 5 inspections except for maths and early reading. The tone of the inspection appears to be different. Schools are being notified on a Monday, and inspections on the Tuesday and Wednesday followed by feedback on the Wednesday. There have been in some weeks 3 inspections of Diocese schools in different locations. There are [links to webinars on the OFSTED](#) site and the Diocese have some training planned for Governors and Directors on the 6th November 24. The government intend to

introduce a school report card inspection from September 2025. The DFE will be consulting on the new system in the coming months.

New OFSTED handbook

This handbook came into force on 16 September 2024 and describes the main activities carried out during graded, ungraded and urgent inspections of maintained schools and academies in England under sections 5 and 8 of the Education Act 2005, respectively. It sets out the grade descriptors that inspectors use to make their judgements and on which they report. It applies to school inspections under the [education inspection framework \(EIF\)](#).

OFSTED have produced a [webinar on the changes](#)

[OFSTED handbook](#)

Catholic School Inspection (CSI)

As you know, Catholic School Inspections in the Brentwood Diocese commenced in January 2023. There have been a number of changes made to the OFSTED inspection handbook. However, the CSI handbook has not moved away from worded grading and overall effectiveness. There was a long consultation by CSI and any changes require the Bishops' approval, so there will be no rush to make changes. There is one change to the [CSI handbook](#) as to who can be informed of a CSI inspection. The Headteacher can tell family and staff but it should remain confidential until the report is published. The biggest change is to compliance.

Updated Bishops' Memorandum of Understanding on the Appointment of Staff in Catholic Schools - approved September 2024

As is clear in the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) the updated version does not include any additional requirements to those in the 2014 version, it simply sets out the requirements in a way which reflects the organisation of Catholic schools today. This version will be available on the CES website shortly.

[Nature Park East of England](#)

This DFE initiative is "to support educational settings from EYFS up to Further Education to improve biodiversity across their school sites. This is a project the Department of Education has created, with the Natural History Museum heading up the programme. This programme links and supports the DfE Sustainability and Climate Change strategy. The hope is that all the school grounds across England, where schools create more green spaces from grey spaces, will equate to twice the size of Birmingham. Therefore, it would be great to get as many schools as possible on board with the project. There are lots of resources on the website for all ages and it gives a clear step by step guide on signing up,

recording their site boundary on the wider map and then they can map any habitats on their school site. This will also give them the opportunity to plan **how they wish to improve biodiversity on their school sites.**

Curriculum and Assessment Review

The Curriculum and Assessment Review has been set up to review the national curriculum and statutory assessment system in England, including qualification pathways. It will consider children and young people's education and experiences from ages 5 to 19. Further details about the Review's aims, its terms of reference and working principles can be found [here](#).

The government is inviting people to share their views on potential improvements to the curriculum and assessment system in England.

https://www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/improving-the-curriculum-and-assessment-system?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=02902886-345d-4c36-8e41-7e13ad7ac931&utm_content=daily

Diocesan Scheme of Delegation (September 2024)

Please see below the link to the new updated Diocesan Scheme of Delegation for Multi-Academy Trusts. (All documents are within the 'Related links section of the page)

<https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/school-governance-2/> **Please note that there is no provision for co-opted Governors in the new scheme of delegation.**

BDES Team News

Cathy McKenna our Diocesan Secondary Adviser is planning to retire at the end of the academic year in August 2025. In due course we will be advertising for her successor and the advert is likely to start to run after October half term. Please watch out in the Friday mailings for more information on this. In the meantime we are of course very grateful for the work that Cathy does and we are confident that it will be business as usual until she retires. We are also going through a process for the appointment of a new Primary Link Adviser which we expect to conclude on 23rd October. We will update you in due course if an appointment is made.

Governor Development

Upcoming Training and Events - for all training and events see website <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/events/>

Booking via links on website.

NEW: Preparing for Ofsted – 6 November 2024 (17:00-18:30)

It is important that governors and directors understand the process for Ofsted inspections and their involvement in ensuring the school is working under the framework. This webinar gives an overview of the role of Ofsted, the criteria on which schools will be assessed and the expectations of governance.

By the end of the session governors and directors will be able to:

- Know the context of the inspection process
- Understand how governors can prepare for inspection and provide evidence of their impact on school improvement

Facilitators: Cathy McKenna, Secondary Schools Link Adviser and Grace Corry, Primary Link Adviser

[To book your place](#)

Reserved post appointments in Catholic Primary schools 29 November 24

This course will cover

- Application form;
- Supporting statement;
- Shortlisting process; and
- Interview day and tasks.

Speakers are: Maria Shepherd, Diocesan Deputy Director of Education and Grace Corry, Diocesan Primary School Link Adviser.

To register for this course please complete the online booking form using this [link](#).

Induction - Being an Effective Governor in a Catholic School

As well as in-school induction, it is important that new governors attend Induction training to gain confidence and knowledge of their role within a Catholic setting.

Diocesan Induction training consists of two modules and the expectation is that governors attend both to complete their induction training. **Whilst it is preferable to attend Module 1 first, they can be done in any order.**

NEW DATE: Module 1: The Distinctive Nature of Catholic Schools – Monday 9 December 2024 (17:00-18:30)

This module explores the distinctive ethos of church schools and the role of governance within a Catholic setting.

Booking: [To book your place](#)

Module 2: An Introduction to the Roles and Responsibilities of Governors – Monday 20th January 25 (17:00-18:30)

This module will help governors gain confidence and knowledge of the 3 core functions of governance and share good practice.

Booking: [To book your place](#)

NEW DATE: Role of Trustees in a Catholic MAT

This webinar on **Tuesday 11 February 2025** (17:30-19:00) is a short course intended for those new to the trustee role within a Catholic MAT (CMAT) or as a refresher for trust boards as part of their ongoing training requirements.

The training will cover:

- What are the basics of good governance?
- How Trust Boards work
- The core functions of a Catholic multi academy trust board
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Facilitator: Stephen Adamson, Diocesan MAT Development Officer

[To book your place](#)

NEW DATE: CSI for Governors

How do you as governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school, RE and collective worship, prayer and liturgy?

Important changes to the CSI Handbook came into effect in September 2024. This webinar on **Thursday 13 February 2025** (17:30-19:00) will outline the key information for governors to develop their understanding of the Catholic School Inspection (CSI) process - so that they can effectively play their part in preparing for inspection and during inspection.

The aim of this course is to gain a greater knowledge and understanding of the role of governors in relation to the Catholic Life of the School, RE and Prayer and Liturgy:

- The distinctive nature of Catholic education

- Expectations in relation to Classroom RE
- Expectations in relation to Catholic Life
- Expectations in relation to Prayer and Liturgy

Facilitator: Maria Shepherd, Deputy Director of Education

[To book your place](#)

Webinars on Premises Related Issues

Four webinars are being run for governors and trustees next academic year on premises related issues. Please see details below and note the dates for your diaries:

NEW DATE: School Building and Premises Training – Autumn 2 – Statutory Compliance Guidance

This is running on **Tuesday 19 November 2024 (16:00-17:30)** and is suitable for headteachers, school business managers and governors (maintained schools and academies).

The course will explain how to use the [DfE's Compliance Excel spreadsheet](#) to ensure your premises comply with H&S regulations and are properly maintained. Using this spreadsheet will enable easy sharing of information with SLT, governors and diocese.

[To book your place](#)

NEW DATE: School Building Premises Training – Spring 1 - Using DfE Good Estate Management for Schools (GEMS) for Governance

This is running on **Wednesday 22 January 2025 (16:00-17:30)** and is designed specifically for governors and trustees (maintained schools and academies).

This is an introduction for governors to a really useful government website "[GEMS](#)" that contains lots of great information to help ensure your school buildings are being properly developed and maintained.

[To book your place](#)

REPEAT WEBINAR: School Building Premises Training – Spring 2 – Schools Governance Responsibilities in Managing Asbestos

This is running on **Tuesday 11 March 2025 (16:00-17:30)** and is for chairs of governors and governors with responsibility for premises issues (maintained schools and academies).

An important course for governors, particularly chairs of governors and those in H&S roles. This course will explain what documentation schools need to have in place (Asbestos Management Plan and Register), the importance of processes to ensure those at risk from asbestos are provided information and sign that they have seen it. Clarity over who is responsible for managing asbestos in Diocese of Brentwood schools, how often to commission an asbestos resurvey and the required training for responsible persons and duty holders and where to access this.

[To book your place](#)

Online Learning

Gift-ED

The Gift-ED library of online courses, supporting governors in their role, has been funded for 4 years but [there is now a subscription for this valuable training](#).

You will not be able to access Gift-ED courses without a subscription. **Does your school subscribe?** Completed order forms should be returned to info@anspear.com

Governor Recruitment

Foundation Governor Vacancies

Foundation governor vacancies are advertised through the Diocesan website. As well as running periodic foundation governor recruitment campaigns through the local parishes, we also work with *Governors for Schools* and *Inspiring Governance* (please note that the *Inspiring Governance* service ends in September 2024) to identify suitable governors for our schools.

Conflicts of Interest

Please note the criteria for becoming a foundation governor.

<https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/departments/education/school-governance-2/foundation-governor-2/>

We have asked clerks to make it clear where there are foundation governor vacancies so we can support schools in filling these positions. If your school is not showing and you need support in filling a foundation governor vacancy, please get in touch. [Current list of Foundation Governor vacancies - October 2024](#)

Schools looking to recruit governors may also be interested in [our flyer](#) to distribute to parents and the local Catholic community. Get in touch if you would like a word version so you can adapt the flyer for your school.

DFE Update

Share your daily school attendance data: The information that schools must provide the Department for Education (DfE) at [Share your daily school attendance data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

UPDATED - Working together to improve school attendance: Guidance for schools, academy trusts, governing bodies and local authorities on maintaining high levels of school attendance, including roles and responsibilities – this guidance is now mandatory, available at [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Share your daily school attendance data: *The information that schools must provide the Department for Education (DfE) at [Share your daily school attendance data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)*

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners: *Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers at [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=6e9fac87-d93f-4d84-9dea-6ff45940ed45&utm_content=immediately

Latest Research and Resources

The Sutton Trust's says equal access to top-performing schools is crucial for enhancing social mobility.

Earlier this year the Sutton Trust published its latest research into the socioeconomic mix of pupils in the top performing comprehensive schools. The results were stark. In essence, students who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) are less likely to attend a top-performing comprehensive than their more affluent peers, even if there is one in the local area. [Selective-Comprehensives-2024.pdf \(suttontrust.com\)](#)

The Law Commission published on 8 the October a [consultation paper on disabled children's social care law](#), as part of a review to ensure it is fairer, simpler and more up to date.

Concerns surrounding SEND provision in mainstream schools

There has been a 25% increase in the number of pupils with education, health and care plans (EHCP) receiving support in specialist resource provisions (SRP) or SEND units in mainstream schools over the past six years. This is according to a [Tes analysis of DfE data](#).

With the increasing role of SEND units and SRP the government is being urged by key sector voices to investigate how mainstream schools are using additional provision to support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) amid concerns about a lack of oversight and guidance.

NGA's [Annual Governance Survey](#) also revealed an increase in SEND demands, with the proportion of boards identifying support for children with special educational needs as a top challenge has risen dramatically to 37%, from 25% in 2022.

New Edurio report: High quality, inclusive education

A recent [Edurio report](#), focusing on education quality and inclusion, highlights a decline in pupil happiness and an increase in staff violence in schools. Pupil levels of interest in learning and overall happiness have significantly worsened, with only 47% of pupils feeling very or quite happy at school. Additionally, the report reveals a decline in respect from pupils towards staff, with a record-high proportion of staff **experiencing violence**.

While the report highlighted areas of concern, it also identified positive trends. Pupils are more engaged in reading for studies and extracurricular activities, and staff perceive increased support from the school for lesson planning, marking, and assessment.

Survey reveals impact of cyber security

Just over one third (34%) of schools and colleges in England have experienced a cyber incident during the last academic year, with 20% not recovering immediately and 4%

taking more than one half term. This is [according to a new poll by Ofqual](#) **who** are highlighting the risks associated with poor cyber security.

Other findings revealed that cyber incidents in schools were mostly due to phishing attacks and security breaches which resulted in lost coursework and missing staff resources. In addition, one in three teachers reported not having had cyber security training this year

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