

By **Nigel Genders**, Chief Education Officer for the Church of England and **Paul Barber**, Director of the Catholic Education Service

Today the Government announces its partner providers for the reformed National Professional Qualifications (NPQ) for aspiring education



the autumn. We are delighted that, among nine national providers, is
Service.

The new frameworks for NPQs is an expansive vision for the whole education sector, and we are pleased that the Government has recognised the strengths of our shared vision for children and adults to flourish, and we are enormously excited to be working together at a pivotal moment across the education sector.

Together the Catholic Church and Church of England, run more than a third of all the country's schools and play a particularly rich role in the wider education landscape.

Our delivery of these qualifications will be across all parts of the country, from Northumberland to Cornwall, from Herefordshire to East Anglia. We will be working with a fantastic range of delivery partners – Teaching School Hubs, Multi Academy Trusts and high performing schools – in each region, and we look forward to welcoming many thousands of teachers and leaders onto the suite of NPQ programmes in the coming years.

And our offer is not just for our own schools, but for everyone, with a particular focus on ensuring that rural school leaders can access and benefit from the programmes. At a local level, this will mean exciting new partnerships between schools, MATs and other networks. At a national level, it will enable us to play our full role in investing heavily in the thing we know the evidence shows makes the biggest difference – our core purpose as leaders – leading a culture of teacher excellence.

The new NPQ frameworks are built from a rich, evidence-informed understanding of what works in school leadership, and they create a clear pathway for teachers' formation over their whole careers. The coherence and clarity of the national roll-out of the Early Career Framework (ECF) reforms, the re-shaping of the Senior Leadership (NPQSL), Headship (NPQH) and Executive Leadership (NPQEL) programmes, and the creation of new specialist qualifications for aspiring school leaders can give us real confidence about a professional development entitlement that works for leaders in all schools – small and large, primary and secondary, rural and urban.

This is a step-change in leadership thinking. which is not seeking simply a more productive workforce, or a deeper academic understanding of



the purpose – leading a culture of teacher excellence.

Providing these NPQ programmes across the country gives us a unique opportunity to place teacher excellence at the heart of our recovery from the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic. This central focus on culture will be key to our delivery, and on every course, every leader will be working closely with an expert coach to explore and plan how to apply knowledge effectively into a variety of contexts.

Dylan Wiliam expresses this eloquently in his 2016 book 'Leadership for Teacher Learning' – saying “...the main job of school leaders is to improve the work performance of those they lead. Other things that leaders do will have an impact on the learning of the students in the schools they lead...but the size of impacts are small in comparison to the impact of developing classroom practice of teachers in those schools.”

Whether teaching a mixed-age class in a small rural primary school, or leading a large MAT across a region or nation, our first call in educational leadership is to put teaching first. Although there are many other aspects of our roles, these can sometimes cloud or distract us from this core purpose – to secure the very best teaching experience for every child in our care. And that means leadership built on authenticity, integrity and a renewed sense of vision and purpose.

In 2016, the Church of England published its [Vision for Education](#), articulating a focus on Wisdom, Knowledge & Skills, Hope & Aspiration, Community & Living Well Together and Dignity & Respect. Putting this vision into practice starts with leaders who build a culture of teacher excellence. Similarly, in 2018 the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales commissioned the *Formatio* initiative to support the development and formation of leaders in Catholic schools. As such it should come as no surprise as to why we are so pleased to be playing our part in the new NPQ landscape.

Creating and sustaining such a culture means we can fully realise our vision for education for every child, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Through pursuing excellence in teaching and working together for the common good, we will be enacting social justice for every community.

Read more

- [Church of England to provide National Professional Qualification for school leadership in partnership with Catholic Church](#)
- [Government announcement](#) (gov.uk)
- [Church of England NPQ programmes](#)

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