



which calls for a major shift in its engagement with the sector.□

The report, *Vocation, Transformation & Hope*, highlights three themes, exploring how FE makes a significant difference to people's sense of vocation, their personal transformation, and their hope for society. The high-quality skill-based education of FE is also the basis for the future development of our economy including the new technology sector and emerging services industries.

The Report notes that there are□almost 2.2 million students enrolled in 168 FE Colleges, with nearly twice as many 16-18-year-olds as in school sixth-forms. The Church is nonetheless underrepresented in that sector, in contrast to its extensive links with schools and universities.

It recommends that making effective partnerships with colleges should become a core part of the Church's own planning, together with developing support for students, for community links and for chaplaincy. FE Colleges are anchor institutions for the local community, bringing



The vision therefore challenges the Church to reimagine its support for chaplaincy provision, one of the major ways in which it says that churches have reached out to staff and students, offering pastoral care, exploring issues of faith, belief and spirituality. Chaplains play a vital role in supporting student wellbeing and mental health and walking alongside those facing grief and loss.

The report asks each diocese to look at how partnerships with local colleges can become part of its everyday thinking, exploring new collaborations and work together. It recommends that, at a national level, the Church considers the possibilities of forming a group of colleges as part of this wider collaboration.

The Church of England's Chief Education Officer, Nigel Genders, said:

“Further education colleges are vital institutions within communities which transform the lives of individuals, train our nation’s essential workers and chances.



“This is a positive vision of how the Church of England will contribute to the flourishing of further education - an area where we have previously had a lack of systematic engagement, but which is a key part of our educational and social landscape.

“Our vision for further education encourages appreciation of the dynamic nature of the sector, its impact upon individual lives and its valuable contributions to society, while challenging church leaders to see the sector in a new light, one in which God is already actively present.

“We also want to encourage churches to take practical steps to affirm and speak up for those who work and learn within further education, and this vision points to ways in which this can happen, especially in a post-Covid world.

“I hope that through local engagement between dioceses and FE colleges we can help to address key issues in the sector such as mental health and wellbeing, and to develop lasting relationships between churches and colleges.”

The new report sits along alongside the Church of England’s visions for schools and higher education, [Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good](#) (2016) and [Faith in Higher Education](#) (2020). Together, they represent a restatement of the value the Church places on education at every level, inspired by Christian faith.

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*Nigel Genders - Chief Education Officer*

## More information

- [Read the new Vision for Further Education](#)

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