

GENERAL SYNOD

**THE CHURCH SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE – CHADWICK REPORT:
A report from the Board of Education**

Progress since March 2012

Background

1. The National Society launched the **Church School of the Future Review** in September 2011 with an online questionnaire which went to all Church of England schools, Diocesan Boards of Education teams and a range of other interested parties. The survey was followed up with a series of detailed interviews with representatives of different constituencies connected to the Church school world.
2. *The Church School of the Future Report* known as the Chadwick Report after the Chair, Dr Priscilla Chadwick, was published in March 2012. The purpose of the Review was to assess the challenges to the Church of England school system in the contemporary education landscape. Especially the Review attempted to evaluate the impact of recent policy directions, especially the growth of academies, and provide some direction for future action by the Church. The Synod debated the received a paper and the Report itself. The debate in July 2012 endorsed the report as a basis for policy development over next 5 years.

Challenges to the Church school system

- Change of rationale for the academy programme: ‘freedom’ from LA control, ‘forced’ conversions for failing schools
- Diocesan sponsorship: meeting the demand for school improvement capability
- Responding to ‘forced conversions’: DBE default sponsor
- Decline of Local Authority funding and services
- Threats to Religious Education

3. A detailed two year implementation plan was developed around the 26 recommendations of the Report. **The Jerusalem Trust** and **the Church Schools Fund** grants, which had supported the Review itself, also enabled the use of consultants to manage specific aspects of the Plan. The funding continues until July 2014 when the most significant work streams will be absorbed into the day to day work of the Society and Division.
4. The recommendations follow the main chapters of the report. A summary report of action so far; can also be found on the Church of England website. The following sections provide more detail on the most important strands of work.

Re-engineering DBEs

5. To meet the challenges identified in the report significant elements of the diocesan education offer need reshaping and bringing up to a high level of operation. In the review this was often expressed as needing greater resource, and there are indeed resource implications. However there are other steps that can be taken and should be taken to make diocesan education

structures and staffing fit for purpose. Other developments, including diocesan Multi-Academy trusts also have their part to play.

6. There is a cluster of recommendations regarding Diocesan Boards of Education, spelling out some of the detail, and a Working Party met a number of times to create a toolkit for dioceses to help them with the task of reconstruction. The membership of the Working Party included Diocesan Directors of Education and Chairs of Boards of Education, Diocesan Secretaries and head teachers. Their report A DBE for the Future was published in July 2013.
7. The starting point for the document is the conviction that schools must be fully integrated into the mission of the diocese. The full text examines the way that can become a reality, including creating structures that enable greater efficiency and accountability. Appendices provide sample job descriptions for key roles, guidance on reducing the size of the DBE, a model of school improvement partnerships based on successful practice across the country.
8. At the heart of A DBE for the Future is the **self-evaluation framework** designed to drive increasing effectiveness through review. Constant improvement is the standard expectation in schools. The Working Party believes that must also be the target for Diocesan team and Boards. The Framework is summarised at the beginning of the document as Ten Marks of a High Performing DBE.

10 Marks of a high performing DBE

1. Clear statement of diocesan commitment to education
2. Regular scrutiny of education by Bishop's Staff and Synod
3. Over 90% diocesan schools to be rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted and SIAMS
4. Sufficient resources for DBE to deliver its strategic plan / employ experienced professional staff
5. Effective data analysis driving support for schools
6. High quality training for RE and worship
7. Governance and leadership deemed good or better in all schools; high quality foundation governors
8. All schools grouped in appropriate collaborative structures for mutual challenge and support
9. High quality training for clergy, ministry teams and governors
10. The DBE self-review framework is used to develop a culture of continuous improvement

9. The Archbishop of Canterbury hosted a significant **Seminar for diocesan bishops** and Chairs of DBEs in July 2012 at which A DBE for the Future was launched. Diocesan Directors had already enthusiastically received it and Diocesan Secretaries had expressed interest in the process of self-review. Following the Lambeth Seminar the process has been recommended to every diocese as a means of making sure the DBE is carrying out its functions effectively. That is the proper basis for any consideration of the level of resourcing made available through the diocesan budget. The motion before Synod seeks to encourage each diocese to plan for a significant review of the education provision based on the self-review framework.

Issues in Religious Education and *The Christianity Project*

10. The Church School of the Future Report expressed great anxiety about Religious Education in all schools. It identified a number of threats and recommended action on the part of the Church of England. In the intervening 16 months one element has receded but the rest has

been confirmed.

11. The absolute place of English Baccalaureate subjects in the accountability of secondary schools has been downgraded in favour of a ranking system based on student performance over their 8 best results at GCSE. This confirms the value of RE alongside other subjects. (In fact the expected drop in numbers sitting GCSE RE has not materialised. There has been some shift between Short Course and Full Course GCSE entries but numbers have largely held up.)
12. The concern has instead shifted to the **training of specialist teachers** of RE and the amount of subject training received by primary teachers. The reduction of places and the removal of bursaries for PGCE RE combined with the shift to placing an increasing proportion of teacher training place in schools is having a damaging effect on the preparedness of teachers to teach RE.
13. Recently Ofsted published the latest of its subject reports on RE: *Religious Education: realising the potential* which confirmed that RE is in serious trouble. The quality of teaching in 60% of schools across the country is judged to 'require improvement'. There are widespread issues of teacher understanding, for example, of the purposes of RE or the nature of progress in RE. The teaching of Christianity is particularly singled out for criticism, suggesting that from the evidence of the survey teaching about Christianity is 'one of the weakest aspects of RE provision'¹.
14. Ofsted reports on RE in community and voluntary controlled schools, thus covering about half of all Church schools. Voluntary aided (VA) schools, and academies on the VA model are not included but the likelihood is that many of the issues raised in the Ofsted report are also present in VA Church schools.
15. The National Society Council has commissioned a survey of **Teaching and Learning in RE** in Church of England schools to provide evidence of standards in RE. The costs of the survey are being met from grants to the NS for the development of RE. It is extremely good that Alan Brine HMI, who holds the RE brief at Ofsted and is the author of '*Realising potential*' has agreed to manage the Review. A number of respected SIAMS inspectors will be visiting a sample of 30 primary and 30 secondary schools during Spring 2014 using an agreed recording format which will explore with schools a range of questions about how RE is organised and supported in the school. Alan Brine will prepare a report for the NS Council which will guide the allocation of resources to RE over the next 5 years.
16. The National Society also determined to meet the challenge to improve the teaching of Christianity, which had been flagged up in independent research for some years. *The Christianity Project* is the result: the creation of a new online resource for teaching Christianity in Church schools. A private donor, William Salomons, underwrote the first year's programme, which covered the research phase and the development of the structure across three Key Stages. The second year of the *Project* has been cofounded by William Salomons and the NS and Chadwick related grants. The target date for all the material to be online and accessible for teachers is Summer 2014.
17. The units will be available for all teachers in Church schools to use and diocesan advisors will be working with them to develop the exciting and effective ways of using the materials in different contexts. Given the criticism of standards in teaching Christianity in all schools we

¹ P9 para 4

would like to develop the capacity to make the Project materials available to non-Church schools as well.

18. The rationale for the *Project* is that all children, of all faiths and none, should be offered the opportunity for a serious engagement with the Christian faith. That is the way schools participate in the mission of the church, as expressed in **Going for Growth**:
 - i. ‘The Church... is called to work towards every child having a life enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ’²
 - ii. There is no expectation of commitment but learning about and engaging with the faith is a necessary pre-requisite for commitment especially for children and young people whose only experience of church is through the school.
19. The material is organised round the core theological concepts of Creation, Incarnation and Salvation, which are encountered through the Biblical narrative through all key stages, with other concepts being added at various stages: Gospel, Prophecy, Old (or First) and New Covenant, Fall. Woven through each element is the exploration of the expression of belief in worship and discipleship, and at various points how Christian history has been shaped and how the many expressions of Christian community connect with each other and with the central narrative.
20. The recently issued **Statement of Entitlement: Religious Education in Church of England Schools** lists the outcomes for pupils that ought to flow from good Church school RE. It includes being able to
 - Think theologically and explore ultimate questions
 - Develop the skills to analyse, interpret and apply the Bible text
 - Make a well informed response to Christianity

The *Project* materials have been developed with these and other outcomes in mind.

21. So far the approach and aspirations have been well received by secondary specialists, diocesan advisors and teachers. Some small scale trialling of units will take place during the Spring term to adjust methodology but the level of demand will not be compromised however much of a step up it is from where teachers currently pitch their lessons.

The theme of **Creation** carries through each Key Stage with approaches and emphases building on each other.

Yr 1 & 2: the creation story; Christians caring for the world; Harvest festival

Yr 3 & 4: creation, temptation and Fall; St Columba, living in community with creation

Yr 5 & 6: Stewardship, living simply, sharing the world’s resources more fairly

Yr 7, 8 & 9: Creation and the Big Bang, where do science and religion meet? creation of human life: when does life begin?

22. The third year of the *Project* will focus on dissemination and training for teachers. Discussions are taking place with an established project based in Oxford University

² **Going for Growth** 5.2

Department of Education developing teacher training materials to enable it to use *The Christianity Project* materials as the basis for improving subject knowledge of Christianity.

Clergy training

23. The Working Group picking up the recommendation encouraging much more focused preparation for clergy during the relevant stages of their training is chaired by the Bishop of Huntingdon, Rt Revd David Thomson. There has been some engagement with initial ministerial education through the Common Awards process and the group has produced a statement of the knowledge and skills need by clergy to enable them to relate to schools (and not only Church schools) as arenas of mission.
24. Many dioceses overhauled their continuing ministerial education following the Dearing Report to include some sessions on schools, children and youth. Mostly these are staffed or resourced by diocesan education officers or head teachers. There is much good practice, well established links with diocesan children and youth officers and schools teams. As is often the case however it is dependent on good will and the interest of particular officers. There is no consistency across dioceses or courses and the voluntary nature means that many are being ordained with little or no understanding of the place of schools in their parish ministry.
25. The value of spending time in a school has been heavily stressed to the group, including by the Chair of the Board himself. The proposal included in the motion before Synod is that all ordinands should have a genuine school related experience during training. The objectives would be several:
 - to get under the skin of a school and understand the priorities and pressures
 - to see what a good Church school looks and feels like and how the Christian foundation is expressed in the day to day life of the staff and students
 - to begin to develop skills needed for devising and leading worship in schools
 - to begin to develop an ecclesiology and missiology with schools as key components

This already happens in many courses but often as an elective activity. The proposal would seek to establish it as the norm for every person in training.

Every diocese to designate **Training Schools** offering

- high quality parish school engagement
- good RE
- superb worship
- strong foundation governors

for short or long placements, or a range of single sessions for clergy and Readers in training, and Lay training.

Streamlining central organisation

26. Recommendations 17 – 20 of the *Church School of the Future* address how the national education function is most effectively organised. The original charitable body set up to build and promote Church schools was the **National Society**. 200 years later the NS is still funding and supporting the work of Church schools, providing a substantial amount of finance out of its own resources to contribute to the cost of the national schools team in the Education Division at Church House and a range of projects for which it has sought external funding.

The NS is a National Church Institution and, like the other NCIs, is a joint employer of national staff.

27. The Society has a Royal Charter and its governing body is the NS Council. The NS has and retains its remit for the **Church in Wales** and so the Archbishop of Wales is a Vice President and the Bishop of St Asaph and Welsh members sit on the Council. The formal links with the Church of England are represented by the Presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Vice Presidency of the Archbishop of York and by elected and appointed members of the Council.
28. Ever since the creation of the Church Assembly in 1919 there has been an issue over how best the National Society should interact with the other national institutional structures of the Church of England. The Assembly set up an Advisory Committee for Education in 1919. Several name changes later that has evolved into the **Board of Education**, which since 1999 has been a sub-committee of the Archbishops' Council. The Archbishops' Council contributes to the funding of the Education Division with money provided by the dioceses through vote 2. The division's remit includes children and youth work, higher and further education and adult education/ lay discipleship as well as schools.
29. Since the 1970s the National Society and the Board have had the same chair and chief officer. This has helped to reduce duplication of effort. But the Chadwick Review noted that the existence of the Society and the Board continued to cause some confusion among key stakeholders. The Report recommended that the structure, constitution and purpose of the Church of England's central educational work should be revised to meet the changing demands on schools, parishes and the wider Church in a more efficient and coherent way.
30. Specifically recommendation 17 suggests that the Board and the National Society Council should
 - **'Develop and discuss with relevant stakeholders proposals for creating a single organisation representing the Church of England's interest in schools.'**

Recommendations 18 – 20 follow with specific proposals for the reform of the NS Council and funding arrangements.

31. In reality the Education Division at Church House, led by the Chief Education Officer, already constitutes a single, integrated team. Its role might in future be more clearly understood if it were known as the 'Church of England's Education Office.' The continued existence of the Society and the Board does, however, contribute to
 - 'Brand confusion' especially when compared to the Catholic Education Service (CES) or academy chains and groups
 - Some duplication of time, work and costs in servicing two sets of meeting
 - Cumbersome, overlarge member level bodies (despite the recent simplification exercise) with representative membership not necessarily having relevant skills or expertise.
32. Work is now underway to identify a sensible way forward. The National Society will continue to exist (as a registered charity there would be a number of difficulties in winding it up) and to have a remit for England and Wales. Despite growing divergence between England and Wales on educational issues there continues to be a common core of work with both Anglican Churches. Areas such as inspection, school improvement and the provision of

specialist support on legislation and support for Welsh DDEs are still necessary and similar.

33. By contrast the Board of Education does not hold assets or employ staff. The body corporate is and will remain the Archbishops' Council. The Council has given its agreement to exploring whether, in the context of changes to the membership of the National Society and a new formal document between the Council and the National Society on roles and responsibilities, it might, after 2015, no longer need to have a sub committee for education.
34. Further discussion will develop detailed proposals which the NS Council and the Archbishops' Council will refine and test in the course of 2014 before decisions are taken.

Conclusion

35. The Chadwick Report has already had a major influence, bringing a measure of coherence to the work in dioceses and the centre, increasing the level of collaboration between partners old and new, and developing confidence that the Church of England can continue to be influential in a new educational landscape. The specific endorsement of Synod will add an important level of authority to the continuing work.

Rt Revd John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford
Chair of the National Society Council and the Board of Education

21 October 2013

Motion:

'That Synod, affirming the crucial importance of the Church of England's engagement with schools for its contribution to the common good and to its spiritual and numerical growth:

- (a) **Urge dioceses, in the light of *A DBE for the Future*, to complete the self evaluation framework within twelve months and thereby review their support for schools;**
- (b) **Invite dioceses to draw up plans for promoting the widest possible use of the new *Christianity Project* materials in church and other schools**
- (c) **Request the Ministry Council to consider and report to Synod in 2014 how training for lay and ordained ministers can include more school related experience**
- (d) **Invite the Archbishops' Council to report to the Synod by February 2015 the outcome of its discussions with the National Society on the national governance proposals made by the Chadwick Report.'**

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