

Appendix 3: Towards a policy for rural schools

Ten questions for the DBE about their rural schools

Whilst acknowledging the distinctiveness of each diocese and the need for local context to be taken into account, the working group offers these questions as a starting point for each diocese to consider as it forms its own policy for rural schools. Such a policy needs to be set within a wider framework of ensuring that there is high quality sustainable education for all of the children in its schools?

1	How do schools fit into the diocese's wider vision for its rural communities?
2	How does the DBE determine where its own resources are deployed (is it based on number of schools, number of pupils, Ofsted outcomes, SIAMS, something else)?
3	What criteria are used to determine the future sustainability of individual schools? How should this be developed?
4	How will the DBE use the school's self-review to weigh the quality of provision and whether the school is viable, sustainable and essential as part of the diocese's education offer?
5	How does the DBE develop and maintain the distinctiveness of its school provision in rural communities and are the foundation governor places filled with suitably equipped people?
6	What mechanisms exist/need to be developed in order to encourage and support schools to work in formal collaborations?
7	Does/should the DBE offer preferred models for collaboration: MATs, Federations etc.?
8	How does the DBE encourage larger schools to offer support and collaborate with smaller rural schools as part of its development of a strong diocesan wide family of schools?
9	What is the likely impact of the national funding formula on the funding for small schools within the LAs that the diocese serves and how is the DBE planning for such scenarios?
10	How does the diocese maintain its influence and connection with communities where there is no school or where the Church of England school may need to close?