Diocese of Leicester
Board of Education

NOVEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Dear school and trust leaders (copy to Chairs, Clerks & Clergy)

Over the years I have been Diocesan Director of Education, I have tried in various different ways to encourage you all to exercise self-care as a priority of your leadership. I hope that some of this encouragement has helped you all in some way – however small!

Those of you who have read my newsletters for many years will know I treasure visiting Wales, swimming outside and reading poetry. I escaped to North Wales this last weekend and in so doing managed all three – including re-reading some poems by RS Thomas.

Thomas, although a Welsh priest & poet, wrote in the English language as he felt he could not do justice to writing in Welsh which was his second language. I'd like to share his poem 'The Small Window' with you.

On first reading, it's clear that RS Thomas is saying something about his views of English people moving in to Wales! Yet on a second read, something else struck me. There are 'jewels to gather', there is 'wealth' and if we take time we can 'grow rich with looking'. To see and experience these precious gifts requires us to stop – and to look.

I pray for you all today that you can stop to soak up the view, step back and let others see the view too.

With every blessing

Carolyn Shoyer

Diocesan Director of Education



**I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.
Psalm 121: 1-2**

Canon Carolyn Shoyer Appointed as Diocesan Director of Education for Coventry

With grateful thanks for her faithful ministry in the Diocese of Leicester and prayers for her future role, we are pleased to share that Canon Carolyn Shoyer, Diocesan Director of Education, has been appointed as the new Diocesan Director of Education for the Diocese of Coventry.

Canon Carolyn has made a significant contribution to church schools and education across the Diocese of Leicester, and we wish her every blessing as she begins this new chapter of ministry.

Read the full announcement here: Canon Carolyn Shoyer Appointed as Diocesan Director of Education for Coventry

Book a slot to meet with the Director

Carolyn is keen to meet routinely with headteachers. These meetings don't necessarily need an agenda but are an opportunity to share news and hear about the school. Most importantly though, they are an opportunity for the headteacher to speak in confidence. There are so many pressures facing school leaders and we are here to listen and support you as much as we can. There is a link in Carolyn's email signature to book a slot for an online meeting which is also found HERE – do please make use of it!



Admissions Policy Builder

The National Society for Education has an Admissions Policy Builder tool available on its website. Simply complete each section and the tool will generate a PDF Admissions Policy tailored to your school. This can help ensure your policy is clear, compliant, and aligned with the latest guidance. You can access the tool here:https://www.nse.org.uk/school-admissions

National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Appeals Information for Schools

To support a smooth and timely appeals process, please ensure your completed School Information Report is returned well before the requested deadline wherever possible. This allows the information to be shared with the independent appeal panel in good time, helping panel members prepare effectively and reducing the likelihood of hearings being postponed due to late documentation. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and helps ensure appeals can proceed as scheduled.

Leicester DBF

Each term, for the past 3 years, the Diocese of Leicester has facilitated a listening exercise in partnership with schools and church groups. The listening exercise enables children and young people (CYP) to explore an issue of their choice and share key findings with our Bishops and the whole Diocese. In Autumn Term 2026, we will explore the theme, Social Media. The Facilitator Guide has been shared as an attachment along with this Newsletter.

Governor Annual Return - Due December 2026

The Annual Return helps the Board of Education to receive up to date information to enable effective communication and an n-depth knowledge of each of our diocesan academies and schools. The details will form part of our database as well as provide qualitative information about Christian Distinctiveness and the Effectiveness of the Governing Body.
We ask that governors complete an Annual Return each year by December.
Please use the following links to access the forms:
School - https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/1b4LwNZ6df
Governors - https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/3Bv4dS7JaN

Headteachers' Conference 2027

Headteachers' Conference - 4 & 5 March 2027

We are delighted to invite headteachers to our annual conference on 4 and 5 March 2027, centred on the theme of Transformational Schools. The conference will begin with a time of opening worship, setting the tone for two days of reflection, learning and collaboration.
The programme will include input from diocesan colleagues on pastoral supervision, alongside exploration of the national picture for Church schools and the key lessons we can learn from developments across the sector. Delegates will also hear from leaders representing both Multi Academy Trusts and maintained schools, who will share examples of best practice, innovation and strategic thinking to support transformational education in our schools.
This promises to be an inspiring opportunity to connect with colleagues, reflect on leadership and discover new ideas to strengthen the impact of Church schools in our communities.
Costs: £210 (PA schools) / £290 (Non-PA schools)
Link to book: https://bookwhen.com/ldbe/e/ev-sv9rn-20270304110000

Eco and Net Zero News

Free Support for Oil-Heated Schools

If your school or college is heated by oil, take advantage of free support from Climate Ambassadors and Let's Go Zero to identify practical energy-saving measures and reduce costs ahead of winter. Join a free 90-minute online workshop to develop a tailored climate action plan and learn from successful schools that have already achieved significant savings. Sign up today.

Sign up here for a free online workshop at a time and date that suits you.

CLIMATE AMBASSADORS

In association with EAUC, STEM Learning and the University of Reading

Energy Sparks - Top 3 Tips for Cutting Heating Waste In Schools

1. ADJUST YOUR HEATING START TIME

Many schools have their heating set to come on very early in the morning. This may be due to systems behaving unexpectedly or because heating managers want to be sure that rooms are warm enough and overcompensate.

The result is often that, once classrooms fill up, they actually become too warm…and it is not uncommon to find classroom windows open while the heating is on!

2. REDUCE YOUR SET TEMPERATURE

To optimise energy efficiency and learning outcomes, the temperature of a normal classroom should be around 18℃. However, in reality, many schools run much hotter than this.

3. REDUCE WEEKEND AND HOLIDAY USE

Here are some statistics to ponder:

- The average school uses more than 60% of its energy when it is closed to students.
- Around a quarter of that is during the holidays
- Almost 10% of school gas use happens at weekends

Energy Sparks

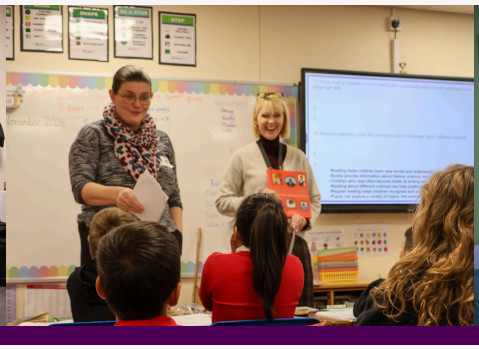
Helping schools fight climate change

School Spotlight

St Luke's CE Primary School Wins Centenary Competition

Congratulations to St Luke's CE Primary School, Thurnby, whose pupils have won the Diocese of Leicester's Centenary Competition. Their creative work exploring the themes of faith, hope and community will be displayed at St Martin's House as part of the Diocese's Centenary Day celebrations on 12 November 2026. The impressive entries showcased pupils' reflections on Christian faith, education and community, and the school was awarded copies of Heroes of Hope in recognition of their achievement.



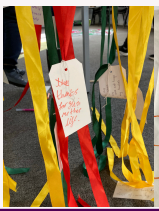


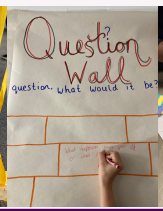


Great Bowden CE Primary School Spirituality Day

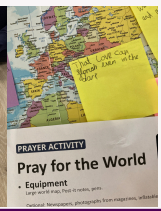
We were delighted to welcome pupils from Great Bowden CE Primary School to St Martin's House for a recent Spirituality Day. Throughout the day, children took part in a range of engaging activities, exploring spirituality, reflection and different ways of thinking about the world around them. It was wonderful to see their curiosity, creativity and thoughtful discussions.

If you would like to arrange a Spirituality Day for your school, please get in touch with our team to find out more.









Upcoming Dates - Autumn Term 2

Wednesday 18th November - 1.00pm-4.00pm - Subject Leaders - New RE Coordinators

Wednesday 25th November - 9.30am - 11.30am - Church School Leadership Session - Collective Wroship and spiritual flourishing

Thursday 26th November - 9.00am-3.00pm - Retreat Day at Launde Abbey

Thursday 10th December - 1.30pm-2.30pm - Church School Leadership Session - Christmas reflection and celebration

Thursday 10th December - 2.30pm - 3.30pm - Governor Briefing - Christmas reflection and celebration

You can book your space here: https://bookwhen.com/ldbe

LinkedIn - Leicester Diocesan Board of Education

Follow our LinkedIn page to keep up to date with the latest news, upcoming training and events, funding and grant opportunities, and resources for schools. It's also a great way to connect with colleagues, share ideas, celebrate success stories, and be part of a growing network of education professionals. We regularly post updates, so be sure to follow us and join the conversation.

Primary RE Development Day: Global Christianity

It was wonderful to welcome teachers and headteachers to our Primary RE Development Day on Global Christianity. Together, we explored the diversity of Christian beliefs and practices around the world and considered ways to bring global perspectives into the RE curriculum. Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to the inspiring discussions.



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2026 CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION





How to enter

- Write the child's name, year group and school on the back.
- Entries can be hand drawn, painted or electronically produced.
- Entries must be on A5 or A4 paper, landscape or portrait.

Prize

The winner will have their design featured on our website and turned into our official Christmas card, as well as receiving a £10 book voucher!

Send entries to Georgeie Booth by Friday 4 December 2026.

Email: officedbe@leicesterdbe.org

‘Only in Leicester’ Digital Creative Arts Competition

St Philip’s Centre, supported by a National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) grant, is launching a county-wide digital creative arts competition for schoolchildren across Leicestershire.

The competition invites participants to explore the theme ‘Only in Leicester’, celebrating the diversity, identity, heritage, and community life of the city.

This initiative forms part of a wider oral history project named Living Together, and aims to encourage reflection on how people from different backgrounds can live well together.

More information can be found here:
https://www.leicesterlivingtogether.com/digital-creative-arts-competition

St Philip’s Centre
living well together
Celebrating 20 years

Do remember to visit our website for lots of useful information and guidance.