

Dear Colleagues

Directors Reflection:

No term isn't busy, but Term 6 is often when many of the annual events that need to be fitted into and around regular classroom learning occur. It's a marathon to keep going across the term with some sprints thrown in to be ready for each event as it appears. Maybe school plays, open days, community festivals, summer fetes, reports, swimming galas, sports days, concerts, leaving services and balls, residential trips, move up days, transition events, planning the new academic year diary and curriculum etc etc. For secondaries, exams continue albeit maybe for some there's a little more non-contact in the diary as a result!



I am sure there is hardly a day when there isn't something out of the ordinary in the diary – while you try to keep going with the ongoing learning. Are you someone who physically crosses out the diary page with a sigh of relief and maybe a sense of regret that what you've worked so hard towards, won't be coming round for another year?

Two big one offs in the church year are around this time of year. Ascension falls exactly 40 days after Easter Sunday, which is why it is always on a Thursday – for some, "Holy Thursday". The ten-day period between Ascension and Pentecost is known as Ascensiontide.

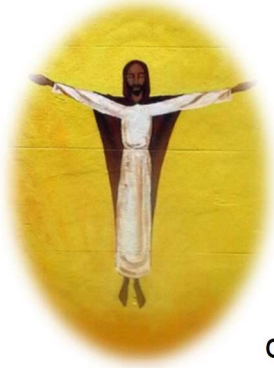
A quick History lesson: the Thursday, in Half term, was Ascension Day. You can think of it as a door we walk through leading us from the season of Easter, which the Ascension feast closes, towards Pentecost in ten days' time (the coming of the Holy Spirit) which it anticipates.

The Ascension story records the moment Jesus returns to heaven following his resurrection and his several post-resurrection encounters with his disciples. It is a transition moment, a turning point, when Jesus promises his disciples, they will be gifted with God's Spirit, to be their comfort and strength for the work of mission that lies before them.

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For a quick recap, see the ending of the Gospel of Mark (Mark 16: 9ff.). Here, Mark rapidly recounts Jesus' appearances to Mary Magdalene and to two disciples (suggesting the two disciples walking on the road to Emmaus, Luke 24: 13-35), followed by Jesus' commissioning of his disciples. Then, Mark writes:



“So, then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it.”

(Mark 16: 19-20) Acts 1: 1-11

describes Jesus' ascension in much greater detail.

I hope Half Term has revived you and refilled you for the Term 6 sprints and marathon. Go well as you navigate the diary this term!

Celebrating SIAMS Successes in 2025

Congratulations to those schools receiving positive SIAMS outcomes in 2025 so far and thanks to all involved in the excellent outcomes received: Cathedral Primary, Christchurch Infants Downend, Seagry Primary, Frampton Cotterell Primary and the Deanery Academy.

Great to see some genuinely inspiring comments from these reports, reflecting impactful school vision and practice:

CATHEDRAL PRIMARY - *The school's vision builds a strong sense of responsibility within staff, to teach pupils about justice and the heritage of protest within this city. Through the vision and values, pupils express why it's important to speak for the voiceless in society. They understand that everyone should be treated with equity and dignity.*



CHRISTCHURCH INFANTS - *Warm, caring relationships, inspired by the vision's strong sense of belonging, are central to life at Christ Church. This is due to the exceptional level of support for the children and adults.*

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DEANERY ACADEMY - *The school's behaviour policy, grounded in its vision, sets very clear expectations for students. The clarity of the policy, and its implementation, has been instrumental in its rapid improvement. The reward system is appreciated by students and contributes to their sense of belonging and self-worth.*

Vacancy in See – Public Consultation

Thursday 5th June marked the launch of our Vacancy in See consultation. We invite you to take part in a short survey that will help shape the vision and priorities for our next bishop.

Your opinion really does matter, and this is our opportunity to really rally for education and young people and the importance of having a supportive Bishop to flourish! You do not have to be from a Church background to take part, and we welcome feedback from all areas of our Diocese. No matter what your role, your thoughts are essential to ensuring that the role profile for our new bishop reflects the hopes and needs of our diverse diocese.

We encourage you to share this survey with your friends, family and wider community. Every voice matters.

👉 **Take the 5-minute survey today** (<https://forms.office.com/e/UkxB4sreBC>)

Easton Jamia Mosque – teacher network visit

Teachers and leaders in ALL areas are kindly invited to join the Bristol Learn Teach Lead RE Hub on 24th June for a visit to Easton Mosque, a fantastic chance to enrich subject knowledge and visit somewhere that might be suitable for a pupil visit. See below:



Please join us for a tour of the Mosque and a talk from the Imam about worship in this space. He will also talk about the work of the Mosque in the local community. This community welcomes lots of school groups on trips and this will be a great opportunity to find out more about this and make connections with other RE specialists from primary and secondary schools across the city. Please follow [this link](#) to book on to this meeting via Eventbrite

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The Association for Promoting Retreats Teachers' Bursary Scheme



Last year, and in recognition of the intensity of the challenges and responsibilities that teachers face in their roles, the Trustees of the APR designated some of the APR Bursary Funds to be specifically used to help teachers and headteachers go on retreat.

Such *Teachers' Bursaries* are available for all teachers in Church of England schools, irrespective of their personal faith, as long as their retreat is made at an APR Member retreat house, as listed on our website, promotingretreats.org/where.

Further details of the scheme can be found **HERE** or on the attached poster, if you or your staff are interested.

Decarbonisation- New animation for schools!



A new [animation](#) to help schools take the first steps to lowering their carbon emissions has been launched by the Church of England's Net Zero programme.

The short 'claymatian' style animation offers tips for schools to help reduce carbon emissions from their buildings, as well as signposting to regional and national support.

An updated **digital guide**, with simple tips schools can follow, has also been launched, [see here](#).

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School Chaplaincy

Have you considered chaplaincy within your school environment? Did you know that here within the Diocesan Education Team that we have an U18 Chaplaincy Adviser **Jane Gillis**, who can guide you with how the role of a chaplain can work for you and your school.

Take a look at the attached [leaflet](#) or contact us at education@bristoldiocese.org if you would like further information



Upcoming Training & Events:



New to RE Leadership

Tuesday 8th July 2025, 2-4pm, Hillside House

£50 per delegate (2nd delegate £20)

For anyone who has been newly recruited to the role of RE Subject Leader or who would like to refresh their understanding of the role. Church and Community Schools are all welcome.

To book a place click on the link below:

[New to RE Leadership Tickets, Tue 8 Jul 2025 at 14:00 | Eventbrite](#)



DBE Annual conference - Friday 21st November 2025

We will be offering **2 FREE** places for all Church of England School delegates this year (with additional delegate places being available at £70) and are so excited to make this the case! This will mean that every school can be represented with their vicar, Chair of Governors and Headteacher – get [booking](#) asap so you don't lose the date!

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Governor Training Package

Due to the success of this year's Governor Training Package, we will be running similar training sessions for the 2025/2026 Academic Year. These sessions will be provided free of charge as appreciation of the essential service that governors provide our schools. Please book your place [HERE](#)



Christmas Panto-Nativity – Herald of Herod



4Front Theatre, a Christian theatre company are now taking bookings for their Christmas panto-Nativity. A pantomime style show with the nativity story at its heart it provides the opportunity to experience the Christmas story in a different and exciting way.

Herald of Herod

Three peculiar Magi have appeared in the Royal Palace, talking of the birth of a potential rival King! The cruel King Herod is keen to unravel this mystery. For Harry the humble Herald, this is the chance of a lifetime... to embark upon an epic quest and be noticed by the King!

Explore the nativity like never before with plenty of songs, plenty of laughs, and a very boo-able baddy, in 4Front's Christmas pan-tivity!

Further information about the show and **Trailer** are available. 4 Front Theatre are also offering [10% discount](#) for bookings made before the end of the Summer Term

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A Prayer for this term

Heavenly Father

Please pour out Your blessings upon our whole school community so that everyone grows in the knowledge of Your truth, love, wisdom and peace.

We pray for all children - help them to explore what they can achieve and give them confidence to play their part in shaping our world.

We pray for all those who work in schools. Care for them as they care for our children.

We pray for all governors of schools. Grant them wisdom and sound judgement, and help them to keep children's well-being at the heart of everything they do.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen

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