

The Maximilian

A monthly newsletter for governors within the Archdiocese of Southwark

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Reflection - Canon Victor Darlington

Beloved Friends, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

When you arrive at Church this weekend, you will notice, as you do each year, that the statues and images are veiled in purple. As soon as we see this, we know we are now in Passiontide, Palm Sunday next week, and Holy Week the week after. In his Passion, Jesus' face and whole body were so disfigured and unrecognisable. For this reason, we veil the crosses in the final days of Lent, hiding our Lord and Saviour under the purple cloth. Crosses remain covered until the end of the Celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday, but images remain covered until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.

Palm Sunday is Lent's sixth and last Sunday and marks the beginning of Holy Week. This day joins the foretelling of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem (as the crowd welcomed Him with palm branches) and the proclamation of His Passion in the Gospel reading. Hence, the day is called "Palm Sunday of the Passion of Our Lord."

Holy Wednesday, also known as Spy Wednesday, because of the Spy – Judas, who came into the midst of his brothers and friends to spy for the Chief Priest so that he could betray Jesus. In our Archdiocese, Holy Wednesday is when we celebrate the Chrism Mass. The Archbishop, joined by all the priests of the Archdiocese of Southwark - in the Southeast and west of London and Kent, gather at the Cathedral of Saint George to celebrate the Chrism Mass. At the Mass, the Archbishop blesses three oils — the oil of catechumens (*oleum catechumenorum* or *oleum sanctorum*), the oil of the infirm (*oleum infirmorum*) and holy chrism (*sacrum chrisma*) — which will be used in the administration of the sacraments throughout the diocese for the year. Chrism is made of olive oil and is scented with a sweet perfume, usually balsam.

All these lead us to three days that changed/changed the world. The Easter Triduum, which begins with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday, continues on Good Friday, reaching its high point in the Easter Vigil, and closes with the Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday, is the summit of the Liturgical Year. It commemorates Christ's Paschal Mystery, i.e., the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

I wish you all a blessed Holy Week and a very Happy Easter.



Canon Victor Darlington

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Education and Director of Caritas, Archdiocese of Southwark

STATLOG

Voluntary-aided schools

With effect from 5th March 2024, the Diocesan Trustees of the Archdiocese of Southwark expect that all Diocesan voluntary-aided (VA) schools subscribe to Statlog. This is in order for the Diocese to comply with the expectation of the DfE's guidance in respect of Good Estate Management of Schools (GEMS). VA schools with unutilised 2021-22 VASCA funding for implementation of Statlog are reminded that these funds shortly expire, so will be withdrawn on 15th March 2024. Thereafter, these VA schools will be required to fully fund their own implementation of Statlog. The Diocese remains unable to support the VASCA funding process to schools outside of Statlog from 2022-23 onwards.

Academies

The Diocesan Trustees also have this expectation of all Single Academy Trusts and there are currently on going discussions with the MATs whose schools will also be expected to subscribe to Statlog.

Governance Guides for schools

The Department for Education (DfE) has published 2 new governance guides, to replace the Governance Handbook and the links are below.

[Maintained Schools Governance Guide](#)

[Academy Trust Governance Guide](#)

There are no new requirements for governors or trustees, so your board doesn't need to do anything right now, except to:

Make sure everyone on your board is aware of, and can access, the right guide for your school type
Remove any copies of, or reference to, the previous Governance Handbook in your board's files and documents.

The DfE has withdrawn the following documents:

- Governance Handbook
- Governance Competency Framework
- Clerking Competency Framework
- Governance Structures and Roles
- Statutory Policies for Schools and Academy Trust

New Attendance Guidance

A new version of the DfE statutory guidance 'working together to improve attendance' has been published, which comes into force from 19 August this year.



The key updates include:

- Changes to the law on keeping school attendance and admission registers including a revised set of codes, granting leaves of absence and access to, and sharing of, attendance information introduced through the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Set out the new National Framework for issuing penalty notices and reflect changes to the law introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- Clarification of the expectations of schools' senior attendance champions
- Expectation for schools to inform a pupil's youth offending team worker of any unexplained absences
- Expectation that there will be regular meetings between schools and LA's to agree plans for the most at-risk absent pupils
- Further detail to clarify additional attendance services that may be traded with schools, local authority responsibilities in relation to cross-border pupils and how to hold effective Targeting Support Meetings.

The summary table of responsibilities has also been updated, with a new expectation added that the governing board will 'use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.'

In a [press release](#) the DfE has explained that parental fines for unauthorised absences will be brought under a national framework, which they state will help tackle inconsistencies in their use. A fine to parents must be considered if a child misses 5 days of school for unauthorised absence. Alongside this, costs for fines will go up from £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days and from £120 to £160 if paid in 28 days. Councils will be able to use any surplus funding to pay for 'attendance support'.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance

Restructuring in Schools and Academies

As pupil roll numbers drop, there will be a need for several schools to undertake restructuring of their staffing in order to ensure that our schools remain viable. Please inform the Education Service about such restructuring at the earliest opportunity, especially if there is a risk of at least 10% of staff or more being made redundant.

Email Address for Governance Queries

Please email governance@rcaos.org.uk in the first instance. Your query will be passed to the relevant team member.

Racial & Cultural Inclusion Lent & Easter Newsletter 2024

Please [click here](#) to view the Racial & Cultural Inclusion Lent & Easter Newsletter 2024



Firm Foundations

Please remember all governors have access to Firm foundations, training provided by the Archdiocese.

This can be accessed on a mobile phone by an app or on a laptop/computer by a web browser. All schools have been given their governor login details but if you are unsure please email clairewilliams@rcaos.org.uk.

Obtaining a DBS from the Diocesan Safeguarding Office

The Education Service is ensuring that DBS certificates are obtained through the Safeguarding office of the Diocese.

During the appointment or re-appointment process of a foundation governor, the Education Service will contact the Safeguarding Office and inform them that there is a need for a DBS for a particular foundation governor.

The foundation governor is contacted by the Safeguarding Office via email and asked to contact a DBS verifier either the Parish Safeguarding Representative, a Verifier from the school or Donna Gray from the Education Service.

Please do not complete the dbS 3c form before receiving an email from the Safeguarding Office as the Safeguarding Office will be unable to process the form.

DBS verification

Verification checks may be undertaken by either a Verifier in the school or by the Parish Safeguarding Representative.

A DBS 3c form must be completed, <https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/identity-verifier-dbs-3c-form/> If this form is not completed by the Verifier, the Safeguarding office will be unable to process the application.

Courses & Events

Induction for New Foundation Governors

Thursday 9th May 2024 4-5.30pm or Tuesday

14th May 2024 5.30-7pm

Free, Zoom

[Book](#)

[This page](#) contains the dates and links to book onto the next series of sessions on Considering becoming a Foundation Governor or Foundation Director. This page also contains 2 A4 posters that can be used to encourage practising Catholics to become foundation governors or directors.

