

Newsletter



20th November 2024

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Reflection from Canon Victor Darlington, Episcopal Vicar for Education

Beloved Friends, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the Month of November, we remember our Dead. We began the Month celebrating all the Saints in heaven; the next day, we prayed for all Holy Souls. Like I mentioned to you last year: Everyone has lost someone dear to them. It may be a distant relative, a parent, a schoolmate, a work colleague, a child, a friend, a grandparent, or even a neighbour. We pray: Eternal Rest Grant to them, O Lord, may they rest in Peace. Amen.

What is also true about this month is that the year is coming to an end. Autumn continues to remind us of the old, and the dawn of new beginnings to come with thanksgiving. November is a month of looking back, of reflecting, of giving thanks. For me, I have so much to be grateful for.

In the month of November, we celebrate Christ the King of the Universe and with that feast we end ordinary time. I invite you to pray for peace in the world as we celebrate this feast. To end the month of November we celebrate the feast of Saint Andrew, the dear Apostle of Jesus Christ who was born in Galilee and spent most of his time preaching the good news of Peace. Andrew introduced his brother Peter, our first Pope, to Jesus. Saint Andrew is a role model for these times as the disciple who is keen to lead us to Jesus.

These two feasts that draw our Liturgical Calendar to an end prepare us for the Season of Advent and, of course the beautiful season of Christmas.



May Saint Andrew, the Patron of Scotland, Pray for us at this time

Canon Victor Darlington
Episcopal Vicar for the Southeast Area,
Commissions for Promoting Racial and Cultural Inclusion,
Education and Director of Caritas, Archdiocese of Southwark

Admissions Update

We are grateful that almost every school in the Archdiocese has now either adopted or are consulting on the new admissions arrangements.

From this process a small number of issues and questions have arisen. We would like to clarify these points. They are not changes to the arrangements, only procedural and therefore schools do not need to consult further on making these adjustments.

The Certificate of Catholic practice should not be on the school's website. Those applying for a place in your school should collect a copy of this document from the school office. Applicants then present the certificate to the parish priest or an appropriate representative of the parish for signing and then present it to you. This certificate is then photocopied by the school and this copy is retained. This then allows those applying for places to take the original certificate to any other Catholic school they apply to.

Secondly, there has been some confusion around the administration form that has been created to support the admissions process. A number of schools have named this document as a SIF. There is a problem here about clarity. The danger is that applicants confuse this document with the original SIF that evidenced Catholic practice and required a priest signature. The new admissions administration document does not require the priest signature and should not be considered part of the admissions arrangements. It is purely a document to assist admissions officers with the process. In a number of cases, schools have referred to this document as a SIF and their arrangements state that to not completing this form impacts negatively on the place their child will be ranked. This would be a breach of the Admissions Code. This form should not appear on the website and it needs to state clearly that it is not part of the arrangements. Once again, parents can be offered this form when they visit school and encouraged to complete it, as it will support a smooth application process.

As always, if you have any questions regarding admissions, please contact Daniel Coleman at danielcoleman@rcaos.org.uk

Webinar: Performance Management | addressing underperformance ahead of 2025

Most employers understand the significant impact of poor performance, yet many are reluctant to address ongoing issues due to concerns about potential conflict and claims. However, letting issues fester can be a recipe for disaster, and over time, can drag your organisation and other employees down.

Join WorkNest on the 28th November at 2pm to learn how to handle poor performance in a fair and compliant manner so that you can get your team back on track while avoiding possible legal pitfalls that could put your organisation at risk.



Register here: <https://worknest.com/training/performance-management-addressing-underperformance-ahead-of-2025-partners/?v=RCAOS>

Upcoming School Grants

[Kellogg's Breakfast Club Grants](#)

£1,000 grant - Priority for schools with over 40% of pupil premium eligibility - No deadline

[Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust](#)

£100 - £100,000 - Project schemes directed towards capital expenditure - No deadline

[Foyle School Library Scheme](#)

Up to £10,000 - Grant to help buy books, e-readers, library software, IT equipment and furniture - No deadline

Action Required: Additional Nursery Places

You will be aware of the government's pledge to create an additional three thousand nursery places. The DfE will, in the coming months, be setting out plans to use surplus capacity in primary schools to create or expand nurseries run from school premises which will include both school-run nurseries and schools partnering with private, voluntary, and independent providers.

The department is working closely with schools, local authorities, and providers to:

- understand what is needed to deliver this
- ensure provision meets the needs of families and schools
- reflect the LA's role in managing childcare sufficiency in funding decisions

Guidance for schools in relation to these proposals will be available in due course but in the meantime, please be aware that schools must have the consent of their diocese or religious order (if relevant) before taking any steps. Matters of provision be it type (nursery, resource sixth form etc) or size are matters for the Education Committee to approve. You must obtain any relevant consents from ourselves or religious order before taking any steps in this regard and that early consultation is paramount.

Invite your MP to Visit your School

As mentioned at a previous CES/DSC KIT meeting, we have produced a new online template for schools to invite their local Member of Parliament for a visit. A school visit is a great way to demonstrate to an MP the achievements of Catholic education, and for the MP to become more involved in supporting education within their constituency. Please can you circulate this link to the template to schools as necessary.

The template is available online here: Invite your MP to visit your school - [Catholic Bishops' Conference](#)



Godly Play Project

The CES is working with Godly Play UK and the Margaret Beaufort Institute to explore how Godly Play can be used to support the RED and the teaching of RE.

Thanks to funding from the Sisters of the Holy Cross CIO, a 3 day fully funded course is being offered to train 12 Primary Teachers in the Godly Play method and participate in research to discuss and consider how Godly Play can be used to enhance and enrich RE pedagogy.

Further information and an application form can be found by [clicking here](#) and [here](#).

Please do forward to your Primary schools. Deadline for applications is 2nd December 2024.

Sharing content from the CES website

It has been brought to our attention that some schools have uploaded to their own websites previously downloaded versions of old resources from the CES website. We would strongly suggest that if a diocese or a school wishes to promote items from any external website (including the CES) that they do so through a link.

We regularly update items on our website and remove other items when they are out of date. By sharing resources through a link rather than a static upload, the accuracy and ownership of the material is more guaranteed. This is particularly important in relation to copyright and intellectual property.

Jubilee Preparations - Pilgrims of Hope School Passport

Many Headteachers collected their Pilgrimage Passport for the Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee, at the Conference this month. The passport should be used by schools to collect their evidence of pilgrimage, journeying to churches and schools across the year.

If you have not yet collected your school's passport please contact Donna Gray.

Save the Date!

The Headteachers' Conference 2025 has been booked for 20th and 21st November 2025. Please hold this date in your diary.



Christmas Card Competition Together for the Common Good - your school is invited!

Are you planning to run a Christmas card competition this year? Why not join ours? We're inviting all children in your school to take part in our FREE community Christmas card competition.

The theme is 'The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood' taken from the Gospel of John.

Entries are due by 29th November 2024 and all the details are available to download [HERE](#). This includes guidance on how your pupils can build the common good whilst taking part.

Follow us on social media to stay up to date with the competition and be introduced to our judges: [@T4CG \(X\)](#)
[@t4cg_insta \(Instagram\)](#)

Recruitment

Vacancies can be viewed in full here: <https://www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/recruitment/>

Class Teacher, St Aidan's Catholic Primary School

Coulsdon

Closing date: 25th November 2024

Clerk to Governing Board, Bishop Thomas Grant School

London

Closing date: 4th December 2024

Headteacher, St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

Hythe, Kent

Closing date: 22nd November 2024

Headteacher, St Aidan's Catholic Primary School

Coulsdon, Croydon

Closing date: 27th January 2025

School Caretaker, St Chads Catholic Primary School

South Norwood

Closing date: 29th November 2024

The Well - Learning Platform

To support governors and school leaders, we aim to keep you up to date with relevant information via The Well (learning platform).

Login details have been sent to all governors with a school email address. School leaders will be sent out their login details shortly.

If you can think of anything else that would be useful to include or any courses you would like us to offer, please let me know and I will do what I can. Emails can be sent to samgower@rcaos.org.uk.



Events & Training

Catholic Leaders Drop in

29th November 2024. Multiple venues

[Book](#)

Headteachers as the Responsible Person for Health and Safety and Buildings Update

Tuesday 19th November 2024. 2-3pm. Zoom.

[Book](#)

Safeguarding for Governors

Wednesday 20th November 2024. 5.30pm-7pm.

Zoom

[Book](#)

Secondary RE Leaders Meeting

Thursday 21st November 2024. 9.30am-4pm.

£40, Cowderoy Room, Amigo Hall, Lambeth Road, SE1 6HR

[Book](#)

Aspiring Leaders

Tuesday 26th November and Wednesday 27th November 2024. 9.30am-3pm.

Education Service, St Edward's House, St Pauls Wood Hill, Orpington, BR5 2SR

[Book](#)

School Building Responsibilities as a Governor

Thursday 28th November 2024. 5.30-6.30pm.

Zoom

[Book](#)

Succession Planning and Recruiting a Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher

Thursday 5th December 2024 5.30-7pm. Zoom

[Book](#)

Advent Service 2024

Friday 6th December 2024 2pm.

St George's Cathedral, Lambeth Road, SE1 6HR

[Book](#)

New to Religious Education Leadership – Day 2

Thursday 9th January 2025. 9.30am-4pm.

Education Service

[Book](#)

News

Christ the King Sixth Forms (CTK) and East Kent Colleges Group (EKC) Christmas Gift Appeal

For the fifth year running, Christ the King Sixth Forms (CTK) and East Kent Colleges Group (EKC) are combining forces for yet another Christmas Gift Appeal which launched on 18th November to collect gifts and donations for various charities, including: Demelza Hospice, Refuge, The Lewisham Foodbank and St Vincent De Paul (SVP).

Last year we raised over £20,000 and this year we hope to raise even more so we can make a real difference for families this Christmas.

[Continue reading.](#)



Governors and Local Businesses Come Together to Revamp School's Library

A real community effort took place over the summer at St Augustine's Primary School in Tunbridge Wells to give the library a make-over. School Governors and local businesses joined forces and gave up their time to create something rather special.

[Continue reading.](#)





Save The Date!

Diocesan Jubilee Day - Journey of Hope
A day of celebration for primary schools

25th June 2025 9am-5pm

Aylesford Priory

