

POLICY STATEMENTS

JANUARY 2007

SOUTHWARK DIOCESAN



BOARD *of*

EDUCATION

PREFACE

The Board receives many requests from schools, governors, parents, local education authorities and national bodies for the Board's views or policy in relation to specific educational matters. Some policy statements are transient in that they pertain to current thought and prevailing philosophy but in due course become obsolete. Others are more durable and long-standing and are the result of thorough debate and refinement. This document brings together the Board's policies for ease of access. Some of these policies are free-standing, others have been extracted from the various documents and publications that have been issued by the Board.

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ADMISSION OF PUPILS

The Board endorses the view that the Church School of today has a dual purpose of offering a Christian education to the children of Christian parents, and yet of still fulfilling its historic mission in the practical expression of its pastoral responsibility to all children of the community in which it is situated.

The Church School is part of the wider mission and ministry of the Church. It follows that both its ethos and its admission policy, and indeed all other aspects of the school, are vital elements in the pursuit of that mission. If that mission is to serve and glorify God, then it follows that the Church School must be a genuine witness to the Incarnation. Therefore the Church School must:

- (a) **serve** by loving and valuing all humanity equally as the Father does in Jesus;
- (b) **proclaim** the Gospel by the whole nature of its words, actions, community life and concern for the individual, thus witnessing to God's gift of free grace in Jesus, not according to individual merit, but because of his love;
- (c) **build** up the people of God so that the Church may not live for itself, but may live in Him and for others and thus be truly alive.

The governors of a church school are required to present the love of God to the community: this must be reflected in the admission policy; a document that can proclaim publicly, more than any other, the governors' understanding of the place and function of a church school in contemporary society.

May 1995

Revised June 2000

Revised September 2002 (Schools Committee)

Reference: *Admission and Appeals in C of E Schools: Guidelines for Governors of VA and Foundation Schools*, SDBE, 2003.

ADMISSION APPEAL HEARINGS IN THE ABSENCE OF THE APPELLANT

The Board of Education recognises the need for admission appeal hearings to be conducted fairly, with both the appellant and the governors' representative being able to present their cases to the committee. It is important that neither party feels that the other has had an unfair advantage by being allowed to address the committee alone.

However, the Board considers that where one party has chosen not to attend the hearing, the rules of natural justice dictate that this should not preclude the other party putting his/her case to the committee in person. The Board has reached this view after taking advice from the Department for Education and Skills and the Council on Tribunals.

This will then mean, for example, that should an appellant choose not to attend an appeal hearing, the governors' representative will be able to present the governors' case in person to the committee. It will be essential in such cases that the clerk ensures that no new evidence is put before the committee of which the appellant is unaware. Should it be the case that new evidence is brought, the committee may consider it necessary to adjourn the hearing so that the appellant can be made aware of the evidence.

June 1996 (Schools Committee)

ADMISSION OF SIBLINGS

The Board of Education appreciates that schools experience difficulties over allocation of places when the differing merits of each application are considered. This can be particularly difficult when considering an application from a committed church family alongside one from a family already having children in the school. It is easy to sympathise with each family's view of its 'right' to a place at the school and consequently difficult to justify denying a place to either. It is important that the governing body itself is clear which application has priority and has an admission policy which makes assigning this priority possible.

The Board recognises that within the primary phase it is desirable that siblings, wherever possible, should be educated at the same school, to encourage stability and a sense of community within the school. Within the secondary phase, however, this may cease to be as significant a factor when considering admission applications. In this situation, with the relatively small number of church places available, more weight should perhaps be given to church commitment. It should, of course, be recognised that giving priority to either siblings or committed church families can upset the balance of the intake too much in either direction, for example, a policy giving priority to siblings can, over a number of years, result in the virtual exclusion of church families without siblings in the school. Governors would need, therefore, to keep the admission policy under review.

The Board of Education will seek to assist governing bodies of church schools within the Diocese to:

- decide its priorities in relation to admission of siblings;
- construct an admission policy which enables the governing body's priorities to be assigned;
- review the workings of such a policy to ensure that it reflects accurately the governing body's wishes.

March 1995 (Schools Committee)

ADMISSION CRITERIA - DEFINING CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT

DEFINING CHURCH CRITERIA

2.8 The criteria which relate to "faith" commitment are the most difficult to define because of the variety of styles of worship and the different ways in which commitment may be expressed. Governing bodies together with the local church need to consider for themselves how commitment should be defined. Each governing body must decide for itself what is appropriate to the local circumstances. Evidence of Christian commitment should be sought from the clergy and this should be stated in the policy. Governing bodies should consider whether parents ought to include evidence of religious commitment with their application, if appropriate.

2.9 Governing bodies should consider how they would define "church" in the policy. Is admission open to members of:

- (i) the local Parish Church? - If so, is it named in the policy?
- (ii) other Anglican churches? - In a defined area or named churches? Governors should consider the proximity of other schools. Governors may wish to consider, in particular, including other churches where there is no church school in the parish.
- (iii) other Christian denominations? - How is "Christian" defined? Are there ecumenical links with other churches?

Consider membership of with, for example, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) and/or the Evangelical Alliance (see Annex 2).

DEFINING COMMITMENT

2.10 Attendance: Many admission policies require parents to attend church services either weekly, or once or twice a month for at least a year. However, attendance at Sunday worship is not the only means of establishing commitment and governing bodies should consider whether this is an appropriate measure. In particular, it is important that single-parent families are not disadvantaged. Consideration should also be given to a parent's ability to attend Sunday worship. Some parents may find it is easier to be involved with mid-week services and some may have jobs which require them to work on Sundays, eg, hospital staff, shop assistants, police; others may have one parent working abroad for extended periods.

2.11 Active involvement in the church: Involvement can be interpreted differently in different churches: for families who have moved recently governing bodies should consider previous commitment in another church. Evidence should be sought from the previous minister. Some examples of evidence of involvement are given below.

- (i) Participation in church activities.
- (ii) Membership of church committees.
- (iii) Responsibilities in the church, eg, steward, sidesperson, youth leader, Sunday school teacher.
- (iv) Leading worship.

However, it is important to note the considerations mentioned in the previous paragraph which may apply to some families. No one definition of Christian commitment will be suitable for all church schools. Each governing body should work out for itself what is appropriate to the particular circumstances of their community.

FAMILY OR PARENT?

2.12 Governing bodies may take into account the commitment of the parent/guardian, or family, and, in secondary schools, that of the pupil. Again it is important to define the terms used. If a governing body means to restrict "family" to parents and guardians, this should be made clear in the policy. If a broader definition is meant, eg, including grandparents, this should also be explained.

OTHER FAITHS

2.14 Some church schools attract parents of other faiths who choose a church school because it recognises the value of faith and acknowledges the reality of the presence of God. In the foundation/open place model, children of other faiths would naturally fall in the open category. Where priority is given to families of other faiths, governing bodies will need to obtain appropriate evidence of commitment from the faith leader and make it clear in the policy that such evidence is required. Governors may also wish to consider what proportion of the intake should be from families of other faiths.

June 1998 (Schools Committee)

Revised June 2000

Reference: *Admission and Appeals in C of E Schools: Guidelines for Governors of VA and Foundation Schools*, SDBE, 2003.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT AND EXCLUSION OF PUPILS

The Diocesan Board of Education urges governors, in their consideration of behaviour management, discipline and exclusion, to temper their deliberations by the Christian values of love, forgiveness and justice. The Board recognises that sometimes this is extremely difficult as headteachers have to balance their responsibility to an individual pupil with their responsibility to a whole class, with the possible end result of rejection of the individual for the good of the whole group.

The Board believes that in a church school, the Christian faith should be communicated through every aspect of church school life. Relationships between staff, pupils and parents should be founded on love and care. Pupils should feel that they belong to a community where they are valued and are encouraged to learn and interact with others in a constructive atmosphere. The Christian ethos of a church school should provide an environment where such positive approaches may be adopted.

The Christian's starting point is recognising that everyone is created in the image of God and is of infinite worth. Additionally, taking as their example Christ's selfless love and compassion, Christians are enabled to create hope and revive purpose. The Christian gospel however, is concerned not only with love and forgiveness but also with repentance and justice. There is a need to recognise that discipline is not only a corrective measure to try to improve behaviour, but is part of Christian love. Everyone has a capacity for self-determination and change. The school should be a place where individuals are encouraged and supported, but at the same time, a place where justice prevails.

Within this context, the Board recommends to governors that their policy should contain:

- a clear statement of the philosophy upon which the policy is based;
- a set of codes of practice for pupils, staff, parents, governors and any regular visitors to the school;
- details of the rewards used to commend good behaviour among pupils;
- a description of the action to be taken when a breakdown in the observance of the codes occurs; and
- suggested procedures for reconciliation and the reintroduction of a pupil into school after exclusion.

January 1995

CAPABILITY PROCEDURES

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that fair, consistent and objective procedures exist for matters relating to staff capability. The capability procedures should not be thought of simply as a means of imposing sanctions or as necessarily leading to dismissal. The intention of the procedures and guidance is that they should encourage all employees to achieve and maintain high standards of performance.

Governing bodies should ensure that in all matters relating to capability, particular attention is paid to providing equal opportunities for all employees. Well-planned support and/or counselling should precede formal procedures. The employee should be helped to improve or resolve the situation as soon as it becomes apparent. Counselling may often be the most satisfactory method of resolving problems relating to a capability matter.

July 2004

Reference: *Capability Procedures for Employees in VA and Foundation Schools*, NATSOC publication with SDBE and London Diocesan Board of Schools, 2004.

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

In view of the Christian foundation of the Church of England schools in the Diocese, the Board of Education recommends that governing bodies ensure that there is a nomination for the chair from among their foundation governors. The chair of governors needs to have a vision for the school and its future development and needs to understand the role of the church school in the local community and in particular, in relation to the church community. The chair of governors will be mindful of the ethos of the school and will wish to ensure that the school's Christian foundation, as reflected in the Trust Deed, is safeguarded and developed.

The Board considers it vital that the incumbent of the parish plays an active role in the school through his/her involvement with the governing body. The Board recognises that incumbents do not always feel that their skills lie in chairing the governing body, but believes it important for incumbents to consider seriously how they might act as a pastoral support to the headteacher and staff in the school.

The Board is aware that there is a legal requirement for governing bodies to elect a chair and vice-chair of governors. However, it recognises that the role of the chair of governors can be an enormous task and that in some governing bodies there is a reluctance among members to take on this particular role. The Board strongly recommends, therefore, that governing bodies look at practical ways of supporting the chair of governors and sharing the workload.

The Board suggests that the expectations of the role of the chair of governors are clearly set down and agreed by the governing body and that the vice-chair takes on specific responsibilities so that the role complements that of the chair. It is important that both are supported in their respective roles by individual members of the governing body working together through an effective committee structure. The Board is committed to supporting chairs of governors through training and advice and will continue to look at ways of improving its support.

January 1997 (Schools Committee)

CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMIES

- The Diocesan Board of Education must have Membership of the Trustee Body.
- The Diocesan Board of Education must have strong representation on the Governing Body. Where there are sponsors other than the Church of England, the Diocesan Board of Education must have equality with the other sponsors in the number of its appointees to the Governing Body. (E.g. where there are three sponsors including the Diocese, the sponsor representation could be 3-3-3 (or 2-2-2). Sponsors (including the DBE) must be in the majority on the Governing Body. One of the DBE appointed governors should be the Diocesan Bishop or his nominee.
- Where the Diocesan Board of Education owns the freehold of the land, and provides this for the purpose of establishing an Academy, the DBE must be officially recognised as having equal rights as the other sponsor(s), including the right to chair the Governing Body (on an agreed basis with the other sponsors, possibly on a rotating basis).
- The *long-term* Christian distinctiveness of the Academy must be secured through various legal and structural arrangements as well as through operational policies.
- The Memorandum & Articles of Association of the Academy must make explicit the Church of England Foundation and the principles on which the Academy is to be conducted. The constitutional documents of the Academy must be consonant with the objects of the Diocesan Board of Education.
- The Academy must be designated by the Secretary of State as a school with a religious character under the Religious Character of Schools (Designation Procedure) (Independent Schools) (England) Regulations 2003.
- The Academy must fall within the provisions of the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 1991 as amended by Schedule 7 to the Education Act 2002.
- As a school with a religious character, Governors will legally be able to appoint Christian teachers (as in a VA school – see Section 60 of Schools Standards & Frameworks Act 1998 as amended by the Independent Schools (Employment of Teachers in Schools with a Religious Character) Regulations 2003).
- The Principal must be a practising member of the Church of England.
- Collective worship must be according to the Anglican tradition.
- RE must be provided in line with the Diocesan Policy.
- Collective Worship/RE must be subject to Section 23 Inspections.
- The Diocesan Board of Education will support the development a strong Christian ethos in the life of the Academy.
- Admissions to the Academy should have an appropriate balance of ‘Open’ and ‘Foundation’ places, sufficient to ensure that the school is a distinctively Christian and inclusive community.
- The Academy will seek to ensure that it has strong links with the local parishes and deanery/deaneries.
- It should be a clear aspiration to have a Chapel as an integral part of the Academy buildings.
- The Academy will develop a strong lay and/or ordained chaplaincy team.
- Although technically an independent school, the Academy should be considered fully to be part of the Church of England family of schools in the diocese.
- Where the DBE has a service agreement with its schools, the Academy will be strongly encouraged to participate in this and look to the Diocese for advice and support in relevant matters.
- The Governors and Principal of the Academy will be encouraged to work in partnership with other Church and Community schools as reflecting the Church’s enduring partnership with the state. Church of England Academies should not become enclaves that operate independently of their local context. Good relations should be fostered with LEAs (even though Academies are directly funded by the Secretary of State).
- Where a Church of England Academy offers Full Service Extended School provision, this should be seen (*and grasped*) as a real opportunity for the Church to engage with the local community in a strong statement of the Church’s mission to the nation.

- Academies are intended to offer opportunities to enhance social inclusion and educational opportunities in areas of social deprivation. Church of England Academies are ideally placed to provide a headline statement of the Church's commitment to educational progression and innovation in the 21st Century.

March 2004 (Board)
Updated 25 August 2004

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The daily act of Collective Worship is a legal requirement in all schools. In a Church School it should always be Christian worship and it should reflect the traditions of the Church of England. It should provide opportunity everyone in the school to:

- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Reflect on the attributes of God
- Reflect on the teachings of Christ
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes
- Share each others joys and challenges
- Celebrate special times in the Christian Calendar
- Foster respect and unity
- Deepen spiritual awareness

Collective Worship has a major contribution to upholding the religious character of a Church School and ensuring that it is understood and owned by all pupils and staff. For this reason it is recommended a working party comprising representatives of the Foundation Governors and teaching staff meet periodically to monitor Collective Worship policy and practice.

June 2004 (Schools Committee)

ETHOS STATEMENT

The Schools Committee of the Board strongly recommends the following model Ethos Statement to the Governing Bodies of Church of England Schools within the Diocese of Southwark.

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

24 November 1998 (Schools Committee)

FEDERATION POLICY

The Board recognises that it may be advantageous in certain circumstances for schools to federate and acknowledges that collaboration between schools is important whether on a formal or informal basis. However, the Board is concerned to preserve and develop the Church of England foundation of its schools whatever their status. It is the Board's view that because of the reduction in the number of foundation governors required by the regulations, voluntary aided schools should only federate with other voluntary aided schools. Also, where it is proposed to federate voluntary controlled schools with other voluntary controlled schools, the proportion of foundation governors should at least equal the proportion prior to federation. Similarly, in any proposal to federate a voluntary controlled, or C of E foundation, school with a community school, steps must be taken to preserve the Christian ethos of the church school and the proportion of foundation governors should again at least equal the proportion prior to federation.

In any proposal to federate church schools under one headteacher, the Board must use its best endeavours to secure that the person appointed is able to maintain, strengthen and develop the Christian ethos of the school.

24 November 2005 (Board Meeting)

FOUNDATION GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Board believes that the preservation of the Christian ethos of church schools is of fundamental importance. The role of foundation governors is critical in preserving and developing this ethos and the Board, therefore, strongly advises PCCs to encourage its appointees in strengthening the links between the parish and the school.

1.2 Following several requests for advice from Parochial Church Council (PCC) secretaries, incumbents and headteachers this guidance is offered to assist PCCs when appointing governors to Church of England schools. It is important that PCCs follow consistent practice and that the needs of the school are taken into account when making appointments. Parishes with church schools have a responsibility to support the school and exercising care in the appointment of those representing the Parish as governors is one way that that support may be realised. By their very nature church secondary schools do not relate, necessarily, to only one parish and will draw pupils from a wide area: the advice contained in this paper could apply equally to bodies other than parishes which have a responsibility to appoint foundation governors.

1.3 The Board recognises the commitment of many parishes in the Diocese which see their church school(s) as part of the Church's mission and which already take seriously the appointment of members of their congregations to serve as foundation governors. The Board recognises that finding governors able to give the proper time and commitment to the task is not easy and does not wish, in offering this guidance, either to dictate the way in which PCC appointments are made, or to create any obstacles for PCCs. In most parishes there is now an additional responsibility to appoint parents who have children at the school as foundation governors (two in primary schools and three in secondary schools, see Instrument of Government for details). It is hoped that PCCs will see this guidance as an opportunity to review and either affirm its current practice or consider, where appropriate, changes to its policy.

2 THE CHURCH SCHOOL FOUNDATION

2.1 In voluntary aided church schools, foundation governors are in a majority on the governing body: in controlled and foundation church schools, foundation governors normally constitute one-quarter of the membership. PCCs need to be aware that in a majority of cases, particularly in primary schools, they are the main appointing body of foundation governors. This places an added responsibility on PCCs to ensure that those who are appointed as their representatives understand that they have a particular duty to ensure that the character of the school as a Church of England school is preserved and developed and that the school is conducted in accordance with the trust deed. PCCs should be mindful of the Church of England foundation of the school (except where the school has an ecumenical foundation) when appointing its representatives, however, it is recognised that sometimes there are good reasons for appointing those from other Christian churches.

2.2 Foundation governors should have a particular concern for religious education and worship in the school and at the same time make the most of opportunities to create a school in which the Christian faith is manifest through every aspect of the school's life. The church school is institutionally rooted in the Christian faith and is thus different from any other school. In seeking to preserve the character of their schools, foundation governors will want to contribute to sustaining, developing and nurturing the school's Christian ethos.

3 THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

3.1 The appointment process should be agreed by the PCC and stated clearly so that everyone is aware how the appointments are made. The following is suggested as a possible model:

- (a) new appointees must be nominated and seconded by a member of the PCC or church congregation;
- (b) prospective appointees should be made aware of the responsibilities of foundation governors;
- (c) prospective appointees should provide reasons as to why they wish to serve the church and school as a foundation governor and the skills that they hope to bring to the governance of the school;
- (d) appointees should be communicant Anglicans, or members of other Christian churches;
- (e) normally, the PCC will consult with the chair of governors and the headteacher before making an appointment or re-appointment;
- (f) the PCC will ensure that the principles of equal opportunities are upheld in making its appointments.

3.2 In (a) above, PCCs may wish to consider whether this should be extended to include other churches within the benefice. In some parishes, church schools have links with other churches from which the school population is drawn. It may be desirable in such cases for the PCC to appoint a proportion of their foundation governors from other churches where there is a clear, established link. This should be clearly stated in any policy. It is sometimes the case that PCCs are unable to find the requisite number of foundation governors from their own congregation. On such occasions PCCs will have to look to the wider church community. It may be that there are people within local parishes which do not have a church school who would view being a school governor as an opportunity to serve the Church. Point (d) above

allows for this eventuality. In making any appointment, PCCs will wish to ensure that, insofar as it is able, the foundation governors reflect the ethnic make-up of the school community.

Re-appointments

3.3 Being a member of a governing body commits a person to considerable responsibilities and duties. PCCs should be mindful of the need for continuity and stability on governing bodies in considering the re-appointment of an individual. However, there should be a mechanism for ensuring that appointees are fulfilling their responsibilities: re-appointment should not be automatic. Such information may be gleaned from the incumbent, the chair of governors and the headteacher. PCCs need to consider such issues as: regular attendance at meetings; commitment to the Church of England foundation; general commitment and loyalty to the school and the contribution made to the work of the governing body and its committees. Governing bodies cannot afford to have members who see their sole responsibility as attendance at meetings.

New appointments

3.4 In making new appointments, PCCs need to provide prospective appointees with sufficient information so that individuals are aware of the commitment they are taking on. They will need information about the specific role of foundation governors (outlined in section 2, above) and their responsibilities as members of a corporate governing body and about what will be expected of them, for example, the timing and number of meetings, expectations regarding membership of committees, visiting the school during the school day. It is recommended that new governors are given an information pack, such as that published by the SDBE, which provides for the inclusion of information by the school and by the PCC. It is also recommended that new governors are encouraged to attend appropriate training provided by the Diocesan Board of Education and/or local education authority.

3.5 There are regulations' in place which prevent certain people from being appointed as governors and PCCs should be aware of these when making appointments.

4 CONCLUSION

4.1 PCCs might wish to devise a policy statement in which the Parish's commitment to its church school, its staff and pupils and the education it provides is clearly stated. The statement might include practical expressions of the Parish's support for the school, one of which would be the seriousness with which it undertakes the appointment of its governors.

June 1996

Revised September 2000

GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINE OF SCHOOL STAFF

The Diocesan Board recommends that governors, after due consultation, adopt the practices and principles contained in the publication "Grievance and Discipline Procedures for Employees in Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools" (2004).

The Board supports the principle that discipline procedures should not be thought of simply as a means of imposing sanctions or as necessarily leading to dismissal. The intention of the policy and procedures is that they should encourage all employees to achieve and maintain high standards of conduct. Well planned support and counselling should, whenever possible, precede formal procedures. The employee should be helped to improve or resolve the situation as soon as it becomes apparent. Governing bodies should ensure that, in all matters relating to grievance and discipline, particular attention is paid to providing equal opportunities for all employees.

Revised July 2004

Reference: *Grievance and Discipline Procedures for Employees in Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools*, NATSOC publication with SDBE and London Diocesan Board for Schools, 2004.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF GIFTED, TALENTED AND ABLE PUPILS

The Board's commitment to the needs of able pupils is rooted in the Christian belief that each child is unique in the sight of God and that all abilities, gifts and potential are God-given deserving full development. There is ample Biblical evidence of the special gifts and abilities used for the glory of God and the requirement to act as good stewards of God-given talents and abilities. History bears witness to the Christian contribution to high academic achievement and the pursuit of excellence in areas such as art, music and science.

As a Christian Body the Board is committed to inclusion; the development of the full potential of all abilities; the development of a wide range of skills and abilities through a challenging curriculum; the promotion of teaching approaches which are matched to different abilities including those with high ability and special talents.

The Board encourages its schools to include provision for able pupils within the school improvement plan. The Board recommends that schools have an agreed policy on able and talented pupils, and that other curriculum policies of the school should make explicit reference to the needs of these pupils. The Board also recommends that schools identify, where possible, a member of staff to co-ordinate the implementation of the policy, and develop teaching skills for the more able through appropriate training.

It is the Board's belief that high ability and giftedness are displayed not simply in intellectual potential but in practical, aesthetic and personal and social skills. The Board is committed to an education which develops all these aspects and is, therefore, fully supportive of the initiatives taken by schools through clubs and extra-curricular activities to extend the interests and abilities of pupils and enhance pupil achievement. The Board also welcomes the government recommendation that schools should identify the 10% of gifted and talented pupils in their schools. The Board also strongly supports its secondary schools in pursuing specialist status within the government's current policy.

The Board occupies a unique position through its involvement in the schools of twelve different boroughs. It will therefore seek to consult with LEAs where appropriate and promote the dissemination of good practice relating to the needs of the more able pupils in its schools across these boroughs. Through its regular involvement with schools and colleges the Board will encourage them to provide for the needs of all pupils with high ability and to work in partnership with other agencies which may assist them in this provision.

The Board will advise governing bodies of the ways in which they may promote the needs of the able and talented pupils in their schools through training and through the support offered to schools before and after inspection.

The role of the Diocesan Board

Governors:

- To highlight the needs of gifted and talented pupils within its training programme.
- To facilitate the exchange of ideas and sharing of good practice.
- To support schools seeking specialist status.

Headteachers and teachers:

- To provide an informal network for the exchange of ideas, the sharing of common difficulties and good practice as with other areas of school provision.
- To encourage collaboration between schools over provision for more gifted and talented pupils where the Board has relevant information over local practice.
- To keep abreast of initiatives relating to the needs of more gifted and talented pupils in order to offer appropriate advice over sources of support and information to schools.

Local Education Authorities:

- To keep abreast of LA initiatives relating to the needs of more gifted and talented pupils in order to support Diocesan schools.

DfES:

- To participate fully in any consultation in relation to measures aimed at addressing the needs of the more gifted and talented, when requested to do so.

26 June 1997 (Schools Committee)

Revised 2 November 2006

NURSERY EDUCATION

The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education re-affirms its commitment to nursery education. This issues from a firm belief in the impact well structured provision makes in the foundation stage, including nursery, on later achievement of pupils. It endorses the view that:

- the number of nursery places should be increased as rapidly as is consistent with standards of accommodation, staffing and other resources;
- that the quality of education offered to the three to five year olds should have the same priority as that given to pupils of statutory and post-statutory age;

- that support should be given to the lobby that the education budget should be re-focused so that more money is spent on pre-statutory education.

January 1995 (Schools Committee)

Revised June 2004 (Schools Committee)

OFSTED INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS

The Board of Education views OFSTED inspection (Section 5) as a positive contribution to a school's ongoing improvement. The inspection process provides a school with a comprehensive and objective evaluation of the standards being achieved, the curriculum provided, the efficiency of its management and the quality of its ethos as a church school. It provides the schools with an objective assessment of its self-evaluation and enables a school to re-assess the priorities it has set in its own development plan and celebrates the areas where there is solid achievement and in which significant progress has already been made.

The Board welcomed the modifications to the OFSTED framework introduced in 2005 which lightened the demands on schools; the Board is committed to the support of schools within the Diocese in relation to inspection in the following ways:

- by offering training for the staff and governors, when requested, as part of their preparation for inspection;
- by advising on the Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools (SIAS) as defined in Section 48 of the Education Act 2005;
- by maintaining a register of SIAS inspectors and coordinating and monitoring the SIAS inspection of Diocesan schools;
- supporting schools in the ongoing self-assessment process relating to SIAS through consultation and the provision of training;
- by offering support to governors and senior management of schools in responding to issues raised in SIAS inspection;
- by working closely with the governors of schools requiring special measures, or with a notice to improve, in close collaboration with the Local Authority. The Board will also exercise its statutory right to appoint additional governors where it considers that such action will strengthen the governing body;
- by monitoring the outcomes of both OFSTED and SIAS inspections through presentations to the Schools Committee of the Board;
- by working closely with the National Society in the development and monitoring of SIAS inspection nationally;
- by monitoring the conduct of Section 5 inspections and making representation to the DfES and OFSTED when appropriate.

March 1995 (Schools Committee)

Revised September 2000

Revised 2 November 2006

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND APPRAISAL IN CHURCH SCHOOLS

The Diocesan Board of Education is committed to the value of performance management and appraisal being set within the context of the professional development of teachers and the enhancement of the learning progress for pupils.

The Board believes that the distinctive features of Church of England schools are integral to all aspects of school life and are not additional features and that all arrangements for appraisal should reflect this.

An important aspect of 'performance' in church schools must be the teacher's contribution to the preservation and development of a school's religious character. It is important therefore for performance management policies in church schools to include at the beginning the school's ethos (and mission) statement and the expectation of members of staff that they will contribute to the development of that ethos into every aspect of the school's life and especially their classroom.

For their part governors must be committed to working closely with staff to pursue the Christian mission of the school. As responsible Christian employers they must be committed to the following fundamental principles in dealing with staff:

- **Partnership** – It is vital to the success of performance management that teachers are fully involved in developing the policy and any future revision;
- **Transparency** – The policy needs to be written in such a way that teachers are clear about how performance management will support them in securing continued and further improvement. Everyone involved – governors, headteacher, team leaders and teachers – needs to understand the process it describes and ensure that they are fully aware of their rights and duties within it;

- **Fairness** – All concerned need to be aware of the potential for unconscious discrimination and to avoid assumptions about individuals based on stereotyping; and,
- **Equality of opportunity** – All teachers should be encouraged and supported to achieve their potential through creating objectives, undertaking development and having their performance assessed.

October 2000 (Schools Committee)

PROVISION OF SCHOOL PLACES - PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Within the Diocese of Southwark, decisions regarding the provision of school places will be made with reference to the following principles:

- (i) Maintaining the historic places in voluntary aided schools;
- (ii) Maintaining and increasing places in voluntary aided schools;
- (iii) Promoting pre-statutory provision in the form of nursery classes;
- (iv) Recognising that one form of entry primary schools are viable and, in the main, very effective;
- (v) Supporting small C of E rural schools as centres for their communities;
- (vi) While recognising the arguments for integration of pupils with special educational needs the Board believes that pupils with profound and complex disabilities will require special provision.
- (vii) Monitoring sixth form provision where this exists and promoting such provision where it is practicable to do so and where it is supported by governing bodies and demanded by parents;
- (viii) Promoting high quality education demonstrating Christian beliefs as expressed in the ethos statement of the school's Instrument of Government; and
- (ix) Recognising the role of the school in the mission of the Church and the life of the community.

October 1999 (Schools Committee)

PRIMARY EDUCATION

The Diocesan Board of Education believes that whenever it is practicable or appropriate, and paying recognition to governors' legal responsibilities and local knowledge, a 5-11 primary school, incorporating Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, should be the considered model for Church of England primary schools for the foreseeable future.

September 1994 (Schools Committee)

Re-affirmed 24 November 1998 (Schools Committee)

RACISM

The Diocesan Board of Education believes that schools and their governing bodies have a significant role to play in addressing racism in society and that a prerequisite of this task is the formulation and adoption of clearly stated policies on all facets of school life which can be owned and proclaimed by all connected with the school.

The Board supports the view that effective countering of racial harassment and violence is essential for the success of a school in delivering a high quality education for all its pupils. The Board therefore recommends that statements of intent and strategies for combating racism are given priority by governors and headteachers in their endeavours to meet their responsibilities.

All those involved in the provision and management of education should be aware of the Code of Practice for educational institutions drawn up by the Commission for Racial Equality and issued under the *Race Relations Act*. Consideration should also be given to the recommendations in the Macpherson Report following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, in particular, Recommendation 68 which suggests that governors should have a duty to create and implement strategies in their schools to prevent and address racism.

The development, content and consequent management and monitoring of racial equality policies and procedures should contain a number of elements. These could include:

- (a) a racial equality statement - a declaration of the school's intent to combat racism;
- (b) an agreed definition of the forms of racism;
- (c) the provision of guidance for those dealing with perpetrators;
- (d) the provision of guidance for those concerned with the support of victims of racism;

- (e) identification of opportunities to adopt the best approach to oppose racism and prejudice through the curriculum;
- (f) monitoring racist incidents;
- (g) dealing with the impact of racism in schools;
- (h) mechanisms for regular reviews of the policies and procedures.

Racism has no part in the Christian Gospel. The Board exhorts schools and governors to consider the themes of justice and the importance of human worth in the booklet *Colour and Spice* (2000), a document which challenges our complacency, our prejudices and our misconceptions.

June 1994

Revised September 2000

Reference: *Colour and Spice: Guidance on Combating Racism in Church Schools*, SDBE, 2000.

REDUNDANCY OF STAFF

The Board recognises the very difficult task that governors are facing in making some staff redundant. In exercising this responsibility the Board draws governors' attention to the following:

- that a governing body ensures that at its first meeting of the school year it formally reviews the membership of its committees and provides them with written terms of reference; this includes the committees which may be needed in connection with redundancies;
- that as employers, governing bodies have considerable responsibilities in relation to redundancy procedures. Such procedures must be fair and consistent, have been drawn up in close consultation with staff and have been formally adopted by the governing body. Copies of the procedures should be readily available within the school; and
- that governors need to pay particular attention to the needs of all those involved in a redundancy procedure and to ensure that pastoral support is available on request for all concerned.

Revised July 2004

Reference: *Redundancy Procedures for Employees in Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools*, NATSOC publication with SDBE and London Diocesan Board for Schools, 2004.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT POST-16

The Board believes that the contribution of religious education (RE) and collective worship to the enrichment of individuals, communities and social and working life should not be underestimated. At post-16 level RE is concerned with belief, and with the cultural, creative, transformative, reflective and cohesive dimensions of social and spiritual well-being. Church of England secondary schools in the diocese with post-16 provision will recognise this potential and will plan and resource the curriculum offer accordingly.

Religious education at this level has significant potential. The following points could be made:

- (i) As a subject with such skills as critical analysis, isolation of truth, transformation of ideas into rationally refined argument, accepting and making sense of ambiguity, RE has much to offer to a work-related curriculum. It can match many of the requirements of employers such as literacy, flexibility, autonomy, broader perspectives, confidence and maturity in the expression of concepts and ideas.
- (ii) RE's distinctiveness is its capacity to engage and interact with the subtleties and intricacies of belief and faith in a diverse and conflicting society. It deals with the sensitive inner world of others' spiritual expression which displays itself in belief, practice and action, both in private and public life – the one essentially affecting the other.
- (iii) Education for employment, vocational education, needs to be refined if we are to avoid an entirely utilitarian view of human purpose in education. RE can lead to reflective enlightened working practices that recognises the need for co-operation with others and the understanding of human interrelatedness.
- (iv) Based on research in psychological development and RE, it is possible to conclude that some elements of education dependent on cognitive maturation, (such as, critical reflection, the ability to cope with ambiguity and conflict, sensitive and sophisticated inter-personal, inter-faith and inter-cultural interaction), will need to be provided for at post 16 level. To cease to provide RE at 16+ is perhaps to stunt the growth of critical being, what Archbishop Rowan Williams calls "reciprocal definition".

- (v) The range of different courses that can be created through linking RE and vocational education is potentially very exciting. Students could study courses on the conflict of belief in matters of life and death related to health and social care practice; they could examine the effect of market forces in business on local faith communities; an exploration could be made of human resources and company practice in relation to belief about human dignity and purpose (the divine uniqueness of each human being); religious symbolism in the expressive arts could be another study. The scope of RE as a vibrant and vital resource for enrichment in the post 16 curriculum should be consciously recognised and promoted in a church secondary school.

May 2000 (Schools Committee)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOLS

In all Church Primary Schools it is intended that the Religious Education provided will enable pupils to:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith through a study of Creation, Prayer and Worship, the Life and Teachings of Jesus, Old Testament Characters, Living out the Faith and Christian Festivals.
- Apply an understanding of Christianity to make reasoned and informed responses to life issues and moral choices.
- Develop some knowledge and understanding of other principal religions, particularly those represented in their community.
- Apply an understanding of religion to develop sensitivity and respect toward all people.
- Develop the ability to reflect on and communicate issues of truth, belief and faith.

The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education has produced a scheme of work for the teaching of Religious Education in its VA schools. It is recommended for use by each school with due regard to its Trust Deeds. The scheme comprises units of study for the teaching of Christianity at Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2 and the study of Judaism and Islam at KS2. It clearly identifies opportunities for pupils to learn about religion, Attainment Target 1, and learn from religion, Attainment Target 2. Some schools decide to teach Judaism in KS1 and to introduce another principle religion in KS2. The Diocesan Advisor will help provide schools with appropriate schemes of work.

March 2004 (Schools Committee)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CHURCH SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education recognises that in a voluntary Aided Church of England school it is the Governing Body who is responsible for the syllabus for Religious Education. The Headteacher and staff work with and under the direction of the Governing Body. It is the Governing Body's responsibility to ensure that Religious Education is provided for all registered pupils, including those in the Sixth Form, in accordance with the Trust Deed.

While it is not usual for parents who have chosen to send their children to a church school to withdraw them from Religious Education, the school prospectus should contain a statement about the law, so that parents who wish to exercise their rights may do so.

The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education suggests that any policy for Religious Education should contain the following elements:

- ❖ Links to the school Mission Statement
- ❖ Aims for Religious Education*
- ❖ Links to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural dimensions of education
- ❖ Links with the local Agreed Syllabus and other resource material
- ❖ An overview of the programmes of study
- ❖ Organisation of teaching groups
- ❖ Assessment and record keeping policy
- ❖ Special Education Needs provision/differentiated groups
- ❖ Equal Opportunity links
- ❖ Allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education
- ❖ Examination information: entry policy/short or long course entries/analysis of results
- ❖ Employment of subject specialists
- ❖ Display and marking policies
- ❖ Links to literacy, numeracy and ICT
- ❖ Accommodation

*Aims for Religious Education in a Church of England school.

Religious Education should help pupils:

- ❖ To acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith

- ❖ To develop the ability to make reasoned and informed responses to religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain
- ❖ To have a reflective attitude to life
- ❖ To have an understanding of the influences of religious beliefs, values and traditions on individual and the wider community
- ❖ To recognise and build upon pupils' prior knowledge and faith background
- ❖ To reflect on personal beliefs and experiences in the light of their studies
- ❖ To develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own and towards living in a society of many religions

March 2004 (Schools Committee)

SECONDARY AND POST-16 EDUCATION

It is the Board's policy to have 11-19 secondary schools, with sixth forms. Thirteen out of the fourteen C of E secondary schools in the Diocese are designated 11-19 schools with stand alone sixth form provision.

The Board sees the distinctive ethos and contribution of religious education (RE) and worship to the spiritual well-being of post-16 students as vital. In general, development of these important areas has been neglected in post-16 education. OFSTED reports show that despite their legal obligation schools rarely make provision for post-16 RE and Worship. Within church schools with post-16 provision and in Church Sixth Form Colleges the experience is very different. In these institutions the religious and spiritual dimensions constitute an essential part of the creation of ethos and corporateness for the whole school community. Religious Education is not merely guaranteed as part of the curriculum but enhanced to reflect the wholeness of all that is best in a balanced educational offer, with appropriate resourcing, staffing and staff development.

The Board recognises that it is the right of parents and pupils to make decisions and choices as to what type of post-16 provision is appropriate. Many parents still seek small scale, safe provision where they feel closely involved in the education of their children. The sixth form in an 11-19 school offers a smaller social group, with all that this implies for cohesiveness and security. It offers continuity, both academic and pastoral: it is well known that to transfer from one educational establishment to another causes stress for a number of students. Schools, by reason of being concerned with children and compulsory full-time education, are inherently orientated to providing a complete curriculum to each student, and to be aware of each student as going through a process of personal maturation.

The Board appreciates that school sixth forms are expensive with group sizes of 10-12, on average, but cheapness will not guarantee quality. In church schools retention and examination pass rates show significant increases and demonstrate the high levels of academic and pastoral support on offer. A number of students would not have stayed on or gone on to university without the support, monitoring and nurture provided by the schools. Some pupils need time to develop and grow and Church of England sixth forms have examples of supporting pupils and families where there is no tradition of going on to higher education.

Finally, having a sixth form can impact significantly on the recruitment and retention of teachers. Many staff value the opportunity to teach and mix with the 16-19 age group. It is the context for entry and job satisfaction for some of the most effective teachers.

May 2004 (Schools Committee)

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Board's commitment to special educational needs has its starting point in the Christian Gospel which recognises the uniqueness and value of the individual and which touches every area of human need. Christ's ministry is characterised by His openness to and concern for each person, in particular those needing support. As Christians in education the Board accepts the Gospel imperative to identify with this commitment, which will have particular relevance to pupils with special educational needs in our schools and colleges. This will be displayed through the Board's opposition to prejudice and pre-conceived ideas and through co-operation with its schools and colleges in fostering a learning climate which is inclusive and which provides effectively for pupils with special educational needs.

As a Christian Body, the Board will seek particularly to engender in its schools a full and balanced view of education, promoting a broad definition of achievement which includes the spiritual and moral development of all pupils.

The Board fully supports the principles set out in the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice* (DfES 2001). The Board supports the principle that whenever possible the special educational needs of children will be met in mainstream schools. It also however supports the right of parents to choose specialist provision where it is deemed to be in the best interests of the child. Although the Board does not share the role, statutory responsibilities and resources of a local education authority (LEA)

in respect of special educational needs, it does occupy a unique position through its involvement in the schools of twelve different boroughs. It will therefore seek to consult with LEAs where appropriate and promote the dissemination of good practice in the area of special educational needs in its schools across these boroughs. Through its regular involvement with schools and colleges the Board will encourage them to value the contribution of all pupils, to provide for the needs of all pupils and to work in partnership with other agencies which support the best provision for those with special educational needs.

The Board will advise governing bodies of their statutory responsibilities to make appropriate provision for pupils with special educational needs and to monitor the effectiveness of their policies. This will be done through training and the support offered to schools before and after inspection.

Through its role in school building development the Board will take account of special needs issues related to accommodation and work in partnership with LEAs to ensure that, wherever possible, its schools are accessible to people with special needs.

The Role of the Diocesan Board

Governors:

- To provide training and advice in the exercise of their statutory responsibilities with respect to special educational needs.
- To facilitate the exchange of ideas and sharing of good practice.
- To encourage governors' awareness of the implications of their mission statement and aims in respect of special educational needs.
- To foster partnership between designated governors for special educational needs and the school's co-ordinator.
- To promote governors' awareness of special educational needs' issues relating to improvements in accommodation.

Headteachers and teachers:

- To provide an informal network for the exchange of ideas, the sharing of common difficulties and good practice.
- To encourage collaboration between schools over provision for special educational needs where the Board has relevant information over local practice.

Local Education Authorities:

- To raise concerns of Diocesan schools with LEAs related to special educational needs, including the basis for funding, through representation on education committees and consultation with LEA officers.

DfES:

- To participate fully in consultation in relation to new legislation on special educational needs.

January 1996 (Schools Committee)

Revised June 2004 (Schools Committee)

SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION

The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education welcomes the new guidance from the DfEE on Sex and Relationship Education. Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. It should not be delivered in isolation. It should be firmly rooted within the framework for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and the National Curriculum, and should be taught within a moral, family-oriented and Christian context.

As part of sex and relationship education, pupils should be taught about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children and the significance of stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. It is recognised that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage and care needs to be taken to ensure that there is not stigmatisation of children, based on their home circumstances.

Parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. Schools should always work in partnership with parents, consulting them regularly on the content of the programmes. Others in the wider community, such as, health professionals, social workers, youth workers etc, will also have a valuable part to play.

Sex and relationship education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.

September 1996 (Schools Committee)

Revised September 2000

STAFF SICKNESS ABSENCE

Governing bodies have a duty to be fair and consistent in any dealings with members of staff who are their employees. This is particularly important in Church schools, where the network of personal relationships within the school community has as its starting point the Christian gospel, which recognises the uniqueness and value of the individual. When the issue concerns sickness on the part of the member of staff, governors will want to demonstrate compassion and sensitivity. Balanced with those attributes, however, they must also ensure that employees fulfil their contractual obligations where possible.

Prolonged or frequent occasional sickness can cause disruption in the workplace and can be unfair to colleagues. It is also important that governors have uppermost in their minds the need to maintain high standard of education for the pupils in the school. Good attendance is necessary to maximise efficiency and effectiveness and it is essential that any policy designed to deal with sickness absence is fair and equitable, enabling governors to deal with each case on its own merits.

July 2004

Reference: *Managing Staff Sickness Absence: Procedures for Employees in Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools*, NATSOC publication with SDBE and London Diocesan Board for Schools 2004

VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS – CHANGE OF STATUS

The Board recognises the value of all its schools regardless of their category. The Board believes that voluntary aided status secures the long term Christian character of the school through the governing body's ability to appoint Christian teachers, its responsibility for the admission and RE policies and through the foundation majority on the governing body. The Board would encourage the governors of the four voluntary controlled schools in the Diocese to consider changing the category of their schools to voluntary aided.

June 2002 (Board Meeting)