

SOUTHWARK DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

POLICY STATEMENT

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.