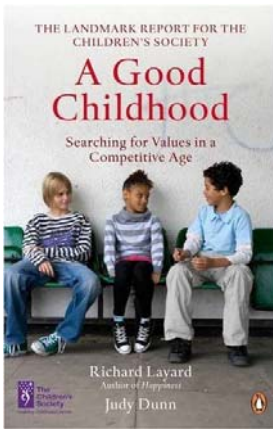


Director's Jottings



A Good Childhood, published last month received a couple of days coverage in the national media and then vanished as new stories took its place. It was ever thus.

But it is an important report, written after two years of gathering evidence and it deserves our sustained attention. It's written in an accessible and engaging style and wears its extensive research base lightly. This was a calculated risk; the authors wanted the book to be read and considered as widely as possible.

Its central message is that our children's lives would be much better if adults could learn to be less individualistic and competitive and re-discover the value of love. Despite greater affluence, life has become more difficult for our children. Surveys show that, since around 2000, one in six of our children have been suffering from serious emotional or behavioural difficulties compared with only one in 10 some 20 years earlier. The report identifies as a root cause, 'a belief among adults that the prime duty of the individual is to make the most of their own life, rather than contribute to the good of others'.

It said this 'excessive individualism' was the cause of high rates of family break-up, unhealthy competition in schools, unprincipled advertising and acceptance of income inequality which leaves millions of children living in poverty.

The report's chapter headings set out the ground it covered. They are:

- ◆ Family
- ◆ Friends
- ◆ Lifestyle
- ◆ Values
- ◆ Schooling
- ◆ Mental Health
- ◆ Inequalities.



A Good Childhood concludes, 'We need a more positive attitude to children, where we welcome them into our society and want to help them....our adult society has to change...It is possible to construct a modern society in which there are higher levels of child well-being than in Britain. The key is an ethic in which we care more for each other...It is a world like this, built on the law of love, that we should create with our children.'

There are specific recommendations for those who run our schools. The chapter starts with a well known line of WB Yeats, 'Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire' Schools should be transformational, enlarging the mind and enriching the spirit. Obsession with the easily measurable and utilitarian is un-

helpful, the Report suggests, 'What does this do to a child's curiosity and excitement about what she learns...The narrow focus is on knowledge and skills with too little room for teaching related to feelings or social commitment'.

So it urges government to replace SATS tests with an annual assessment designed mainly to guide a child's learning and to stop publishing data on individual schools from which league tables are constructed by the media. It also suggests raising the pay and status of people who work with children including teachers and child care workers and offering a salary supplement to teachers taking jobs in deprived areas.

Much of what is suggested strikes a chord with Church Schools and resonates with their ethos. Schools should 'develop happy, likable and pro-social personalities' and discipline which is based on 'mutual respect'. *A Good Childhood* praises the quality of PHSE in primary schools and says that sex and relationship education be presented not as 'biology' but as part of 'social and emotional learning'.

A Good Childhood: Searching for Values in a Competitive Age is published by Penguin.

Didn't they do well?

Good schools are about far more than published results and Ofsted outcomes. But it is good to know that our Church Schools continue to do well by these measures too.

We recently undertook some research about our schools' inspection outcomes now an inspection cycle is virtually complete. The results were very encouraging: no schools in a 'category' and grades above the local and national averages in most cases.

A recent census of diocesan Boards of Education across the country also gave us grounds for satisfaction. We offer an excellent level of services with a relatively small team. For that we are immensely grateful not just to dedicated colleagues but to our many volunteers, including Headteachers and Bishop's Visitors, who freely give so much.

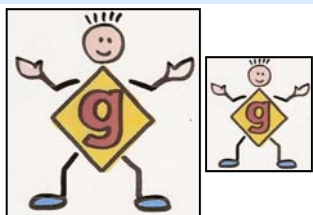
However, we are not complacent and are reviewing our structures at present. If you think any aspect of our organisation or governance could be improved, please do contact us with your ideas and suggestions.



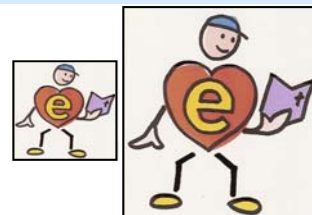
Tim Elbourne

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The Schools Bulletin is published fortnightly in term. We are pleased to publish news and notices. Please send details and pictures (.jpeg) and we will try to include them. Send to: debbie.jordan@ely.anglican.org

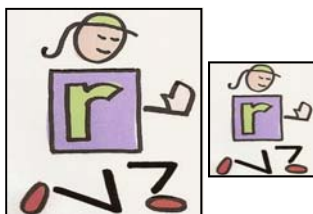


Flippin' Praise It's here at last!

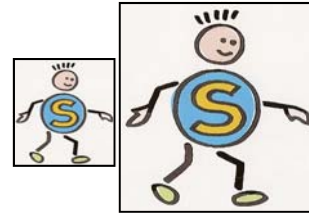


The collective worship flip book we were trialling last year is now in print! **Flippin' Praise** is an interactive flip book which helps you to structure collective worship under the four headings of Gathering, Engaging, Responding, Sending.

Schools which have used the prototype have found it makes a real difference to their collective worship – in particular it assists pupils in taking on the role of collective worship leaders in a real and effective way. The book costs £10. Shirley will be bringing copies out to RE meetings for sale, or you can order them through Debbie at £10 + £1 postage (cheques to EDSF). Bulk orders (one for each class?) will attract a discount.



Let's get flippin'!



Vellore IT Equipment

Multi-sensory Spiritual Garden

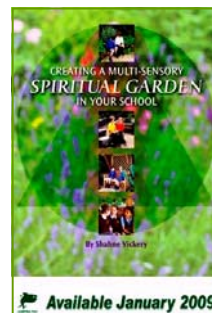
Following on from the article by William de Yaxley Junior school, I am also delighted to report that **St Martin at Shouldham Primary School**, near King's Lynn also raised a massive **£2,000** towards this project by holding various fundraising events.

“Creating a Multi-sensory Spiritual Garden in your School” is a new publication by Jumping Fish and offers a host of practical ideas and advice for schools to create a spiritual garden in their grounds.



This now brings the total amount raised for Vellore IT equipment to **£4,753** which overall equates to the purchase of 12 new Computers, which is a wonderful achievement.

It includes several hundred high quality photographs from school gardens throughout the UK as well as many fresh ideas for outdoor prayer and reflection activities.



Each chapter focuses on one of the 5 senses and considers how planting, hard landscaping, art installations and wild life habitats can be used to foster children's spiritual development.

A big thank you to all our schools who have contributed to this amazing sum!

The cost is **£22.50 + £2.00 p&p** (cheques made payable to Diocese of Gloucester Board of Finance) and can be ordered by emailing: jumpingfish@glosdioc.org.uk

Singing with the World



On March 2nd two dozen enthusiastic teachers joined with Jan Payne and Shirley to explore a multicultural dimension to music in collective worship, using the Iona Group's excellent new resource **“Sing with the World”**.

They also had the opportunity to think about the World Church and hear some of the stories of last year's Lambeth Conference from Jan who had been on the Conference Music Team.

There were plenty of ideas to take back to school – not just of songs to use, but also of ways of teaching them – and a chance to think through the role of music in collective worship. Delegates left requesting a similar style of event next year with more worship ideas on other themes

– so watch this space, we'll see what we can do!

If any school would like a copy of the Sing with the World music book and CD, we still have three sets left at the special cost of £22.99p – contact Shirley for details.

From the Schools Team

Young Pavement Artists Competition



Get chalking in your area!

Medium: Chalk

Theme: Endangered Species

Canvas: Pavements, playgrounds, pathways, even patios!



Hold your own pavement artist event any time to 13th June 2009 and pick a winner for each category. Send photos of the winning entries to try for great prizes, including meeting celebrity supporters at a national awards ceremony.



Five age categories from 4-19—Entry fee: £1 per child

For more details log on to: www.muscular-dystrophy.org/pavementart or call 01225-354286

Last chance to see "Experience Easter"

This week the Experience Easter displays are at Yaxley Church and open for viewing between 4.00 and 6.00 p.m.

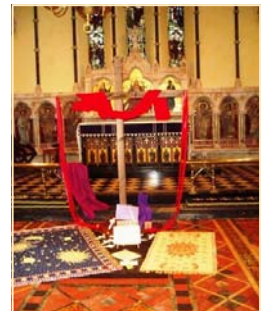
These are interactive displays which help children (and adults) engage with the story of Holy Week and Easter and its meaning for themselves.

The photographs show some of the same displays in Waterbeach Church last week where they received a steady stream of visitors from both schools and churches.



The materials are based on an excellent pack of suggestions from Gloucester Diocese which may be ordered at:

<http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/downloads/798.pdf>



Our thanks to Ros Wright for all the hard work she undertook in putting these displays together – do go and visit her at Yaxley if you can!

From the National Society

Making it Happen: The Children's Plan and You

Mela Watts, the Director of the DCSF Performance and Reform Group, is running a series of regional events on 'What does a 21st Century school look like?'



How can we work better together for children and families? How do we make a reality of the 'Every Child Matters' vision? What difference would a school report card make?'

You can have your say about how the Children's Plan ambition of making England the best place in the world for children to grow up will be realised. You will be given the opportunity to think about how the education system should be re-shaped to ensure it prepares every young person to make a success of their life. Schools have always

prided themselves on their focus on all aspects of children and young people's education, development and well-being.

The DCSF wants your views on how - in the 21st Century - schools should go further, by responding to the full range of educational and additional needs of children and young people; becoming more outward-facing; acting as a resource for families and the wider community; working more closely with other schools and services to ensure delivery; taking their place at the heart of local Children's Trust arrangements to help drive local priority-setting for all children; and be judged on their contribution across this broader front.

For further information and to register to attend log onto:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/21stcenturyschools

School Partnerships enriching learning

St Philip's is fortunate to be one of the four partner primary schools for St Bede's Inter Church Secondary school in Cambridge. For the last three years our Year 5 children have attended Humanities taster days in the Summer term and we have enjoyed visits from the Worship band, the school choir and the drama group which have enriched our collective worship.

On Monday 9th February a group of 11 students from St Bede's, together with Mr Chappell & Mrs Richardson came to our school and took the whole school assembly. This involved leading the school in singing some worship songs, a dramatised reading and prayers. Despite the school closures the previous week interfering with their practices, they did this in a very reverent and professional manner.



After the assembly the St Bede's students were interviewed by two classes of year 3/4 children about their involvement in the group and how this related to their personal faith. (This related to their current R.E. lessons.) The secondary students delighted and amazed all the staff and the younger pupils with the confidence with which they answered some searching questions. For example in response to the question "What holds you together as a group?" the students mentioned friendship and a love of music, but also their belief in God and a desire to share this with others.

Following the visit the year 3/4 children commented to their class teacher about how struck they were that *young* people were brave enough to talk about their Christian faith in such an open way without fear or embarrassment - they had thought that Christianity is for "old" people. It was a pleasure to be involved in this event. The St Bede's students were a true credit to themselves and to their school, and I think both schools were enriched and encouraged by the experience

Siobhan Rouse
Headteacher St Philip's CE (A) Primary school

Pupils get together to help their Indian counterparts

Pupils have been learning about the wider world as they raise funds for local and global causes.

Children at William de Yaxley Junior School near Peterborough have been busy raising £400 to buy a new computer for a school in India.



Pupils show Dr Shirley Hall where the money raised will be going

The money, which was collected over a series of events including a secret Santa, school disco and penny collecting in the classroom, means pupils at the school's twin diocese Vellore, India, now have a brand new computer.

Teaching assistant and fund-raiser Jenny Atkinson, said "It is very difficult to get any IT equipment in Vellore, with a computer costing the equivalent of a teacher's yearly wage".

Dr Shirley Hall, the Diocese of Ely RE Adviser, who has been out to Vellore, came into the school to show the children some pictures. They got really fired up and sympathised with them, and were keen to launch this fundraising project".

"We do a lot of fundraising for all different causes in order to establish links and ensure the children learn about issues in the wider world".

Artist in Residence update—Alconbury Primary School

Again, we have been lucky that our Artist in Residence, Mr Howard, has been working with pupils this month on our Creative Walkway.



The picture shows children from Oak class creating some amazing insects. The creatures will soon be placed around the outside of the school building.

Our 'walkway' is beginning to take shape as more sculptures are being placed around our grounds. Hopefully the weather will remain dry so that parents can soon walk round to see the lovely art work.

Recently a huge 'shoal' of fish have been placed 'swimming' under the horse chestnut trees at the back of our field.

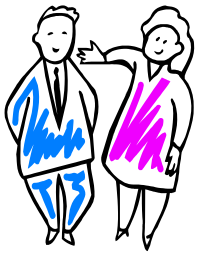


The pre-school work has also been put together to create totem poles. They are in the centre of a circle to the far side of the field beyond the Willow structure. Mr Howard has now worked with all classes.

Feedback from the art project by children, parents and grandparents has been very positive. This has been a wonderful activity to undertake.

Alconbury Primary School

Hellos and Goodbyes

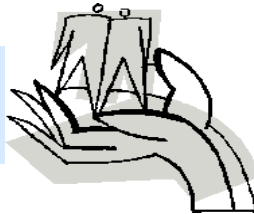


Tracy Phillips was appointed as the new Headteacher at St John's Church of England Primary School, Stanground, Peterborough.

Dates for the Diary



In our Prayers over the next month



Day	School
16th March 2009	St Mary's Church of England Junior School
18th March 2009	Lt. Thetford Church of England Primary School
24th March 2009	Cheveley Church of England Primary School

RE Liaison Group Meeting	18th Mar 4.15-5.15	All Saints School, March
RE Liaison Group Meeting	19th Mar 4.15-5.15	Diocesan Office, Ely
Headteachers' Conference	27th March	Bishop Woodford House
RE Liaison Group Meeting	26th Mar 4.15-5.15	Linton Infant School
Praise Party (with Scripture Union)	15th May 2009	Ely Cathedral
Rave in the Nave	10th July 2009	Ely Cathedral
Children's 900th Celebration Service	19th Sept 2009	Ely Cathedral
Church School—Cathedral Days	6th&7th Oct 2009	Ely Cathedral
Community Schools—Cathedral Days	14th&15th Oct 2009	Ely Cathedral

SIAS Reports

Inspection Reports (Ofsted and Statutory Church School Inspection) were published recently for the following schools:

◆ St Botolph's Church of England Primary School

These Inspection Reports can be read directly via the link on our website.

Click on:

"Information about Individual Schools" on the Ely

Vacancies

SCHOOL	VACANCY	CLOSING DATE
St Paul's CE Primary School	Headteacher	20.3.09

Contact details for all schools can be found on our website:
www.ely.anglican.org/education/schools/Info/Sch

For Governors

Newly appointed Governors

New (or re-appointed) Foundation Governors:-



◆ **Anthony Sharpe—Teversham Church of England Primary School**

◆ **Sharon McGinty—Thriplow Church of England Primary School**

May I ask all Clerks to keep a check on the **terms of office** of all Foundation Governors and advise me of any re-appointments.

Thank you,

Debbie