

Director's Jottings

One of my real pleasures is to drop into schools throughout the year and to see whatever is happening on a normal school day.

This is the season of the school Christmas production and it was a delight a few weeks ago to spend a few minutes with a Key Stage 2 class at Mepal as together they thought about and wrote the script for the nativity play that would be performed by the younger children in Key Stage 1 a few weeks later. There was a great deal of eager learning going on; thinking about dramatic form and structure and the practicalities of mounting a production. And, of course, thinking about the meaning of the Christmas story. I had a similar experience this week when my visit



coincided with the KS2 Christmas production at Castle Camps - a homegrown and highly polished celebration of "Christmas Around the World", with a clear focus on the meaning of Christmas.

At the beginning of December there was a media story after a survey of 100 schools found that 36 per cent were staging religion-free Christmas plays or planning no event this winter - up from 14% three years ago. Now of course 100 schools is hardly a great sample. But it was used by some to bolster their argument that Christianity is being squeezed out of public culture, and by others to support the notion that in a multi-faith society, nativity plays and other overtly Christian celebrations do not belong in schools.

Of course, in church schools such arguments are an irrelevance. Our schools are up front and explicit about their ethos having an openly Christian basis. Indeed one of the key church school inspection questions is "How well does the school, *through its distinctive Christian character*, meet the needs of all learners?".

In any case, my own experience is similar to that of Prof Terence Copley of Oxford University who commented, "I have never met a single Jew, Muslim, Sikh or Buddhist who has objected to the commemoration and celebration of the birth of Jesus... if we don't teach about Christmas and deal with it confidently, not just in RE, we are failing in our duty as educators."

As all around the diocese schools celebrate Christmas and "deal with it confidently", we send you our best wishes for this special season and share the words of a prayer by Robert Louis Stephenson,



**Loving Father,
Help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds,
and worship of the wise men.**

**Close the door of hate and open the door of love all
over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and
good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by
the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be
merry with clear hearts.**

**May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy
children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds
with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus'
sake. Amen.**

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

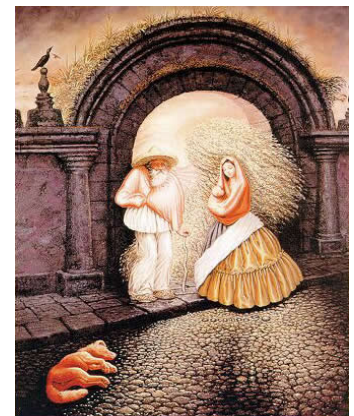
Education Sunday — 20th January 2008

Education Sunday has been kept in England and Wales on the ninth Sunday before Easter for over a hundred years. It is a national day of prayer and celebration for everyone involved in the world of education, from primary school pupils to university professors. It is an ecumenical event.

We know that many schools and parishes celebrate Education Sunday together, so we thought you would appreciate an advance warning that the date for next year is the, very early, 20th January!

This year the materials to help parishes and schools to prepare suitable worship are only being made available on-line. You can download them from <http://www.churches-together.net/Publisher/Article.aspx?ID=96291> and we recommend that you start thinking soon about what your school and parish will be doing to support this very special day.

The theme for 2008 is "Seeing Things Differently" and resources available include: a leaflet with a service outline; an assembly; prayers; and a powerpoint with several strikingly "different" images to support your worship—one of which you see here.





From the Schools Team

Fairtrade Fortnight

Fairtrade Fortnight
25 Feb – 9 March 2008

Fairtrade Fortnight will be launched in central London on Sunday 24 February with a Fairtrade Fairground.



foreword by Sophie Grigson will be launched, plus 'Fighting the Banana Wars' an account by Fairtrade Foundation's Executive Director Harriet Lamb of the battles to establish fairtrade products in supermarkets.

Full details of how to order are on the website.

Visit www.fairtrade.org.uk to download a complete Action Guide to Fairtrade Fortnight 2008. I

It has lots of suggestions for events and activities to be held in schools, workplaces, places of worship etc. Giant inflatable bananas can be ordered along with a wide selection of posters, mugs, postcards etc.

On 7 February the 'Fairtrade Everyday Cookbook' with a

For a further exploration of supermarkets and their effect on British farmers, read "Fairtrade begins at home" a report by the Church of England available online at www.cofe.anglican.org/info/ethical/

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) Scheme

department for
children, schools and families

Under the terms of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 the ISA will be implemented next year. The scheme is intended to protect children and vulnerable adults by preventing people known to pose a risk of harm to those groups from working with them.

A consultation has been published which invites views on a number of policy proposals. Views are sought on, among others:

- What are the range of activities that are defined as regulated and controlled, that will be regulated under the new scheme
- Requirements of those activities which will need to be met under the SVG Act
- Who is entitled to check a person's ISA status and under what circumstances
- Arrangements for the phased introduction of the scheme
- Who will check a person in ISA registered
- Making referrals to the ISA

The consultation document which you can access on www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations is a fairly hefty document (58 pages) but the questions to respond to are interspersed throughout at the end of each section.

There are also case studies, including ones on work experience and school transport.

ISA: School Governors and Appropriate Authorities

Governors of schools will be deemed to be undertaking a regulated activity under the Act, but this is not discussed in the consultation as regulations applying to governors will be developed in meetings and individual discussions with stakeholders on a less formal basis.



The issue has been discussed by the DCSF's Advisory Group on Governance (AGOG) as the provisions of the Act will apply in a slightly different way than to other members of the scheme. Both the Church of England and the Catholic Education Service are represented on this Group.

The current discussions concern who should be the Appropriate Officer, whose duty it will be to check a person's ISA status before appointment as a governor and who will be informed if the person is subsequently barred.

There are suggestions that this might be the headteacher or possible the body that appoints the various categories of governors. This could complicate the process considerably, as, particularly in Church schools, there could potentially be a number of Appropriate Officers who would be involved for a single school.

Note: Existing governors will not have to register with the ISA immediately, it goes live in August 2008, but will have to become members before reappointment, so all existing governors should have been checked within four years ie by August 2012.





Farmington Fellowships 2008—2009



Have you ever thought of applying for a Farmington Fellowship in RE? Many teachers around our region can testify how much they have benefited from this

very special opportunity.

The aim of the Farmington Institute is to support, encourage and improve Religious Education in schools and colleges. The Institute awards Fellowships to teachers of Religious Education in schools and to headteachers, publishes discussion papers and arranges conferences.

The Fellowships are for teachers of Religious Education in secondary schools and for primary school RE Co-ordinators or other primary school teachers involved in teaching RE, as well as teachers of children with Special Educational Needs who are involved with RE. Headteachers who wish to undertake research into either Religious Education or Values Education are also eligible to apply.

Applicants should preferably have had at least three years in their present post. Fellows are free to study any aspect of Religious Education they wish, but preference will be given to applicants whose work can be seen to be of direct value to the teaching of RE in schools.

Fellowships can be university-based or school-based. Univer-

sity-based Fellowships are available for a full term or half a term and can be residential or non-residential (locally at both Homerton and UEA). Teachers with school-based Fellowships will work mostly at school or at home.

The Fellowships can be for a continuous period for as much as half a term or as little as two weeks. Alternatively, the Fellowship may be taken in the form of day release, for instance for one day a week for a term or even a year.

The Fellowship will cover the cost of tuition, board and lodging where appropriate, essential travel and, by negotiation with the school, the salary of a replacement teacher up to point 6 of the main pay scale.



The Farmington Institute

Applications forms for Fellowships can be downloaded from:

www.farmington.ac.uk/

The closing date for applications for the academic year 2008/2009 is 4th February 2008.

From our Schools

Operation Christmas Child



Shoe boxes will bring a smile to the faces of children around the world after local youngsters showed their Christmas spirit.

Pupils at Sutton Primary School were taking part in Operation Christmas Child,

which sees gift-filled shoe boxes sent out to children facing difficult times at Christmas.

Staff at the school sent out the message that help was needed, and pupils and parents responded with toys, stationery and even the odd chocolate or sweet.

All 270 pupils at the school were involved in filling the shoe boxes before they were sent around the world.

For Governors

The Changing Face of Religious Education

**Cambridgeshire Governor Services -22nd January 2008
Godmanchester Professional Development Centre
7-9pm—Booking Code: RE/01**

This course will help Governors understand the changes in the new Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus September 2007 and will inform you of the proposed National Strategy for Religious Education.

Governors will be able to consider the implications of the changes in the syllabus for their schools and time to reflect and discuss the importance of Religious Education on the

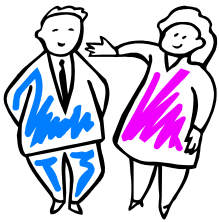
curriculum. how to implement the statutory requirements for Religious Education and the statutory role of governors will also be explained and discussed. To book a place call 01223-717288 or email:

governor.training@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Also please remember that Shirley is available to work with all church schools on their RE Syllabus, and as well as working with governors, can lead staff meetings or training days, or work with the school's RE co-ordinator. shirley.hall@ely.anglican.org



Hellos and Goodbyes



Naomi Chapman has been appointed as the new Headteacher for Great Wilbraham Church of England Primary School.

Naomi will take over in the Summer Term from Ann Jordan who leaves at the end of this term



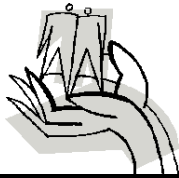
Dates for the Diary

Education Sunday	20th January 2008	
The Changing Face of Religious Education	22nd Jan 2008	Godmanchester Professional Development Centre
National Conference for Christians in School Leadership	7th-9th Feb. 2008	Coton House Rugby
Farmington Fellowships 2008/09	4th Feb 2008	Closing date for applications
Fairtrade Fortnight	25th Feb -9th March 2008	

Newly appointed Foundation Governors

- ◆ Dr Philip Rayner—Abbots Ripton CE Primary School
- ◆ Dr Iain Mason—The Orchards CE Primary School
- ◆ Catherine Mason—The Orchards CE Primary School
- ◆ Diana Ogunlana—St Philip's CE Primary School
- ◆ Martin Lomas—Holme CE Primary School
- ◆ Revd Anne Rigelsford—St Luke's CE Primary School
- ◆ Edwin Rule—Cherry Hinton CE Infant School
- ◆ Susan Ward—Brington CE Primary School
- ◆ Claire Walpole—Thriplow CE Primary School

In our Prayers over the next month



Day	School
21st December	St Luke's CE Primary
26th December	St Peter's CE Junior

Vacancies

SCHOOL	VACANCY	CLOSING DATE
Elm CE Primary	Teacher (part-time)	14.12.07
St Luke's Primary	Temp. Teacher (part-time)	17.12.07
Isleham CE Primary	Headteacher	3.1.08
Park Street CE Primary	Art Teacher	14.1.08

Inspections

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

St Bede's Inter-Church VA Comprehensive

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

"Information about Individual Schools" on the Education or Schools homepages

Contact details for all schools can be found on our website :

www.ely.anglican.org/education/schools/Info/Sch



May we take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas

*Best Wishes from
Tim, Shirley, David & Debbie*

The Diocese of Ely Schools Team