



BRENTWOOD DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE

“Supporting Catholic schools to provide excellent education where pupils flourish, and Christ is made known to all.”

Provision of Essential Diocesan Functions September 2020

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the functions undertaken by the Brentwood Diocesan Education Service (BDES), which the school contribution partly funds:

Provision of a Diocesan Education Service

- Maintaining an effective and professionally staffed Diocesan Education Service to oversee the provision of education in the Diocese, including ensuring that there are sufficient places at Catholic schools to fulfil the Diocesan Bishop’s Canonical and statutory responsibilities.
- Routine Diocesan advice and support which may include, but is not limited to:
 - Telephone advice;
 - Advice by email;
 - Visits from named advisers with specialisms in primary and secondary education, including classroom observation and scrutiny of pupils’ work;
 - Provision of relevant information and guidance via an online platform;
 - Classroom observation and scrutiny of pupils’ work;
 - Advice on the general conduct and overall leadership of schools, including responsibilities of the governing body and Headteacher;
- Additional support from specialised advisers for schools causing concern.
- Support during the denominational inspection cycle to ensure schools meet the statutory responsibilities for RE and Collective Worship, including support with the process of self-evaluation and advice on the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales.
- The provision of legal advice to schools as required via the CES (both Canon and civil law).
- Provision of advice in relation to RSE along with model policies and guidance.
- Advice on strategies for fostering relationships with the Wider Catholic community, including home and parish.

School Organisation

- Support for school organisation: liaison with local authority, School Improvement Partnerships and RSCs, in line with the Memorandum of Understanding agreed with the DfE.
- Assistance with place planning, reorganisation and academy strategy.
- Assistance with interventions.
- Advice on and support with MAT development and expansion.

Catholic School Monitoring and Improvement

- Support is provided to schools by a dedicated team of experienced officers including school advisers with significant experience of Catholic Senior Leadership, and denominational inspection. Support is tailored to the needs of each school.
- Diocesan Officers act as a first point of contact with the DfE including RSCs and local authority officers when performance data is under scrutiny.
- Supporting schools with school improvement on a school-by-school basis including brokering additional school improvement support where necessary.
- Liaison with Ofsted.
- Brokering specific funding bids through national support schools and teaching schools.

Support with statutory responsibilities

- Stakeholder engagement with Ofsted and contact with HMI in support of schools.
- Ensuring executive action, advice and support to governing bodies following Ofsted inspection, where school is in special measures and / or notices to improve have been issued.
- Coordination and quality assurance of denominational inspections and publication of denominational Inspection Reports.
- Notification and guidance on statutory changes to land, property, buildings and organisation relating to Catholic schools.
- Representation on local authority committees where possible etc.
- Equalities advice in a Catholic context.

Director / Governor recruitment, training and support

- Recruitment of suitably skilled foundation Directors / Governors.
- Appointment of suitably skilled foundation Directors / Governors.
- Liaison with schools regarding skills requirement to ensure placement of appropriate foundation Directors / Governors.
- Induction training for Directors / Governors, to enable them to undertake their roles and responsibilities in a Catholic school.
- Ongoing Director / Governor training to ensure they can carry out their duties in the context of a Catholic school in addition to maintaining standards in RE and more generally.
- Induction training for clerks in Catholic schools.
- Academy Directors' training to ensure they understand how a Catholic MAT is operated.
- Support for Directors / Governors as employers in a Catholic school, including model documents and legal advice through training and support sessions.
- Briefings on statutory changes relevant to Directors / Governors of Catholic schools.
- Ensuring that Directors / Governors are fully aware of their Canonical duties.
- Support for Directors / Governors in dealing with complex or challenging issues in Catholic schools.
- Support for Directors / Governors in relation to the Catholic character and mission of schools including ensuring that schools adhere to Catholic Social Teaching.
- Diocesan attendance at Ofsted Feedback and contact with HMI in support of the school.
- Telephone and email advice for Directors / Governors.
- Provision of mentors for Directors / Governors.
- Development training for Chairs and prospective Chairs.
- Training for Directors / Governors on the promotion of Catholic Education and the provision of effective RE and Collective Worship.
- Intervention and removal of Directors / Governor(s) where appropriate.
- Keeping governance under review in order to ensure that either a new Director / Governor is appointed or an existing Director's / Governor's term is renewed when a Director's / Governor's term comes to an end.
- Monitoring compliance with governance codes of conduct.
- Ensuring use of CES model documents as required by the diocese.

Admissions and Appeals

- Provision of Diocesan guidance, sample documentation and templates for use in Catholic schools.
- Formally review governing bodies' admission policies in Diocesan schools.
- Provide advice and support to governing bodies and Headteachers on admissions.
- Maintain an overview for schools and academies on LA admission committees, school place planning forums and other relevant bodies.
- Advice in relation to exclusions.
- Where relevant respond to the Schools Adjudicator in relation to Catholic admissions queries.
- Strategic support with pupil place planning.
- Provide advice and support to Governors/Headteachers on admission appeals.
- Provide updates on the law relating to appeals, where appropriate, in relation to Catholic schools.
- Respond to the Local Government Ombudsman, Education, and Skills Funding Agency as appropriate on behalf of the Bishop.
- Information bulletins and updates on changes in the Codes where relevant and their impact on Catholic schools.
- Support for appeal panels, including provision of training and advice on appeals to Catholic schools.

Catholic Senior Leadership Appointments

- Providing oversight of the recruitment process for senior leadership positions in order to ensure compliance with the Bishops' Memorandum on the recruitment of teachers.
- Providing support through the recruitment process of any protected posts.
- Provision of CES model recruitment documents including application forms, contracts and employment policies.
- Providing guidance on employment issues as they relate to Catholic schools.
- Support with the application and implementation of the Catholic Education Service's employment protocols and procedures.
- Providing telephone and email advice in relation to staffing issues.
- Attendance by diocesan adviser(s) at shortlisting, interviews for CEO/ (Exec) Headteacher/ Principal/ Head of School/ DHT/AHT and all similar posts including Head of RE.
- Induction and succession planning for Catholic school leaders.
- Strategic oversight of staff development including the provision of Catholic leadership training events, CPD and coaching.

- Providing general and specific recruitment and staffing advice, which may often include HR and employment law advice.
- Support for Headteacher and staff wellbeing, including ongoing support for their spiritual formation within a Catholic context.

Resources

- Guides and relevant models including recruitment and performance management documentation, which is suitable for a Catholic context.
- Access to a range of online resources that relate to Catholic governance, school improvement, RE, Ethos and the distinctive Catholic nature of Diocesan schools.
- Facilitation of data sharing and management of information across groups of Catholic schools.
- Managing database, to assist advice on Catholic pupil population trends in a Catholic Context.
- Providing regular newsletters to schools regarding current issues.
- Providing advice and support on academisation, federation and statutory responsibilities.
- Providing access to Church Marketplace.

Buildings, premises and land

- Liaison between Diocesan Trustees and schools regarding the use of charitable capital assets.
- Buildings advice (including visits), on repair, maintenance, adapting and developing existing buildings.
- Providing models and advising Headteachers/Governors on the preparation of school asset management plans.
- Tendering and procurement process advice.
- Training for Governors in order to ensure that schools exercise responsible stewardship and a care for the environment.
- Provision of a model lettings policy.
- Provision of advice on the sources of funding available for building projects in Catholic schools and academies.
- Oversight of capital funding and capital spending process, including approval of capital spending projects and provision of relevant consents.
- Monitoring of VASCA fund for capital projects in Catholic VA schools within the diocese.

- Advising Headteachers/governors on the latest DfE building guidelines and school premises regulations for Catholic schools.
- Assisting, where appropriate, Headteachers/Governors in liaising with professional building consultants on school-sponsored projects.
- Providing advice on appropriate or preferred consultants, contractors and other professional advisers.
- Providing support and advice for significant capital funding bids.
- Provision of a professional view on projects proposed/developed by the local authorities that will be realised in Diocesan schools.
- Provision of advice on trust and property issues, including use by third parties.
- Periodic provision of Premises Roadshows across the Diocese specifically aimed at Catholic schools.
- Assistance with capital estate reviews.
- Additional support where there is a difference of opinion between a school and its appointed contractors.
- Advice in relation to the Building Bulletin guidelines.
- Access to the Catholic Insurance Service.

Additional Functions and Diocesan Education Service Communications

- Pastoral and spiritual support for teachers, including retreat days for staff and/or pupils.
- Supporting governance responsibility for safeguarding and welfare support for pupils, including working with relevant school teams and local authorities (multi-agency working).
- Provision of resources to support RE in schools.
- Ensuring schools have access to Catholic Education Service resources and services through the support of the Diocese including in relation to the appointment and dismissal of staff.
- Diocesan representation at National Religious Education conferences and SACRE bodies and with planning decisions and consultations, such as at scrutiny committees, early years and financial forums.
- Provision of Diocesan meeting facilities.
- Access to subsidised Leadership Conferences.
- Access to CCRS course.
- Support for teachers through Catholic Newly Qualified Teacher programme.
- Access to Religious Education training events and other events on collective worship, education and personal relationship programmes.
- Coordination of Annual Catholic Headteacher and DHT conferences and regular networking opportunities within the Catholic family of schools.

- Training for RE Co-ordinators and Heads of Department.
- Access to bereavement support training.
- Termly information bulletins and updates from the Diocese via email for Headteachers/ Principals and chairs/clerks as appropriate.
- Briefing papers and updates on national policy changes and impact for Catholic schools.
- Notification of Diocesan special initiatives and opportunities for Catholic schools.
- Providing notes of visits following Adviser visits to schools including any relevant recommendations.
- Providing advice for parents on Diocesan school provision.
- Supporting professional development for Diocesan Schools Commissioners, Diocesan Officers and Education Services Staff.
- Responding to Government, CES and local authority consultations.

Support from the Catholic Education Service (CES)

- Model documentation for use in schools.
- National guidance.
- Representation of Catholic Education at a national level.
- Specialist advice, including legal, on Catholic specific issues.
- Facilitation of appropriate networking and professional development for diocesan officers, and staff in Catholic schools.