

Bishop's Visitor to Church Schools Information for schools and governors

Bishop's Visitors are normally former head teachers and teachers who volunteer to support colleagues in schools in the Diocese by sharing the wisdom, insight and experience they have gained during their careers. The role of Bishop's Visitor is essentially pastoral.

The purpose of Bishop's Visitors scheme is:

- a) to provide pastoral support to the school, especially the headteacher, as appropriate.
- b) to foster the link between the school and the Diocese.
- c) to encourage and support the expression of Christian beliefs and values on which the school is founded.
- d) to foster good relationships within the school, and between the school, the local church and wider community.
- e) to encourage and support RE, Collective Worship and values education by sign-posting staff to appropriate officers and resources.

Bishop's Visitors will:

- a) establish links with a group of about 10 schools, usually allocated on a deanery basis. (Clergy who are Bishop's Visitors will not normally visit schools in their own deanery.)
- b) make a formal half-day visit to each school annually.
- c) write a letter to the headteacher, to be presented at governors' and PCC meetings.
- d) complete a report for the Strategic Lead for Christian Distinctiveness which will form the basis of a feedback meeting with the Strategic Lead for Christian Distinctiveness.
- e) attend a variety of other school functions to foster the relationships as a friend of the school (depending upon capacity to do so).
- f) support the annual church schools' leavers' service in the Cathedral.
- g) attend a meeting each year called by the Strategic Lead for Christian Distinctiveness, at which there will be an opportunity to discuss general issues relating to the role and individual schools as appropriate.
- h) attend a one-to-one meeting with the Strategic Lead for Christian Distinctiveness annually to discuss schools in more depth.
- i) receive and read school newsletters (by email) to keep informed of events and other matters relating to the life of the school.
- j) view schools' websites regularly.

Strategic Lead will:

- a) meet with BVs during the year to discuss general issues.
- b) circulate departmental schools' newsletter.
- c) signpost training and update Bishop's Visitors.

Schools are asked to:

- a) introduce BV to staff and children and make everyone aware of their role (BVs will happily describe their role).
- b) plan a programme for the BV's annual visit which might include worship, an RE lesson and a meeting with the RE subject leader
- c) send all school newsletters by email to the BV.
- d) invite BV to events and special occasions.
- e) inform BV if the Bishop has been invited to the school.
- f) inform BV of change of head and deputy head teachers.
- g) inform BV of any pastoral issues eg serious illness of a staff member or pupil.