DBE Strategy Document: from Vision to Practice

June 2019

The vision is deeply Christian, with Jesus’ promise of ***‘life in all its fullness’*** right at the core. There are four basic elements that interplay and run through the whole approach, an ‘ecology’ of the fullness of life. It built on the Church of England’s long tradition of pursuing the ‘common good’.

This vision focusses on the following themes:

***Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills***

***Hope and Aspiration***

***Community and Living Well Together***

***Dignity and Respect***

These four areas of the vision run through all that we do. The strategy has therefore developed four streams to deliver the diocesan vision for education.

***If we forget our “why” then we will fail (eventually)***

***HOW we do what we do really matters***

***WHAT we do matters***

***but our WHY drives them both, and is vital***

The strategy acknowledges and builds on the particular challenges facing Cumbria:

This includes:

• Rolls falling, particularly in rural areas.

• Significant ongoing budget challenges.

• The complexities of national movements towards new structures for school organisation, including multi academy trusts (MATs) as well as strong cluster working locally.

• The different impacts of changes in church structures, resources and deployment; fewer full time paid ministers brings an emphasis on self-supporting ministers and lay ministry, and affects the number of governors, whilst also providing a significant stimulus for greater lay involvement, and opportunities to do things in new ways.

• Our Diocese and County­wide vision of God for All, with its emphasis on mission and outreach, which encourages, expects and equips churches and church people to look outwards, including to their local schools.

The Diocesan Vison document was approved by Synod early in 2018.

That document framed the vision within the four marks of the national Vision for Education and what that motivates and commits us to through the lens of the diocesan ‘God for All’ vision.

The ‘Growing Faith’ and subsequently the ‘Growing Faith: Churches, Schools and Households’ documentendorsed by the General Synod of the Church of England (Feb 2019) seeks to ‘see every aspect of our mission and ministry through the lens of what it means for our ministry with children, young people and families.’ These papers highlighted a number of key actions including:

*a. Developing and supporting the Christian ethos and character of our schools as a vital part of our mission - recognising the fact that we live in a pluralist culture and are funded by the state but being bold and confident about the fullness of life Jesus offers.*

*b. Investing more in the opportunities our schools provide for children to develop spiritually and, through the link between our churches and schools, equipping them to share the good news with their families and friends.*

*c. Renewing a culture that brings Christian life back into the household, recovering family prayer and a pattern or rule of life which has a love for Jesus at the centre and where children or parents have confidence in sharing that faith with their whole family. And, where we have already missed a generation of parents who have faith, encouraging and supporting the role of Christian grandparents and godparents as part of our evangelistic strategy.*

*d. Providing and signposting to resources (especially digital) that help children, young people and families to grow in faith together.*

*e. Working positively and proactively with secondary-aged children, through youth based fresh expressions and inherited models of church, equipping young people as disciples, evangelists and leaders, to grow in love for Christ and be bold about sharing the good news of Jesus with their friends and family.*

*f. Recalibrating how we invest our resources to make work among children and young people a priority; putting a significant proportion of funding into promoting faith amongst children to grow the church younger, resourcing projects that are more intentionally about children and young people growing in confidence as they share their faith and love of Jesus with their friends and family.*

*g. Ensuring our approach to selection, training and the development of clergy and other ministries does not offer ministry with children and young people as an optional extra, but as an essential priority for everyone who is called to serve in the church.*

*h. Being mindful that focusing on children and families who are already committed to the church is not enough. We need to do more to support those families, but we must also find ways to reach families who do not have existing connections with the church. Nearly all children go to school, so emphasising the opportunities to engage children and their families through school (church and non-church schools) will be vital.*

**Process**

This 5-year strategy document attempts to develop those visionary aims that underpin our ***WHY*** by providing focussed areas of work, how they will be delivered by when and by whom.

Diocesan Synod voted unanimously to "commend all within this Diocese and County to work towards it, through formal structures and personal interactions"

Crucial to the on-going success of this strategy will be the co-ordinated approach with all sections of the diocese including the God for All team and our other networks locally, regionally and nationally. An important tool to deliver this will be a co-ordinated approach within the diocese to monitor progress on agreed strategies and contribution to the development of mission to children and young people

We will share stories, resources and provide encouragement. Increasingly what we do will be relevant to all schools.

As we focus on key areas to develop we will in certain areas identify a project scope and commission this work either through officer time or consultancy.

The nine main themes covering four areas are outlined below and provide a clear focus for our key practical strategies. Each is underpinned by a theological truth that guides our work.

* **Schools’ Outcomes** + Character (*grace*)

+ Health and Well-Being (*children of God*)

+ Learning (*growing*)

* **Shared Leadership** + Christian Vision (*prophetic voice*)

+ Resourcing (*reservoirs of hope*)

* **Local Mission** + Inspire (*disciple*)

+ Equip (*commission*)

* **Building the Future** + Neighbour(hood) (*love*)

+ Structure(s) (*eternity*)

There are a number of key areas of work that will run through these themes that reflect important aspects of the Board’s work, such as SIAMS, and the continuing links through the Church of England Foundation.

Priorities for the coming year will be agreed by the Board taking into account the resources available and agree any changes. In order to facilitate activities / the ‘How’ will be colour coded to illustrate the relative priority.

2019/20 Green

2020/21 Yellow

Uncoded areas will be after these dates but reviewed annually

**Communications**

The development of the plan will be shared with schools through newsletters and consultant visits. Documents and updates will be easily accessed from the diocesan website. We will continue to develop other forms of social media including Twitter.

Regular items will appear in the Diocesan News and The Way newspaper.

Themes at conferences will continue to be relevant to the vision’s priorities

Project proposals will be approved by the Board but will be shared with Bishop’s Leadership Team and Bishop’s Council. Members of the Board will act as advocates for the Vision within their own constituencies where appropriate and with each project having a ‘sponsor’

**Area of activity 1 Schools’ Outcomes**

**Focus:**  
***Character*** (grace)

The challenge – we should expect all in our schools to understand what Christian character means – including Christian values and virtues (forgiveness, acceptance generosity)

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| **What to do** | **How** | **Who** |
| Promote the development of character education in all schools | * Role out of Peer Support Network (PSN) focussed around ethos enhancing outcomes * Support ethos/values days in (clusters of) schools – encourage and roll out good practice * Bishop’s Award annually with different focus each year | * CEFEL * Schools with DBE promotion * DBE led/liaison with G4L |
| Provide focus on relevant SIAMS themes | * In particular provide resources and focus on global neighbours, justice and courageous advocacy (link to Bishop’s Award) and monitor school outcomes | * Consultant commission |
| Provide a new focus on character within school policy making | * Work with schools to develop a model behaviour policy for schools based on Vision for Education (V4E), including exclusions * Consider other policies/advice document | * DBE with schools |

***Health & Well- being*** (Children of God)

The challenge – God aspires everyone to be the best version of themselves. Promoting a positive self –worth and image and focussing on emotional intelligence.

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| **What to do** | **How** | **Who** |
| Provide focus on supporting well-being of school leaders and diocesan staff | * Work collaboratively with LA to facilitate the ‘Thriving headteachers programme’ * Assist the role out of PSN to more schools with LA support * Promote Laing partnership outcomes and seek further funding * Review Diocesan Friends Scheme to ensure it is more effective in tackling HT well-being and staff appropriately trained as coaches * Review Partnership Agreement offer to reflect this focus – including, away day, residential, support for safeguarding leads. Offer to non-church schools ‘affiliation’. * Enable members of diocesan team to have a spiritual retreat | * Diocesan team * Diocesan team /CEFEL * Consultant * Diocesan Team * DDE |
| Develop a strategy to promote ‘Healthy Schools’ including promoting healthy lifestyles | * Scope out a project and commission to develop and/or identify resources for schools and specific objectives   To include:   * Role out of CofE ‘Mental health and Well-being’ document for schools as diocesan strategy. * Identify partners that can provide a different and regular focus through regular conferences or workshops e.g. Heartsmart / Lifesavers * Develop with NISCU the ACORN scheme to deliver listening skills / mental Health First Aid – consider diocesan sponsorship * Explore possibility of Drop in listening course at school to support families – held at school resourced by the Church * Promote schools doing mental health First Aid course – MIND * Develop materials for schools based on healthy lifestyles – that reflect V4E * Termly focus in newsletter identifying resources and initiatives | * Consultant lead |
| Promote outdoor education | * Develop through a good practice guide (based on V4E principles), curriculum * Revisit link to Outdoor Worship ‘Engage Worship’ * Outdoor prayer spaces and Fresh expressions in outdoor environment linked to schools. |  |

***Learning*** (Wisdom)

The challenge – To support schools and their networks by facilitating support through the diocesan team and through local networks.

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| **What to do** | **How** | **Who** |
| Continue to work with local, regional and national system leaders to promote effective delivery of the curriculum and successful educational outcomes | * Attendance at Cumbria Alliance of System Leaders (CASL). Local Alliance of System Leaders (LASL), School Improvement Meetings (SIMs), Ofsted and involvement in initiatives as appropriate * Contribute to National C of E networks e.g. through DDE Association and National Conference, Regional Schools’ Commissioner (RSC), DBE Services * Monitor schools systematically and inform DBE on issues and actions taken by developing a risk management approach | * Officers and consultants * DDE and Deputy * Deputy DDE |
| Promote curriculum innovation centred around V4E ‘hope and aspiration’ | * Develop a DBE statement on curriculum (reflecting on new Ofsted proposals) through national research - include Revisit ‘What If Learning’. * Develop support for children moving from primary to secondary school * Promote PSN outcomes and future development with partners * Share good practice | * Deputy DDE |
| Support the development of RE in schools | * Scope out a project and commission to develop and/or identify resources for schools and specific objectives * Consider implications of National Commission on RE   To include:   * New model RE policy in light of SIAMS with a focus on understanding of religious literacy * Review current arrangements e.g. RE cluster groups and effectiveness * Develop scope for further roll out of Understanding Christianity, particularly in churches * Churches and clergy supported to become more involved in delivery of RE – liaise with God4All team | * Consultant   Complete   * Deputy DDE * Deputy DDE * Deputy DDE |
| Supporting schools to be ‘scandalously’ inclusive and meet the needs of all learners | * Develop policy statement around SEND , unpack ‘ethos enhancing outcomes’ – what expectations are within V4E and explore guidance and support based on action research with schools, supported by workshops and conference. * Being an advocate for the disadvantaged by promoting initiatives between church and school and sharing good practice * Continue to promote ‘Valuing All God’s Children’ and monitor implementation | .   * DBE officers |

**Area of activity 2 Shared Leadership**

**Focus:**

***Christian Vision*** (Prophetic voice)

The challenge –to encourage our schools to be ‘Church Schools for All’ and having Christian distinctiveness and ethos. Church schools need to have a Christian vision that is part of the church’s prophetic voice but also means offering refreshment and nourishment for school leaders as well as pathways through Christian leadership. Ensuring that Christian governors understand that their role is a calling. Church of England schools which are authentically Christian and encourage spiritual development, growth in discipleship, and provide a rich experience and understanding of Christianity.

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| **What to do** | **How** | **Who** |
| Develop an understanding of Christian / spiritual leadership in schools | * Produce some further guidance statements based on ‘Ethos Enhancing Outcomes’ (theology into practice)   e.g.  Hospitality and welcome  Stewardship (Fund raising, buildings)  Partnership  Recruitment and development  ‘marketing’   * Governor recruitment and development strategy including focussed input at Deanery and MC level. * Day workshops and training (including Video resources) on Christian Vision and ethos | * Deputy DDE * Deputy DDE |
| Provide an emphasis on the importance of effective collective worship. | * Scope out a project and commission to develop and/or identify resources for schools and specific objectives   To include:   * Review effectiveness of current practice across a range of schools * Rewrite guidance in light of V4E * Develop a new training package focused on working in schools including sessions / training for Mission communities and clergy. | * Consultant led * DDE |

***Resourcing*** (Reservoirs of hope)

The challenge – to provide a range of support and resources for church and school leaders including governors and prospective governors,

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| **What to do** | **How** | **Who** |
| Provide support to develop system leaders with a clear understanding of leadership in a church school | * Develop diocesan development pathway with partners including Teaching schools, NW diocese and National -i.e Church of England Professional Qualification for Headship (CEPQH),Initial Teacher Training (ITT), Christian Leadership and promote widely * Provide focussed training on this aspect of SIAMS process and specifically review school visions and process within schools | * DDE/Deputy * Deputy DDE |
| Review services and offer to all schools | * Review partnership agreement and offer an affiliation scheme to non-church schools * Look at communication process with ALL schools. | * DDE * DDE |
| Review governance process and support ensuring the centrality of the V4E in governance practice | * Produce a Code of Conduct for governors in CE schools using the language and principles of the V4E. * An update of DBE ‘Guidance for Church School Governance’ to ensure it explicitly reflects the V4E and the introduction of the online module and a review of the content and structure of face to face training, taking into account, particularly material covered within the online module * Review of DBE policy of selection, appointment and reappointment and associated processes * Review the role and purpose of ex-officio governor in light of the establishment of mission communities -job scope * Raising the profile of governance through clergy training and induction as appropriate * Consider the establishment of an annual commissioning service for governors * The promotion of serving as a governor as a vocation or calling throughout the diocese as part of the vocations roadshows or visioning for mission communities * Increased awareness of the ex-officio role through input into curates training and exploring the establishment of a school placement as an integral part of curacy training. * Review impact of new admissions policy | * Deputy DDE |

**Area of activity 3 Local Mission**

**Focus:**

***Inspire*** (disciple)

The challenge - Developing a co-ordinated approach to Mission Communities with REACH / CCL / Vocations for Children, Young People and ALL schools to ensure children, young people are at the heart of mission, serving the life of schools

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| **What to do** | **How** | **Who** |
| Work with parishes and mission communities to understand the primacy of working with children and young people as central to the mission | * Communicate House of Bishops’ ‘Growing Faith:Churches, Schools and Households’ and share internally and diocesan response * Work with God 4 ALL team to co-ordinate strategy for promoting mission to children and young people including schools * Develop strategy for supporting the development of mission community vision which acknowledges the centrality of schools as part of the priority for reaching children young people and families   To include:   * Communication strategy with schools and churches * To consider a schools, churches and families forum / ‘Growing Faith’ Champion(s) * To develop a suggested structure of children’s / schools’ champion in mission communities/or agreed similar role * Liaise with those involved in clergy training to provide an offer for those in initial training and on-going development and consider being part of national pilot. | * ALL * DDE / Deputy * DDE * DDE * DDE * DDE * DDE |

***Equip*** (commission)

The challenge – to provide co-ordinated resources across the diocese to equip mission communities to live out their vision through schools

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| **What to do** | **How** | **Who** |
| Support for Mission communities in establishing mission with schools | * Provide a Guidance template and document   To include:   * Theological underpinning of V4E and vocation of school work in all forms * Job description for children’s / schools’ champion (team) / or agreed similar role | * DDE * DDE * DDE |
| Practical support for local lay and clergy within mission communities | * Scope out a project and commission, offering good practice and ideas for working with schools e.g. going into school to do what, prayer spaces, setting up clubs, developing a Fresh Expression in a school, church in school, how to pray for schools, recruiting governors, the ex-officio role etc * Specific targeted training opportunities as part of wider co-ordinated support, to include, collective worship, Godly Play |  |
| Support the development of work in secondary schools | * Help churches think about how to work with their local secondary school * Co-ordinate input with God4All team and other partners e.g. NISCU to share intelligence to target resource * Develop with God4All an understanding of ‘chaplaincy’ and how that is delivered and supported by the DBE (e.g. delivering assemblies etc) |  |
| Support the development of work with families | * Ensuring a co-ordinated approach and understanding of support for families, particularly Christian ones, in discipleship |  |
| Clergy development | * Offer on-going training for clergy in understanding and working with schools – workshops to share issues and good practice, targeted training * Clear programme of input int clergy training and the offer of school placements | * DBE officers * DBE Officers |

**Area of activity 4 Building the Future**

**Focus:**

***Neighbour*** (love)

The challenge - To build sustainability and resilience within local communities rooted in God’s love for our neighbour

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| **What to do** | **How** | **Who** |
| Establish church schools at the heart of their communities | * Establish key local and national stakeholders to consider areas of shared concern and understanding e.g. DEFRA / LA * Scope out a project and commission diocesan paper on the theology of community and what it looks like in a school context (theology of small, love, generosity, forgiveness) and through a working group of schools offer good practice for churches and schools to engage with their local communities (possible conference) * Promoting specific Diocesan Schools’ Project e.g. working with elderly, op shop, homeless | * DDE |
| Develop an increasing awareness of global neighbours | * Develop work with e.g Christian Aid, CMS (others) and CDEC, to include environmental education * Explore options of work and development with Rose Castle – Reconciliation theme * Promote Zululand link and existing and new resources (and potentially other diocesan link diocese) * Provide examples of good practice on website * Explore the SIAMS theme of courageous advocacy and justice and what that means in a global context. (see character) |  |
| Help schools to use their buildings better | * Provide guidance on sharing the use of school buildings * Promote more effective management of school buildings and better use of resources available. | * DDE |
| Develop the diocesan youth centres as places that reflect service to community | * Share V4E with youth centres and adopt as key aspect of revised vision * Support the centres in their underlying service to children and young people and a place recognised as offering Christian service | * DDE |

***Structure*** (eternity)

The challenge – To provides guidance and direction to schools and churches in setting up robust and sustainable communities focussed on Christian values

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| **What to do** | **How** | **Who** |
| Develop with others in the diocese a rural communities strategy | * Share the Cof E ‘Embracing Change’ document and in liaison with the LA set up a Rural Schools Forum to re-imagine rural education * Explorewider diocesan Rural communities strategy * In co-ordination with the LA provide clear guidance on what is a sustainable school and how to manage change * Promote the development of the Cumbria church majority MAT(s) as an educational and structural solution for all schools * Ensure mission communities are able to take a view on future of their schools * Providing advice on better use of community buildings - church in school. | * DDE |
| Consider DBE structure and resources to undertake the strategy | * Reflect priorities within team reviews and appraisal * Liaise with DBE on capacity and resource issues | * DDE |