

The Maximilian

A monthly newsletter for governors within the Archdiocese of Southwark

April 2025

Reflection

Beloved Friends, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Happy Easter in this Jubilee Year, and welcome back to school after a much-deserved rest during the Easter holidays.

As we return to our school communities, we do so with heavy hearts following the recent death of our beloved Holy Father, Pope Francis. We give thanks to God for his life of humble service, his prophetic witness to mercy and justice, and his call to see one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. May the Lord now grant him eternal rest and reward him for his faithful ministry to the Church and the world.

The Easter season is a 50-day period of joy, thanksgiving, and new life. It runs from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the victory of life over death. This season is considered the most important time of the liturgical year. After your 40 days of Lent, we now give thanks to God for the sacrifice He made for us in Jesus.

In our schools and homes, the message of peace, reconciliation, and an end to violence and suffering in various parts of the world continues to be our Easter message. Alleluia! Jesus is truly risen, and His sacrificial love continues to change us and bring us to salvation, now and always.

The darkness of Good Friday was only temporary—light scattered the darkness of the grave, truth triumphed over falsehood, our strength was restored, and our hope came fully alive once again.

During the Easter Season, we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday on Sunday, 27th April, which was originally intended to be the date for the canonisation of Blessed Carlo Acutis, a great inspiration for our young people. Following the death of Pope Francis, the Vatican has postponed the canonisation.

A new date will be announced by the next Holy Father in due course. Nonetheless, we continue to honour Blessed Carlo's witness, especially during the Church's Jubilee of Adolescents.

We will also be celebrating a number of Feast Days:

- Friday, 25th April – Feast of Saint Mark, Evangelist

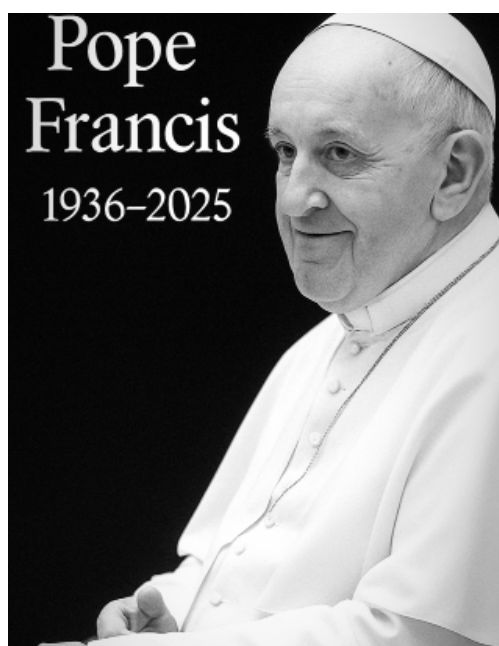
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- Monday, 28th April – Solemnity of Saint George, Patron of England (transferred from 23rd April due to Easter Week)
- Tuesday, 29th April – Feast of Saint Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church
- Saturday, 3rd May – Feast of Saints Philip and James, Apostles
- Wednesday, 14th May – Feast of Saint Matthias, Apostle
- Tuesday, 27th May – Feast of Saint Augustine of Canterbury, Bishop
- Thursday, 29th May – Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord (Holy Day of Obligation in England and Wales)
- Saturday, 31st May – Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Tuesday, 3rd June – Memorial of Saints Charles Lwanga and Companions, Martyrs
- Thursday, 5th June – Memorial of Saint Boniface, Bishop and Martyr
- Sunday, 8th June – Solemnity of Pentecost, the Birthday of the Church and the end of the Easter Season

I'm sure you will also have much going on this term, with plenty to prepare for and do. May the joys of the Easter Season continue to sustain us, renew our strength, and inspire us to carry forward the legacy of faith, love, and compassion that Pope Francis embodied.

Canon Victor Darlington
Episcopal Vicar for Education



**Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord,
and let Your perpetual light shine upon him.
May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed
rest in peace. Amen**

Pope Francis RIP. Archbishop John calls Pope Francis a Pope for the poor and a Pope for peace. Following the death of Pope Francis, Archbishop John said the Holy Father was a Pope for the poor and a Pope for peace. [Continue reading.](#)



Early Years Funding Rates for 2025/2026

A summary of the funding rates from 1st April 2025:

- 3- & 4-year-old funding: £5.22 increasing to £5.50 (£5.36 base rate plus Universal supplements – 10p for SEND and 4p for Deprivation)
- 2-year-old funding: £7.10 increasing to £7.42 (£7.28 base rate plus Universal supplements – 10p for SEND and 4p for Deprivation)
- Under 2's funding (from 9 months): £9.60 increasing to £9.92 (£9.78 base rate plus Universal supplements – 10p for SEND and 4p for Deprivation).

You will notice that the universal supplement for SEND has been increased to 10p per hour to support providers make reasonable adjustments to include children with low level and emerging needs. The funding for Early Years Pupil Premium and Disability Access funding is paid in full to providers.

Rates are confirmed as:

- Early Years Pupil Premium funding: £1 per hour for all eligible funded children of all ages if in receipt of any of the funding streams
- Disability Access funding: £938 per annum (pro rata for school starters age 4 years) for eligible funded children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and accessing any of the early years funding streams.

Allergy Guidance for Schools

The Natasha Allergy Foundation has developed 'Allergy School' to supply school settings with resources to promote allergy awareness. As part of the launch of the Allergy School programme, NASUWT – The Teachers' Union has collaborated with the Natasha Allergy Research Foundation to collect data on the prevalence of allergies in schools and the support available to teachers when dealing with allergies in the school environment. The survey of 1900 teachers across the UK found:

- 95% of teachers surveyed said that there were pupils at their school with allergies
- 30% of the teachers also said that they had allergies. Only 40% of teachers said that their school had an allergy policy; 46% said they didn't know, and 13% said that their school had no allergy policy
- 84% said they knew how to access information on such children's food allergies and medication at their school.

When asked if they had received training on administering an adrenaline pen, only 28% of teachers said they had received training in the current academic year. 20% had received the training last year, and 34% said they had received training but not in the last two academic years. 17.5% said they had never received the training.

The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation.

The Natasha Allergy Foundation has produced a range of resources, including a model policy. The resources are free and currently aimed at nurseries, primary schools and out-of-school clubs for pupils aged 3-11. Secondary resources are in development. Further details can be found at: <https://www.narf.org.uk/allergy-school>



Cultural Education

Governing boards have an important responsibility to ensure that their school offers pupils a broad and balanced curriculum; creative teaching and learning is a core component of this.

Governors in maintained schools need to consider cultural education as it is a statutory requirement. Maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum, which requires Art & Design and Music to be taught up to age 14 (KS3). There are also minimum requirements for Drama to be delivered within the English curriculum, and Dance within PE. Cultural education includes: Arts, poetry, music, heritage, film, drama, digital arts, design, dance, craft, theatre and more. Although academies are not currently subject to the National Curriculum, they must teach a broad and balanced curriculum as specified in their funding agreement, which by definition will include arts subjects. The Children's and Wellbeing Bill, currently on its journey through parliament, proposes that academies will be required to follow the National Curriculum, in line with their maintained school colleagues.

One of the key areas for governors and trustees to consider is how their individual school shapes the curriculum for their individual pupils, recognising that it will be different from the school down the road. Do pupils learn how to learn, explore, imagine, create, ask questions and are they encouraged to think for themselves? Most boards will be used to the emphasis put on literacy and numeracy, but many in education believe we should be thinking about literacy, numeracy and creativity. Engaging with the arts is a particularly powerful way to experience creative teaching and learning practices. Ofsted inspectors have suggested the following questions for governors/trustees:

- Does the school offer a broad and balanced curriculum that develops creativity through cultural education?
- Is the school meeting its statutory curriculum requirements?
- Do we regularly receive information about the range and impact of cultural activities on pupils' learning, for example as part of the headteacher's report?
- What data is there in the school about pupil engagement with cultural education?
- What does it indicate about which pupils are the most involved?
- What are the trends over time in this?
- If certain groups of pupils aren't engaging with cultural education, do we know why?
- What are we doing to improve this?
- Does the school work with other schools to share best practice and pool resources?
- How does the school involve parents in their children's cultural education?
- Does the school have governors/trustees who work in the creative industries?

Procurement Act

The new Procurement Act 2023 came into force on 24 February 2025. The Procurement Act means changes in procurement regulation and practices, aims at bring about a more flexible, strategic approach to public procurement. This creates both challenges and opportunities for schools and trusts. There are a range of resources to support schools on the buying for schools page on the GOV. UK website, including a link to free training for those involved in procurement.



Churchmarketplace

Created by the Catholic Church in England & Wales to enable the Catholic community to save costs by purchasing together, their free subscription entitles you to access great prices on a wide range of products and services. Whatever kind of Catholic organisation you are – curial office, school, parish, religious order, charity, society - they have services, products and contracts you can trust.

Through their Official Suppliers and Religious Communities, they have created a marketplace where a range of suppliers are present, offering discounts and competitive pricing on products and services that are most needed by our Catholic community.

Further products and services are available through their White Pages, which advertise suppliers that their members have recommended, though not vetted or endorsed by Churchmarketplace.

Further details can be found at <https://www.churchmarketplace.org.uk/>

Courses & Events

Details for our upcoming courses and events for this academic year are available on our website.

<https://www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/governor-cpd/>

Governors' Gathering

Wednesday 7th May 2025. 4-5pm. Zoom

Thursday 8th May 2025. 5-6pm. Zoom

[Book](#)

School Building Responsibilities as a Governor

Thursday 12th June 2025. 5.30-6.30pm. Zoom

[Book](#)

Foundation Governors Retreat Day

Saturday 14th June 2025. 9.30am-3.30pm.

£25, Cowderoy Room, Amigo Hall, Lambeth Road, SE1 6HR

[Book](#)

Finance for Governors

Tuesday 24th June 2025 5.30-7pm. Zoom

[Book](#)

Induction for New Foundation Directors, Governors and Clerks

Tuesday 3rd June 2025 4-5.30pm. Zoom or

Thursday 26th June 2025 5.30-7pm. Zoom

[Book](#)

Clerks to Governors Forum

The dates for the next set of Clerks to Governors Forums are Tuesday 13th May 2025 or Tuesday 20th May 2025. Further details can be viewed here: <https://www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/clerks-to-governors-forum-topics/>

