

# Newsletter



28th January 2026

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## Director's Message

Dear Colleagues,

The last few weeks seem to have flown by and, as we move through January, it is a reminder that time does not stand still and nor do we have enough of it to do all that we want.

I have had a warm welcome into the seat; I have been delighted to be invited into schools and Donna is making time in my diary for as many visits as possible. Even more heart-warming, is that school leaders are letting me know of the great things that are happening in schools so that even if a visit isn't possible, we are aware of the events and opportunities that are being presented to staff and pupils across the diocese.

I have been making myself familiar with the other curia so that we can work together in order that the Diocesan offer to schools goes beyond the Education Service. The essential services programme is a document the team are collating so that you can be assured of what the Education Service role is within Trusts and schools.

I have asked Claire to diarise a half termly [Senior Leaders Briefing](#) on the last Wednesday of each half term from 8.00am-8.30am. We will put on the booking form a response piece for you to add to the agenda for those briefings. I hope that the messages that you hear are relevant for you.

As Diocesan Director of Education I am committed to doing my best for the pupils in schools by serving you. I am in no doubt that there will be things that we agree upon and things that we will compromise or disagree on however, we are all working for the same common goal: flourishing and thriving Catholic Education across our Diocese. I am in the service of Archbishop John and aim to serve him and Canon Victor well, working on their vision for Education.

PG 1



My role is to ensure that those who have responsibility for decision making in Education are as well informed as possible and I can only get that information from you as leaders. Keep me informed of what is happening, directly to me or through your TRO or your CAT leaders. With my rose-tinted spectacles on I want to make sure that Catholic education in Southwark is the best it can be, so that our schools are where people want to work and parents choose for their children and that Southwark is the Archdiocese that leads the way.

There are tough times ahead for a number of reasons: school budgets, SEND provision, place planning to name but a few. In working together, we can weather all storms, united for strength and solidarity. I have a lot to learn, the last few weeks have taught me that, but the willingness is there, to serve and to represent you all as best I can. Keep me in your prayers and I will keep you updated!



Colette Doran-Hannon  
Diocesan Schools Commissioner

## Staffing updates

Heads should have received their letter this week announcing the early retirement of Sharon Docherty from the Education Service. We wish Sharon all the very best as she moves onto this next chapter in her life. She will be greatly missed but we are sure she won't be a stranger.

We are delighted that after a successful interview process that we have appointed Dr Ann Marie Mealey as our third Trust Relationship Officer. Ann Marie is a moral theologian with 20 years experience of teaching and leadership in education. We are sure she will add value to our established team and that she will receive a warm welcome from all. Ann Marie will join us on 2nd February.

## Excellent Outcomes for Disadvantaged Pupils

We have been delighted to receive correspondence from our Heads who have received letters from the Secretary of State for education, congratulating them on their excellent outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. We know that this is a culmination of years of work, building the right culture, excellent teaching and not giving up on any child regardless of barriers they face. If you have received one of the letters and haven't yet let us know, please do share your good news with us!

## CSI Update

We are at the 2.5 year mark of the current CSI framework and a national level review has begun. This review will result in an updated framework to be introduced in the 2027 -2028 academic year. The reasons for this review is that as we approach the end of the first full cycle of inspections under this framework, it is timely to ask some global questions about aspects we inspect and report on before we begin the next cycle. Philip Robinson, the Chief Inspector will be leading this process nationally.



School leaders will be kept informed via their diocesan CSI Co-ordinator.

All schools will be inspected under the current framework before we move to the updated one. If your school has not yet been inspected under the current CSI framework and is due between now and the 2027-2028 academic year, please contact your Trust Relationship Officer who will provide support.

Please use the link below to view all changes in relation to inspections under CSI.

<https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/resources/csi-change-log>

## Census 2026

England & Wales. 15th January 2026 – 11th February 2026. All CES Census returns must be completed during the Census period.

Thank you to everyone who has submitted their CES Census 2026. This is such an important exercise to help retrieve the data needed to ensure there are sufficient places in schools for our Catholic children. **As of 28/1, 51% (81)** of schools have returned their information. Not that we are competitive, but this is 11th place out of 21 dioceses looking at the live return rates. If, like me, you would like us to be the first diocese to have 100% submissions, please try to get this done quickly. I will keep you updated with the figures. Please do get in touch with Sam Gower if you need and support. Further details can be found here: <https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/census>

## Catholic Young Artist Award

[The Catholic Union Charitable Trust](#) is delighted to announce the [Catholic Young Artist Award](#). Open to primary school aged children, the theme will be Forgiveness. The Award will be judged by Margaret Mizen, Founder of the [Mizen Foundation](#).

Professor Peter Hindmarsh, Chair of the Catholic Union Charitable Trust says: "I am delighted that the Catholic Union Charitable Trust is supporting this newly established Catholic Young Artist Award. I hope that many children will take part and show us how best to depict forgiveness. My thanks to Margaret Mizen for judging the Award, Margaret is an ambassador for forgiveness, peace and hope and works tirelessly in schools and the community to spread this very important message".

Launched this year, the [Catholic Young Artist Award](#) is sponsored by the [Catholic Union Charitable Trust](#). The winner, to be announced before the end of the academic year, will receive a cash prize and runners up will be recognised too. This Award runs in tandem with the [Catholic Young Writer Award](#) which is open to Catholic pupils of secondary school age focusing on the question 'why do we go to confession'.

Margaret Mizen MBE, Founder of the Mizen Foundation, says: "It is an honour to be the judge for the Catholic Young Artist Award. I look forward to seeing all the pictures. Art is a great way to express our emotions and communicate such vitally important messages including those of forgiveness".

Parents, guardians or teachers of primary school aged children wishing to submit an entry should complete the [application form](#) and scan pictures to [info@catholicunion.org.uk](mailto:info@catholicunion.org.uk) with the title: Catholic Young Artist Award by 22 May 2026. Please could you indicate the school and/or parish that you belong to as well as first name and school year of the child.



## Inspection of Multi-academy Trusts Confirmed

The government has confirmed that inspections of multi-academy trusts (MATs) are expected to begin as early as 2027, representing a significant development in the accountability framework for academy governance. The change will be enabled through amendments to the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, formally bringing academy trusts into the inspection system. We know through our regular conversations with our partner MATS that this is a welcome development and they see it as an opportunity to celebrate all that they do well.

Inspections will be carried out by Ofsted, using a new framework informed by updated trust quality descriptors. Ministers have framed this as part of a wider effort to increase transparency and public confidence, reflecting the growing role trusts play in shaping educational quality, workforce decisions, financial management and pupil wellbeing across groups of schools.

### Principles shaping the new approach

While detailed arrangements are still being developed, the government has set out a number of principles to guide implementation. These include ensuring that trusts are not discouraged from supporting schools in difficulty, aligning expectations between Ofsted and the Department for Education, and keeping inspection demands proportionate. There is also a clear emphasis on the need for inspectors to have appropriate expertise in trust leadership and governance.

### What inspections are likely to examine

Rather than duplicating school-level inspection, trust inspections will focus on leadership, governance and overall impact. Inspectors are expected to consider how effectively trusts improve standards across their schools, support and develop staff, use resources responsibly, and promote pupil wellbeing and inclusion. Alongside challenge, the framework is intended to recognise trusts that demonstrate strong impact or play a wider role in supporting other schools.

### Intervention and improvement

The proposed inspection arrangements sit alongside strengthened intervention powers, enabling more decisive action where trust performance is not meeting expectations — including moving schools into stronger trusts where necessary. At the same time, ministers have indicated that the system should provide clearer ways of identifying and highlighting trusts that are successfully improving outcomes for pupils.

### Implications for governors and trustees

Although implementation is still some way off, this announcement confirms the direction of travel. Trust boards should expect increased external scrutiny of how strategic decisions translate into improvement across their schools. For governors and trustees, this reinforces the importance of robust oversight, clear evidence of impact, and a shared understanding of how trust-level governance adds value for pupils and communities.

## Godly Play and the RED

3 March 2026 at 4:00 pm

Led by Dr Sue Price from the Margaret Beaufort Institute and Andrea Harrison from Godly Play UK with Dr Mo Glackin, CES.



For Religious Education teachers and leaders. This session will be recorded and shared afterwards.

For further information and to sign up for this free webinar, please use the Eventbrite link below:  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/sacred-stories-open-hearts-bringing-godly-play-into-re-teaching-tickets-1978229531782?aff=oddtcreator>

## Prayer and Reflection Days

New Story Theatre Company offers prayer and reflection days to Catholic primary schools in the diocese. They support pupils' spiritual growth using scripture, storytelling, creative activities, music, liturgical dance and drama. They work with a class of 30 KS2 pupils and their teacher to deliver a spiritually enriching day based on each school's theme and focus.

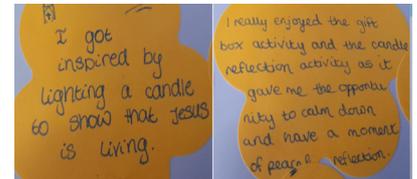
Martin was a primary school teacher in our diocese before starting his own business. He has already led reflection days in two of our schools and received excellent feedback. Fees are negotiable depending on what is being delivered but you would be looking at approximately £200 for the day. If this is something you would be interested in, please contact him directly via [martin@newstorytheatrecompany.co.uk](mailto:martin@newstorytheatrecompany.co.uk)

### Prayer and Reflection Days for Catholic Primary Schools



**We provide opportunities for prayer and reflection to support pupils' spiritual growth using scripture, storytelling, creative activities, music, liturgical dance and drama.**

**We plan and deliver prayer and reflection days based on school themes and focus.**



**For further information and pricing, please contact:**  
[martin@newstorytheatrecompany.co.uk](mailto:martin@newstorytheatrecompany.co.uk)

## Leading Enhanced Provision

[Leading Enhanced Provision](#) is a professional development programme that helps you meet the complex needs of your pupils in a mainstream setting.

Programme start: March 2026.

Duration: 12 months.

Delivery: In-person conference, followed by online live sessions.

Cost: £1,200 + VAT per participant.



# Southwark Catholic Youth Service

The Southwark Catholic Youth Service has a number of upcoming activities for youth and young adults. For regular updates on forthcoming events, sign up to its network at [www.tinyurl.com/scysnetwork](http://www.tinyurl.com/scysnetwork). For queries on youth activities email [youth@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:youth@rcaos.org.uk)

## Racial Justice Sunday Mass - 1 Feb 2026

For more information contact:  
✉ [caritassouthwark@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:caritassouthwark@rcaos.org.uk)  
☎ 07521 425400



Principal Celebrant:  
Archbishop John Wilson

**Racial Justice Sunday 2026**  
Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February, 10am  
St George's Cathedral, Southwark

After Mass, all are welcome to gather in Amigo Hall for refreshments and conversations!

You are warmly encouraged to attend in person, but if you cannot make it you can watch the livestream by scanning the QR code or by using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/fdmGwmESSgI>



Click the link on the left or Scan the QR code to watch online

## Recruitment

To advertise any school [vacancy](#) with us for free, please email [clairewilliams@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:clairewilliams@rcaos.org.uk)

### Headteacher, Holy Cross School

Catford

Closing date: 30th January 2026

### Headteacher, St Mary's Catholic Primary Schools Trust

Croydon

Closing date: 30th January 2026

### Class Teacher, Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School

Bromley

Closing date: 30th January 2026

### Headteacher, St Philomena's Catholic Primary School

Bromley

Closing date: 2nd February 2026



**Headteacher, Holy Innocents Primary School**

Bromley

Closing date: 2nd February 2026

**Maths Head of Department, St Ursula's**

**Convent School**

Greenwich

Closing date: 5th February 2026

**Class Teacher, St Peter's Catholic Primary School**

Woolwich

Closing date: 13th February 2026

**Headteacher, St Thomas' Catholic Primary School**

Canterbury

Closing date: 2nd March 2026

**RISE Theatre**

From the team that brought you God's Planet  
RISE Theatre presents...

**TREASURE WITHIN**

A theatre production on  
**CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING**  
for primary schools - Summer Term 2026

Treasure Within's immersive theatrical story follows a school child who is set a unique homework assignment - to find 7 treasures (Catholic Social Teaching principles), in 7 different locations, and apply them to their own lives.



**RISEtheatre**  
admin@risetheatre.co.uk  
www.risetheatre.co.uk

Costs for the day (based on school size)

£549 – under 125 pupils

£599 – under 325 pupils

£649 – under 450 pupils

£699 – over 450 pupils

Group discounts available when 3+ schools book together in the same area or academy.

Summer Term 2026 - Bookings now open!

Please email [admin@risetheatre.co.uk](mailto:admin@risetheatre.co.uk) to reserve a date.

**Costs & Booking**

'Treasure Within' will take the whole school off timetable for the day to immersively explore the theme through live performances, music, workshops & classroom activities.

Email [admin@risetheatre.co.uk](mailto:admin@risetheatre.co.uk)

to reserve your 2026 date today!

**Price Per School**

School size under 125 children - £549

Under 325 children - £599

Under 450 children - £649

All other schools - £699

Discounts available when 3 or more schools book consecutive dates from the same local area or academy



## Events & Training

All sessions are available to book on our website: [www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/et](http://www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/et)

### Spring 2026

#### Handling Complaints for Governors

Thursday 5th February 2026. 5.30-7pm  
Zoom

#### Senior Leaders Briefings

Wednesday 11th February 2026. 8-8.30am  
Zoom

#### Primary Religious Education Leaders Conference

Thursday 12th February 2026. 9.30am-4pm  
Amigo Hall, SE1 6HR. £25

#### Marketing Training with AmplifiED Schools Marketing – Secure Admissions, Celebrate Success, Build Community

Tuesday 24th February 2026. 4-5.30pm.  
Zoom

#### Governors' Gatherings

Wednesday 25th February 2026. 4-5pm  
Zoom

#### Clerk to Governors Forum

Thursday 26th February 2026. 2-3pm  
Zoom

#### Effective Support and Challenge for Governors

Wednesday 4th March 2026. 5.30-7pm  
Zoom

#### Diocesan Chaplains Retreat

Thursday 5th March 2026. 10am-3pm  
Walsingham House at Abbotswick

#### Racial Justice and Inclusion in Education

Thursday 5th March 2026. 4-5.30pm  
Zoom

#### Catholic Social Teaching – Next steps to Really Live it Out

Tuesday 10th March 2026. 4-5.30pm  
Zoom

#### The Way of Beauty: The Evangelising Power of the Arts in Education and Catechesis

Friday 12th March 2026. 10am-4pm  
Amigo Hall, SE1 6HR. £25

#### Induction for New Foundation Directors, Governors and Clerks

Tuesday 17th March 2026. 5.30-7pm  
Zoom

#### New to Catholic Schools

Tuesday 17th March 2026. 9.30am-4pm  
Education Service, Orpington, BR5 2SR

#### Aspiring to Governance

Wednesday 25th March 2026. 5.30pm-6.30pm  
Zoom

#### St Oscar Romero Feast Day Mass

Thursday 26th March 2026. 12.30pm  
St George's Cathedral

## Save the Date!

**Good Shepherd Mass (secondary and Sixth Form Colleges) - 28th April 2026**

**Deputy Headteachers Conference - 19th May 2026**

**Celebration of Service Mass - 17th June 2026**

**Beginning of Year Mass - 25th September 2026**

**Headteachers Conference - 19th & 20th November 2026**



**Former Pupil of St Francis R.C School Honoured with Peerage**

The school community at St Francis R.C School in Peckham are proud to celebrate the remarkable achievement of former pupil Peter Babudu, who has recently been appointed Baron Babudu.



[Continue reading.](#)

**Exploring Jesus’ Baptism at St Augustine’s Catholic Primary School**

Year 2 children at St Augustine’s Catholic Primary School in Tunbridge Wells have been exploring the story of Jesus’ baptism in the River Jordan. Through their artwork, they learned how this moment marks the beginning of Jesus’ mission and shows God’s love for His Son.



[Continue reading.](#)



## Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership

‘Academies in Christ’  
of the Archdiocese of Southwark

### KCSP GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE 2026

JOIN US

**17 MARCH 2026: ST SIMON STOCK CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL, MAIDSTONE, ME16 0JP**

**Session 1:** CSI Inspections, Catholic Education, and the updated Religious Education Directory (RED) - KCSP

Chair of the Trust Board Q&A

**Session 2:** Supporting disciplinary panels and the legal requirements - HR Connect

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**25 MARCH 2026: ST ANSELM'S CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL, CANTERBURY, CT1 3EN**

**Session 1:** SEND strategy and the changing landscape - KCSP

Chair of the Trust Board Q&A

**Session 2:** The new Ofsted framework and its implications for governance - NGA

Book your place [here](#) or via the QR code



Agenda for both events:

Arrival from 16:30

Session 1 starting at 17:00

Networking at 18:00

Chair Trust Board and LGC Chair Q&A at 18:15

Session 2 starting 18:30

CSI / Ofsted Q&A 20:00

Finish 20:30

