

Newsletter



6th May 2026

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Director's Message

Dear Colleagues,

I hope that you had the opportunity to enjoy the Bank Holiday weekend, but I know that a short week often means we attempt to do the same amount of work in less time!

Exam season is nearly upon us. We keep all our young people sitting public exams at the forefront of our minds, but we also remember their teachers, leaders and parents at heart as they go through the season with them.

This time of year the Education Service is very busy with the recruitment of staff to reserved posts within our schools and trusts. We have had 41 rounds of recruitment processes this year to date and the vast majority resulted in successful appointments. We will always put these as a priority in our diary, working as best we can around the needs of the school; please give us plenty of notice to be involved in the process from the beginning, so that we can make it work.

I had the privilege of bringing the work from our SEND White Paper round table to the Houses of Parliament this week. Conversations around the impact of the paper on schools and trusts around the table were useful and broadly similar. I am very grateful to the colleagues from our schools who came together in February, allowing me to draw our collective thoughts and share them this week. Our collective views were shared; this is a powerful reminder to me that the round tables we will hold across my time in post will be of great value to our system. The same will be for our Link Heads group, (Headteacher Reference Group).

Our world is in turmoil, the prayers in our churches call for peace and tolerance, we need to show the same in our schools, for our children and staff. As we approach Pentecost, the feast in the church

PG 1



that celebrates diversity and difference within the common cause of spreading the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Over the last few months, our staff have been able to visit schools as they celebrate the diverse cultures and appreciate how the differences between cultures make us stronger as Catholic schools. We do not dilute our faith with tolerance of others, but neither are we apologetic for retaining our distinctly Catholic charism. As we move towards Pentecost, let us have this at the forefront of our minds and nurture it within our hearts.



Colette Doran-Hannon

Diocesan Schools Commissioner

Diocese Insurance Contribution

Some schools may receive an invoice regarding unpaid contributions towards insurance taken out by the diocese on the school's behalf. This is something schools may not have paid as they did not know what it was, but it is something that you would definitely appreciate if it became necessary.

The insurance is so that, in the event of a major disaster which requires an insurance pay out, you would not be left having to pay the excess. For many premiums this is 10% of the claim.

The insurance you have with the diocese will pay this money. This is particularly important in this time of reduced reserves. This money goes directly to the finance team who manage the policies. Please can you look out for it and action as required. If you have any questions, you can [contact your TRO](#) to discuss, although we may have to find the answers ourselves.

Judaism Q and A - May 2026

Anna Silver's monthly Q and A 'Any questions' zoom session to support teachers in their teaching of Judaism will take place on: **Monday 11th May 2026, 3:45-4:45**. It's free and informative and no question is a silly one!

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84379134655?pwd=Fu6SJUPBx01tcNU7cDbYT4mq7H2Xbg.1> Meeting ID: 843 7913 4655. Passcode: 278417

Pupil Celebration Day

Schools are invited to attend the annual Pupil Celebration Day at Aylesford Priory on **25th June 2026 from 10am until 2pm.**

This event is for pupils in Year 4 or Year 5. This will be a fantastic opportunity to gather together to celebrate Catholic education and we are really looking forward to seeing lots of schools there.

To book please [click here](#)



Superb Gap Year Opportunity

For anyone finishing Year 13 this summer, or age 18-23 from September: Be part of the Walsingham House Team 26/27. Applications are now open! Being on the team is a wonderful opportunity to work with young people, gain life skills, live in community and to share and deepen your faith. For more information please see the website www.bcys.net/whabbotswick/be-on-team or email michaelkearns@brcdt.org

Reduce Water Usage, and Save Money

Understanding How Efficient Water Management Can Help Detect Leaks, Reduce Water Usage, and Save Money

Friday 8th May 2026 10-10.30am

Key takeaways:

- Introduction to The Churchmarketplace Water Framework
- Water Management - What does this look like?
- How To Reduce Water Consumption
- Additional Benefits

[Register here](#)

Board of Deputies of British Jews

Please find below a message from the Board of Deputies of British Jews

I am sure you are aware of the arson attacks, stabbings and murders which have targeted our Jewish community.

Please could you remind our members of the resources to combat anti-Jewish hatred on the DfE Education Against Hate website [Educate Against Hate - Prevent Radicalisation & Extremism](#) and [Teaching Resources | Antisemitism | The Rabbi Sacks Legacy](#).

Education is surely the key to combat this injustice and we need the help and support of the 'silent majority'.

Length of Service as a Foundation Governor/Director in One School

Please be aware Foundation Governors/Directors can only serve a maximum of three terms of office i.e. 12 years in one school. After 12 years you are welcome to become a Foundation Governor/Director at any other school in the Diocese.



Statutory RSHE Updates

Please see below the link to latest diocesan briefing from Ten:Ten Resources. This provides a comprehensive update on the statutory RSHE updates that come into force in schools in September 2026. [Read the briefing here.](#)

Training Opportunities

We know how busy you all are in school and the Education Service are keen to help and support where we can. Sometimes this is passing on information to give you options, reducing the time spent talking with sales teams.

We have put some information on The Well about Zen Educate and Best Practice Network showing you what they can offer in terms of staffing and training, including apprenticeship level qualifications. [Log In - The Well.](#)

Help DfE shape digital, data, tech and AI support in schools

The DfE are running user research sessions in May to better understand how schools use technology in day-to-day practice and where support is needed from real classroom experience. They would like to hear from teachers, teaching assistants and leaders about how they use technology (including digital, data and AI) to carry out tasks as part of their job and activities within the classroom and across the wider school.

If interested, please [click here](#) for the screener questionnaire.

Archbishop's Appeal 2026 Grant Scheme

The Archbishop's Appeal is a fundraising appeal that takes place across parishes in the Archdiocese of Southwark each year.

Grants of up to £5,000 are available to support innovative projects taking place within the geographical boundaries of the Archdiocese of Southwark and led by parishes, schools, diocesan commissions, or other entities working alongside the Archdiocese, which seek to enhance one or more of the key missionary areas: Youth and Evangelisation or Social Outreach.

Open from **1st May 2026 to 1st July 2026**

Website: <https://rcaos.org.uk/archbishops-appeal-grant>

Application form: <https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/archbishops-appeal-grant-application/>

Eligibility criteria: <https://rcaos.org.uk/media/xamfcf2r/archbishop-s-appeal-grant-guidelines-and-eligibility.pdf>



CPD: Growing a Liturgical Choir in your Secondary School

Thursday 21 May 2026, 4-5pm, Online, free

Secondary Music Teachers, RE leads and Chaplains are invited to attend an online CPD session organised by the Archdiocese of Southwark Music Committee. This free session outlines the practical and strategic considerations behind developing liturgical singing in secondary schools and is aimed at those who may be directing or setting up a choir in their school.

[Register here](#)

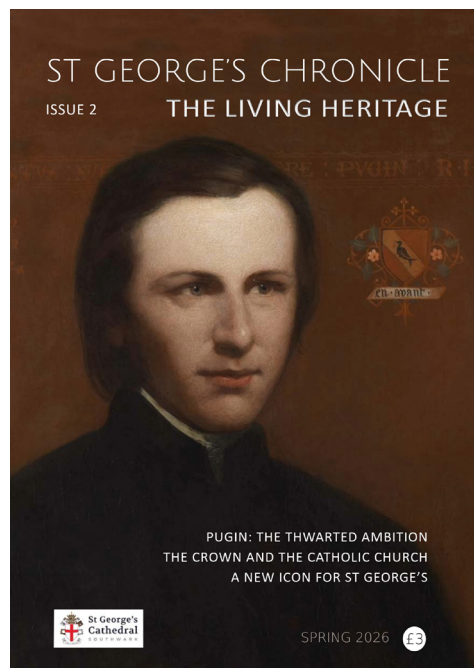
Introducing St George's Chronicle: The Living Heritage

Augustus Pugin, a Catholic convert, is best known as the architect of the Houses of Parliament. But his design of St George's, opened in 1848, is one of his most important contributions to the restoration of Catholic worship after the Emancipation Act earlier in the century.

Though St George's was at the centre of this revival, public awareness of its rich history has long faded. To rediscover this legacy, the cathedral has launched a flagship quarterly journal, St George's Chronicle: The Living Heritage.

Benefits to schools and their communities:

- Strengthens identity and a sense of belonging
- Connects communities through a shared history
- Reinforces traditions and values, helping people feel rooted and united
- Supports education by offering accessible ways to explore history, practices, and cultural significance
- Contributes to the preservation of traditions
- Encourages wider community and Archdiocesan engagement



This is not simply a “nice to have” — it is essential. It safeguards our shared Catholic heritage, ensuring it remains visible and meaningful rather than fading from the narrative. Every school, community, and generation deserves access to its history in full, not in fragments. Each of you has a role in making that possible.

The cost of the publication is £3. For further information and to subscribe please contact e: cathedralenquiries@rcaos.org.uk

Front cover image
© National Portrait Gallery, London
Augustus Pugin
by Unknown artist
circa 1840



Encounter Pentecost

You are warmly invited to Encounter Pentecost at St George's Cathedral, Southwark, on **Saturday 23 May**.

This will be a day of worship, teaching and prayer as we gather to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost together. The programme includes praise and worship, teaching from Fr Emmanuel Mansford CFR, opportunities for Adoration and Confession, prayer ministry, and Mass in the Cathedral. Families are very welcome. There will be a dedicated programme for children and young people during the day, including a children's music workshop led by Jonathan Schranz, as well as other activities.

-Children from Yr 1 to Yr 7 -session led by Colette Doran Hannon from the Education Service
-Young people from Yr 8 upwards - 'mini-retreat' led by the wonderful Youth Ministry Team

If your child would like to take part in the children's programme, please register in advance via [the website](#).

Encounter Pentecost

Talks and testimonies – Praise and Worship
Children's ministry + music workshop
Stalls – Food – Refreshments
Prayer Spaces - Confession – Rosary
Closing Mass

23rd May 2026 10 am - 5 pm
St George's Cathedral
Lambeth Road – SE1 6HR

encounterpentecost.com



Teacher Degree Apprenticeship (TDA)

What is the Primary TDA?

An innovative work-based route into teaching, blending school-based and university-led learning. Become a confident, reflective, and research-informed primary school teacher, earning an unqualified teacher's salary for the duration of your degree.

Who can apply?

You, if you have a passion to become an effective primary school teacher.

- Teaching Assistants looking to advance their careers.
- Higher Level Teaching Assistants.
- Unqualified teachers without a degree and seeking QTS.
- Career changers ready to enter the education sector.
- School leavers committed to a career in teaching.

What will I study?

During the degree you begin with modules that consider child development, inclusive practice, curriculum subject knowledge and pedagogy. This leads into modules which develop knowledge of pupils with SEND, assessment, research informed practice and curriculum design and knowledge. The course ensures you cover all aspects needed to become an effective teacher.

How is the course delivered?

- **Duration:** 45 months (4 academic years).
- **Start date:** New cohorts begin the TDA each September.
- Over 3 levels of academic study, each lasting 8 school terms. These align with all CCCU ITE courses (Collaborative/Developing/Independent phases).
- **Delivery:** on-the-job training 60% (in employing school) and off-the-job training 40% (mix of taught campus sessions (Canterbury), guided hours in school, independent and remote study).
- **On-the-job training:** develop practice from day one as an employee engaging in teaching activities.
- **Off-the-job training (2200 hours):** research-led training delivered by subject specialists in practical campus sessions, guided independent learning, virtual learning and school-based development from experienced mentors.

Successful TDA Graduates will:

- Achieve a Primary Education Honours Degree with Qualified Teacher Status.
- Be an effective member of a school team delivering high quality teaching and learning to all pupils.
- Develop both academic and practical expertise to become an excellent primary school teacher.



Wintershall

You are invited to the Life of Christ


WINTERSHALL
Experience the story

*Free Teacher tickets on
Wednesday 17 June 2026*

10am - 3.30pm

This unique, immersive theatre performance is a learning experience unlike any other.

Supporting high quality RE teaching and learning, deepening the understanding of Christianity for both staff and students.

Excellent CPD opportunity for those looking to be inspired by the best teacher around!

Email to book your free CPD ticket admin@wintershall.org.uk

DBS verification

The Education Service is ensuring that DBS certificates are obtained through the Safeguarding office of the Diocese. Verification checks may be undertaken by either a Verifier in the school or by the Parish Safeguarding Representative. A DBS 3c form must be completed <https://forms.rcaos.org.uk/identity-verifier-dbs-3c-form/>. **If this form is not completed by the Verifier, the Safeguarding office will be unable to process the application.**

RISE Theatre

Thanks to generous funding, RISE Theatre is delighted to offer primary schools 50% off our "Treasure Within" day, now just £299.50! This immersive theatre experience explores the 7 principles of Catholic Social Teaching combining drama, music, and meaningful reflection to enrich your CST curriculum. Selected dates are available for the summer term and bookings are now open for the Autumn Tour too! Get in touch - admin@risetheatre.co.uk - to reserve a date for this inspiring adventure at your school.



Save the Date!

Lighting the Path - 29th June & 6th July 2026
Primary Headteacher's Retreat - 15th July 2026

Beginning of Year Mass - 25th September 2026
Headteachers Conference - 19th & 20th November 2026

Recruitment

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

Full Time Class Teacher, St Anne's Catholic Primary School

London

Closing date: 8th May 2026

Director of Secondary Education, St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Closing date: 14th May 2026

RE Teacher, St Columba's Catholic Boys' School

Bexleyheath

Closing date: 14th May 2026

Headteacher, St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Eltham

Closing date: 15th May 2026

Music Specialist Teacher, St Fidelis Catholic Primary School

Erith

Closing date: 18th May 2026

Headteacher, St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Beckenham

Closing date: 1st June 2026

Events & Training

All sessions are available to book on our website: www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/et

Summer 2026

New to Religious Education Leadership – Day 3

Monday 11th May 2026. 9.30am-4pm
Education Service, Orpington, BR5 2SR.

Induction for New Foundation Directors, Governors and Clerks

Thursday 14th May 2026. 5.30-7pm
Zoom

Deputy Headteachers' Conference

Tuesday 19th May 2026. 9.30am-4pm. £60
West Indies Room at The Kia Oval

Senior Leaders Briefings

Wednesday 20th May 2026. 8-8.30am.
Zoom

Drop in Session for Parish Priests

Thursday 21st May 2026. 2-3pm.
Zoom

Directors Keeping in Touch (KIT)

Wednesday 3rd June 2026. 8-8.30am.
Teams



Finance for Governors

Tuesday 9th June 2026 5.30-7pm

Zoom

ECT Celebration Event

Tuesday 16th June 2026.

Amigo hall, Lambeth Road, SE1 6HR

What Does Good Prayer and Liturgy Look Like?

Thursday 18th June 2026. 1-4pm.

Zoom

Clerk to Governors Forum

Thursday 18th June 2026. 2-3pm.

Zoom

Directors & Governors Retreat

Saturday 20th June 2026. 9.30am-4pm

Education Service, BR5 2SR. £20

Secondary RE Leaders Meeting

Tuesday 23rd June 2026. 4-5.30pm.

Teams

Safeguarding for Governors

Tuesday 23rd June 2026. 5.30pm-7pm.

Zoom

Governors Gathering

Thursday 11th June 2026 4pm-5pm

Zoom

Pupil Celebration Day

Thursday 25th June 2026. 9.30am-4pm

Aylesford Priory, Kent ME20 7BY.

News

Canon Victor Celebrates Mass at St Philomena's School



On Saturday 18th April, Canon Victor celebrated a Mass at St Philomena's school chapel in Carshalton, during the Mass he baptised Daren King, a foundation governor at Richard Challoner School, and he also confirmed him, and gave him first holy communion.

[Continue reading](#)

National Recognition for Richard Challoner School Outstanding Performance

Members of the Richard Challoner School community are delighted that the school's excellent outcomes, once again, have been recognised by SSAT (Schools', Students' and Teachers' Network) in this year's Educational Outcomes Awards.

[Continue reading](#)





**Year 5
Transition
Events**

**Maths Challenge
30th June**

**Science Fayre
6th July**

**Key Stage 2 Literature
Quiz 8th July**

At: St Ursula's Convent
School

Contact Miss Groves on: mgroves@stursulas.com
Book your place by Thursday 21st May at the latest!

