



I don't know about you, but I am rubbish at being disciplined enough to spend a few minutes each morning reading my Bible and praying. However, whilst I was on sick leave during the summer I found I had more time and less excuse not to. I use 'Our Daily Bread' by [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#) (others are available). Often the thoughts for the day really resonated with how I was feeling and helped me immensely with all that was going on at

the time. I have been blessed by them and so I am happy to personally commend them to you.

Today's reading and thought is once again appropriate. The reading is 1 Corinthians where Paul is explaining to the Corinthians that we are all servants of the Lord's work. The passage speaks of Paul planting and Apollos watering. They each had a part to play, but it was and still is God who causes growth.

'What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.'

1 Corinthians 3:5-11

'It can be easy to honour certain people and their gifts – seeing ourselves as far more 'ordinary.' Yet it is God who makes our offerings beautiful. In His community of believers, there's an important role for each of us when we focus on Jesus.' (Adrian Smith, Our Daily Bread 02/09/26)

As we start a new school year may we each take comfort in the fact that we all have a part to play in God's work in Church of England schools. May we rejoice in this and be blessed by the knowledge that we are God's workers, in partnership with Him in His mission for all.

Deborah

DATES FOR THIS TERM

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 19 September	Shades Celebration - Trinity High School
Wednesday 23 September	New HT Induction ½ - St John's House
Monday 28 September	Heads & Chairs online briefing (11am)
Tuesday 29 September	Heads & Chairs online briefing (2pm)

OCTOBER

Friday 2 October	Annual School Conference - The Monastery, Manchester
Tuesday 6 October	New School Leaders Evensong
Thursday 15 October	Telling the greatest story with Bob Hartman - St John's House

NOVEMBER

Monday 16 November	New HT Induction 2/6 - St John's House
Saturday 28 November	Governor Conference - St John's House

DECEMBER

Thursday 10 December	RE Hub (online)
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CHURCH
FOR A
DIFFERENT
WORLD



Prayer for Peace

Almighty God,
whose Son Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace
and loves to bless the peacemakers,
at this time
we particularly pray for
peace in our communities,
peace in our nation,
and peace across the world.
We pray that people may live in safety,
secure in your grace,
through Jesus Christ, who died to bring us
peace.
Amen

New Team Members

We welcome two new team members to the Diocesan Board of Education team. Hilary Henderson has joined us as our part time School Effectiveness Officer. Hilary will be coordinating the DBE's approach to supporting school leaders in their preparations for inspection.

Helen Eves is our new part time RE Adviser. Alongside our popular professional offer, Helen will be exploring how we can further support RE Leads and better resource the syllabus and its delivery.

Our new team members bring a wealth of knowledge and experience which we are sure will benefit leaders, teachers and most of all, the children and young people across the diocese.

I just wanted to say 'Thank you' to all those who wrote to me, asked the DBE team how I was getting on and remembered me in their prayers during my recent period of sick leave. It was humbling and so encouraging to hear from you. I benefitted from your kind words and prayers. I have had a good recovery and have now returned to work, albeit on a phased return for a few more weeks. I hope to be out and about in schools in the coming months and will see many of you at the Annual Schools Conference on 2 October.

Deborah

ANNUAL UPDATE

To ensure we have the correct and up to date information for all our schools, our annual School Information Update will be sent to all Headteachers in the near future. We ask that this is returned as soon as possible, to enable all information or training invites to be received by the correct person.

You may wish to liaise with your SBM and/or Chair of Governors to ensure all information is provided.

Many thanks

Helen

Heads & Chairs Briefings

Meetings will take place via Teams and are scheduled for 1.5 hours.

- Monday 28 September 2026 - 11.00am
- Tuesday 26 January 2027 - 1.30pm
- Tuesday 27 April 2027 - 1.30pm
- Tuesday 29 September 2026 - 2.00pm
- Wednesday 27 January 2027 - 10.00am
- Wednesday 28 April 2027 - 10.00am

New School Leaders Evensong

We warmly invite New Headteachers, Heads of School, Governors and new members of the leadership teams within Manchester Diocese schools to a special extended choral evensong at Manchester Cathedral. Taking place on Tuesday 6 October, this formal service of music and reflection will be led by The Right Reverend Mark Davies, Bishop of Middleton. Please join us as we welcome new leaders into our school communities. Book your place [HERE](#)



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

BOARD OF
EDUCATION

Telling the Greatest Story



with

Bob Hartman

Thursday 15th October

St John's House, Bury 9:30am - 12:00





Annual Schools Conference

The Character of Leadership

Friday 2 October 2026

 THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

BOARD OF EDUCATION

'And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skilful hands he led them.'
Psalm 78:72

Our 2026 theme, The Character of Leadership, places a spotlight on the vital role of character education in shaping not only our pupils, but also the leadership culture within our schools. At a time when educational leadership faces increasing complexity, the conference will explore how values-driven leadership can inspire flourishing communities and deliver lasting impact. Through keynotes, discussion and reflection, we will consider how character, virtues and purpose can strengthen leadership at every level.

We are delighted to welcome two keynote speakers to this year's event.

Professor Tom Harrison, Director of Education at the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham, is a nationally recognised leader in character education. His work has shaped policy, research and practice both across the UK and internationally, helping schools place character development at the heart of their ethos and curriculum.

Joining him will be **Nick Johnson**, Senior Leader at The Lane, Long Lane Church, Liverpool. Nick is widely respected for his expertise in faith-based leadership and community transformation, bringing engaging and practical perspectives on leadership, culture, values and personal development.

Following the keynote presentations, delegates will have the opportunity to choose from a range of workshops exploring the themes of character and leadership in greater depth.

We are also pleased to offer a series of optional "After Hours" sessions, hosted by members of the DBE team. These focused sessions will provide attendees with the chance to explore specific topics in more detail following the main conference programme.



BOOK NOW

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

NPQ Update

NPQ applications for Autumn Term have been building steadily. Thank you to all those who have applied. The NPQs being delivered by Manchester Diocese Board of Education are:

- **NPQ H**
- **NPQ SENCO**
- **NPQ SL** (Senior Leadership)

This year, all of the NPQs that we are delivering in Manchester are **FULLY FUNDED**. This is an excellent opportunity to ensure that your staff are accessing CPD opportunities.

If you are interested in any other NPQs, you can still apply via the National Society (Church of England) but some of these courses will be delivered online only.

Application process: [NPQ applications are open! — National Society for Education](#)

Please follow this link. You will first be taken to the DfE registration form and then once they have received it you will be sent an NSE (Church of England) form to complete, where you can choose Manchester Diocese as your local delivery partner.

The closing date for NPQ H, SL and NPQ SENCO is 6th November.

Welcome to New Headteachers

Mike Fletcher
Helen Kelly
Laura James
Andy Clerc
Danielle Childs
Laura Flynn
Maria Lowe
Emma Richardson
Katy Ormerod
Dr Suzanne Wrigley
James Waddington
Sam Walsh
Samantha Walker
Lucy McGreavy
Chris Lamb
Cheryl Nelson
Ken Corrall
Emily Kirk

Leigh St Peter's CE Primary School
Wardley CE Primary School, Salford
St Andrew's CE Primary School, Boothstown
St John's CE Primary School, Heaton Mersey
St Michael's CE Primary School, Alkrington
St Wilfrid's CE Primary School, Newton Heath
Astley St Stephen's CE Primary School
St Peter's CE Primary School, Swinton
St Paul's CE Primary School, Rawtenstall (Constable Lee)
Bury CE High School
St Matthew's CE Primary School, Bolton
Rivington & Blackrod High School
St Mary's CE Primary School, Deane
St Paul's CE Primary School, Astley Bridge
St James's CE High School
St Barnabas CE Primary Academy
St James' CE Primary School, Gorton
St Barnabas & St James CE Primaries (Executive Head)

LOUISE MORLEY

As part of our welcome to those new to leading a school in Manchester Diocese we invite you to take part in our induction sessions taking place regularly throughout the year. There should have been a welcome letter waiting at school for the start of term containing information about the Education Team, the induction sessions offered and a personal message from Deborah Smith. If this has gone astray please contact the office and we will send a copy by email.

The first induction session - Being a Headteacher in Manchester Diocese - will take place at St John's House, Bury on Wednesday 23 September 2026.

It would be appreciated if you could pre-book your place using this [LINK](#)

Aspiring to Leadership Course

DBE services

This four-day face-to-face programme, supported by online learning, is designed for current and aspiring middle leaders working in Christian primary schools.

Participants will explore their own values and leadership identity, gain a deeper understanding of the distinctive mission of Church of England schools, and develop practical leadership skills through engagement with leadership theory, research, tutorials and peer discussion.

Programme includes:

- Four face-to-face training days
- Online Zoom session (March 2027)
- Group and individual tutorials
- Celebration event

There are no formal entry requirements. The programme is specifically designed for teachers in Christian primary schools and offers a distinctive faith-based approach to leadership development. Places are limited to 15 participants.

HOW TO APPLY

For more information please contact:

- David Thorpe, Deputy Director of Education Liverpool Diocese:
david.thorpe@liverpool.anglican.org
- Andrew Clark, Deputy Headteacher Chorley St. James' CE
Primary School: deputy@st-jameschorley.lancs.sch.uk

All bookings can be made using this [LINK](#)
Password: AspiringToLeadership2025



Duration
8 months



Delivery
Blended Learning



Start date
November 2026



East Manchester
Teaching School Hub



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

CHURCH
FOR A
DIFFERENT
WORLD

Early Career Teacher Entitlement

Diocese of Manchester and East Manchester Teaching School Hub are pleased to be working together to provide schools across the region, their ECTs, and mentors, with the opportunity to undertake the UCL ECT Programme newly developed with a **Flourishing** lens by the Church of England.

Fully funded
Entitlement

Two-year
Package

High-quality
Professional
Development

For ECTs &
Mentors in
CofE Schools

Provided by:



For more information on how to register, please visit our website below.

info@eastmanchesterteachinghub.com

0161 785 5083

www.eastmanchesterteachinghub.com

Leaders Like Us Cohort 5

Applications are now open for Cohort 5

Are you a UKME/GMH teacher?

Do you want to upskill to become a Headteacher?

The Leaders Like Us Programme is an 18-month learning journey that supports middle and senior leaders from UKME/GMH (UK minoritised ethnic/global majority heritage) into senior leadership (including headship) roles within the next five years through our bespoke multifaceted programme.



PLEASE SCAN THE QR
CODE TO COMPLETE
OUR PARTICIPANT
APPLICATION FORM



Leaders Like Us
National Society for Education

Leaders Like Us Cohort 5

Applications are now open for Cohort 5

Are you an experienced Senior Leader or Headteacher passionate about leadership?

Do you enjoy mentoring and coaching?

Mentors are essential for the ongoing support and development of our LLU participants. LLU participants are assigned a mentor for the duration of the programme. Mentors (if able) provide the opportunity for their mentees to shadow them, providing a close-up experience of headship. Mentors will be provided with training to fulfil this role. We welcome applications from experienced school leaders of all heritages.



PLEASE SCAN THE QR
CODE TO COMPLETE
OUR MENTOR
APPLICATION FORM



Leaders Like Us
National Society for Education

GOVERNANCE

Signposting

Signposts: DfE core governance guidance, and key national governance organisations

The following links, while not exhaustive, will help you find your way to national governance organisations and some of the main DfE core governance guidance.

Governance related organisations:

National Governance Association: <https://www.nga.org.uk> This is the professional body for school governors. They are a campaigning organisation and are closely involved in national governance developments alongside other national education stakeholders including the Church of England.

Boards for Education (formerly Governors for Schools) Now the only national governor recruitment agency. Their basic services are free, with enhanced options such as 'search for CoG' involving a fee: <https://boardsforeducation.org.uk/>

Schools Week: a regular round up of education news <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/>

Key national governance guidance and templates:

Maintained schools governance guide: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/governance-in-maintained-schools>

Academy Trust Governance Guide: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-trust-governance-guide>

Academy Trust Handbook: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-trust-handbook>

Effective Governance resources <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/effective-governance-resources>

Church academies, model documents: includes template for articles of association: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/church-academies-model-documents>

Constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools: this includes the template for an Instrument of Government for single maintained schools: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/constitution-of-governing-bodies-of-maintained-schools>

Federation formation and governance: this also includes the (sparse) national guidance on how to dissolve a federation. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-in-federations/federations-guidance-on-the-governance-processes>

Formal collaborations and other school partnerships, guidance and templates: this includes the template for a collaboration Memorandum of Understanding:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-up-school-partnerships>

Closing maintained schools: This includes guidance on decision makers needing to have regard for the 'balance of denominational provision' locally.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a034409e71c4cdf4026bab8/Closing_maintained_schools_guidance_-_May_2026.pdf

Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools. This includes changes to age range, site transfer, amalgamations etc.

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68947395ad0cbc0e276430d8/making-significant-changes-prescribed-alterations-to-maintained-schools.pdf>

Statutory guidance on opening new schools (effective from September 2026):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/opening-new-schools>

DfE guidance generally does not include specific detail on the additional requirements and processes for church schools, much of which has developed over time through custom and practice about the interpretation of DfE guidance and the Diocesan Measure; and by asking 'what would be a reasonable way to proceed'. The DBE team is here to help with any enquiries.

MAT Governance

The National Governance Association (NGA), the professional body for school and academy governors, has a range of courses this term relating to MAT governance, please see below.

Chairing & leadership

Strengthen your leadership as a chair within a MAT with practical support, peer networks, and strategies to tackle common governance challenges. Includes The Chairs' Handbook and 12 months' free access to NGA's online e-learning platform Learning Link.

Development for MAT Chairs – 29 September 2026

[!\[\]\(3b2dcacf48e43c80086616b9c3042b47_img.jpg\) Book your place](#)

Development for chairs of Local Governing Bodies - 29 September 2026

[!\[\]\(e97636a3328cdaccd5ffd8fe3bc69ce6_img.jpg\) Book your place](#)

Development for chairs of Local Governing Bodies – 21 January 2027

[!\[\]\(d8fdd8b2bb8b1ec8f8281882eb89eb1f_img.jpg\) Book your place](#)

Development for chairs of Local Governing Bodies – 21 April 2027

[!\[\]\(64aa49a093b417cefcbea2338d3c32ec_img.jpg\) Book your place](#)

Governance Essentials: start the year with confidence

Build the knowledge and confidence to contribute effectively to MAT governance. Ideal for new trustees, those needing a refresher, as well as senior leaders and governance professionals.

MAT Governance Essentials – 7 October 2026

👉 [Book your place](#)

MAT Governance Essentials – 3 February 2027

👉 [Book your place](#)

For Local governors, there is also a bespoke programme tailored to you, building confidence and capability through focused, practical governance support.

Local Governance Essentials - flexible

👉 [Find out more](#)

Specialist governance training

They also offer a range of wider governance programmes relevant to MATs, including:

- Governing AI in Schools and Trusts
- Getting headteacher performance management and appraisal right
- Understanding the role of Academy Trust Members
- Understanding independent review panels

An opportunity to contribute

To all our Headteachers / Deputy Headteachers / Assistant Headteachers

Have you ever thought that you would like to share your skills and experience as part of your school's Senior Leadership Team to contribute to any of the other schools in your area?

A role as Diocesan Foundation Governor in another of our schools in the diocese could be perfect for you.

- You can expand the positive impact you have on the children in your school to any of our schools.
- Your area of expertise could be just what one of our other schools needs, and could help you to deepen and expand it.
- It would give you a different perspective on the functions around running a school.

You can find further information on the NGA's website here:

[Educators on Board campaign](#) | [National Governance Association \(nga.org.uk\)](#)

If you are interested in this, please contact Helen for a chat.

HELEN COWLEY

Updated Model Contracts

The NSE have worked with Winkworth Sherwood LLP to provide updated template employment contracts and offer letters for various roles in both academies and VA Church of England maintained schools. The template model employment contracts are provided in the form of a template central master terms and conditions document with an accompanying offer letter that is intended to fit the individual role/circumstances. The offer letter and terms and conditions together constitute the written statement of particulars of employment. Note that this suite of model documents is intended to be adapted to reflect the context of the particular educational establishment and its local circumstances ensuring proper consultation with trade unions and staff, as appropriate.

These templates were updated in light of the Employment Rights Act 2025 and are current as of 1 June 2026.

The updated template NSE employment contracts are now on the NSE website together with a guidance note/drafting notes. <https://www.nse.org.uk/education-policy/schools-contracts>

Admissions

The admissions consultation window opens in October. Before any church school consults on admissions, they must directly consult the DBE as their religious authority.

Please send any proposed admission policies that are seeking consultation to **admissions@manchester.anglican.org**

Schools should consult on admissions arrangements at least once every seven years, please check when you last consulted.

An overview of admissions is available on the diocesan website [Admissions - Diocese of Manchester](#) However, we also provide training sessions on admissions policies and consultation processes. Our next session is online on the 29th Sept at 6pm. We have placed this session outside of school hours to support governors in attending. To book onto this session, please use this **LINK**

SIAMS Framework

This Summer there have been two small changes to the SIAMS Inspection Framework. They are as follows:

1. The phraseology prior to IQ7. The wording in IQ7 has been widened to include a variety of foundations. It now reads '...maintained voluntary aided schools or academies for which the founding documents indicate that denominational religious education be taught'. This should not have any impact on evidencing for SIAMS.
2. The Statement of Entitlement for RE. The new Statement of Entitlement (SoE) will be implemented as an inspection measure from September 2026. Therefore, schools should be referring to the new SoE.

The updated Framework can be found **HERE** and this is the link for the [2026 Statement of Entitlement](#).

If you have any questions related to any of the above, please contact terryhart@manchester.anglican.org

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Guidance Update

In June 2026 we launched our new collective worship suite – MDBE collective worship guidance, CWQM™ (Collective Worship Quality Mark) and RIPPLE – a collective worship approach. To support our schools in providing exceptional collective worship, we have produced a guidance and support document. This outlines the requirements of collective worship as well as supporting schools in the development of policy and planning.

All resources are available on the Manchester Diocese website for you to download.

[Religious Education and Collective Worship - Diocese of Manchester](#)

CWQM™ – Collective Worship Quality Mark

The purpose of this quality mark is to support school leaders in providing impactful collective worship. This mark seeks to make collective worship a priority and ensure its quality. We hope its content will be of use to you in defining, partnering, leading and evaluating collective worship within your setting. The quality mark process is structured to address these key four areas for enquiry.

Since its launch we have had four schools that have been successfully awarded either CWQM or CWQM+. Congratulations to all the staff and pupils of these schools, who are delivering transformative daily collective worship.

- St Andrew's Rochdale
- St Peter's Rochdale
- Bishop Bridgeman Bolton
- St James' Farnworth

We have more visits planned to schools in the Autumn term and look forward to receiving more applications over the next year.

RIPPLE

RIPPLE is an evidence-based approach to collective worship that has been designed to be used in all schools, ensuring that collective worship remains context specific. The RIPPLE approach is designed to run alongside each Christian value in turn, taking the school community on a journey, developing a deeper understanding of each value and leading to change.

RIPPLE was piloted with a number of schools across the diocese in Spring 26. We have been delighted to see the impact of the approach and the enthusiasm for it.

CAPITAL BUILDINGS OFFICER

As you start your new school year and amid the numerous responsibilities of school administration, we would like to inform you of a few important dates and a reminder of the consideration of capital building works and building compliance matters.

For our VA schools, in most cases where SCA was granted, we hope that the schools that received it are happy with the progress of the works carried out over the summer holidays. Whilst not all projects were due to start, we are happy to say that the majority of the planned works have been carried out successfully. With this in mind, letters for 2027 SCA bid invitations are due out by the end of September. Please contact your school's building consultants to discuss your five-year plan and SCA bids. The deadline for bid submission is Friday 27th November. Bids will be collated and the selection process will begin with successful bids announced in MAY 2027.

For Academies, please be aware that any and all capital building works over £50k must be granted permission by the Diocese.

School Rebuilding Programme

Over the past three years, we have worked closely with the Department for Education (DfE) on an ambitious programme to improve and rebuild schools across our Diocese. Six schools—five primary and one secondary—are currently undergoing full rebuilds, with each project at a different stage of delivery.

Why the Schools Are Being Rebuilt

Four of the rebuilds were required following the discovery of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC). One project is addressing the overall condition of the school estate, while another became necessary after a devastating fire. Although the circumstances behind each scheme are different, they share the same goal: to provide safe, modern and sustainable learning environments for pupils and staff.

A Challenging but Rewarding Programme

The process has been challenging at times, as major construction projects must be carefully managed alongside the day-to-day needs of school communities. However, the long-term benefits will be significant. On completion, the new buildings will offer improved facilities and create places where children and young people can learn and thrive for many years to come.

Building for a Low-Carbon Future

Sustainability is central to the programme. The six current rebuilds, together with the two further primary schools recently submitted for consideration, are intended to meet the relevant decarbonisation targets in both their construction and day-to-day operation. This will help to reduce environmental impact while producing more efficient and resilient school buildings.

Looking Ahead

In the most recent application round, the Board submitted proposals for the rebuild of two additional primary schools. We now await the outcome and hope the applications will be successful. We invite our communities to join us in supporting—and praying for—a positive decision for both schools.

Compliance

Schools must perform regular compliance checks on the building and its systems, including inspections for fire safety, water hygiene, electrical and gas systems, asbestos management, and structural integrity. They are also required to adhere to Workplace Regulations, ensure the building meets the School Premises Regulations and maintain records of all statutory tests and inspections to ensure ongoing safety and suitability for purpose.

DBE Services offers the Total Property Management program, which functions as a comprehensive service available 24 hours per day, 365 days per year, accessible via telephone, email, online submission, or various digital platforms according to your preference. Compliance documents, assessments and appointments are kept centrally by the DBE Services team.



LEONA BROOKSHAW

School Honours Programme



Representing
His Majesty The King in
Greater Manchester

The Greater Manchester Lieutenancy has developed a flexible interactive Honours Programme to provide schools with a resource they can use when exploring British Values. Over 19,000 children and young people have already engaged with the programme, teachers have found it easy and enjoyable to deliver, and an OFSTED Inspector, described it as 'the most powerful act of British Values' he has seen.

This interactive programme is specifically designed to be delivered by teachers at primary and secondary. No prior knowledge of the Honours System is required and there is minimal preparation. All materials, including presentations and workbooks, are freely available electronically together with delivery notes and can then be adapted to meet individual pupil/student needs.

If you would like to explore delivering this Honours Programme, please attend our online introduction on Monday 5 October at 3.30pm.



BOOK NOW

YOUTH OFFICER

Hello,

I'm Lucy Brierley, the new Diocesan Youth Officer.

I have been in role for 2 and a half months now and I'm really looking forward to building relationships with our churches, secondary schools, clergy, volunteers and young people across the diocese.

Before stepping into this role, I have spent the last seven years working as a Children, Youth and Families Worker across two different churches. Supporting children, young people and families in their faith journeys and helping to build welcoming spaces where they could belong, grow, feel safe and be encouraged. Alongside this, I have also been a Girlguiding leader in my local village for over ten years, which has given me a real passion for seeing young people develop confidence, community and leadership. It was my role in Girlguiding that initially inspired me to study my master's degree in Mission and Ministry (children and youth). Outside of work, I enjoy reading, gardening, and spending time with my friends, family and my dog.

Over the last few weeks, I have begun to listen, learn about and connect with churches, schools and diocesan staff. Finding out what youth ministry already looks like in different places, hearing where encouragement is needed and exploring how we can support one another in helping young people encounter Jesus and grow as active disciples.

Over the next few months, I intend to continue visiting parishes and secondary schools, building relationships, sharing useful resources, and helping to shape training, hubs and opportunities that equip and encourage those working with young people.

If you would like to introduce yourself, share what is happening locally, ask a question, or arrange a conversation, please do get in touch with me at lucybrierley@manchester.anglican.org.

I cannot wait to get to know you all.

Lucy



LUCY BRIERLEY

CHILDRENS OFFICER

Year 6 Leavers' Celebrations

What a great series of Year 6 Leavers' Celebrations we had at Manchester Cathedral this summer. Over 5,500 children and staff joined us as we celebrated this important milestone together.

We were delighted to be joined by our friends from iSingPOP, who led us in singing, and by Bob Hartman, who brought John 10:1-10 to life in his own memorable way. Thank you to everyone who attended and to those who have shared feedback. We're already using your comments as we begin thinking ahead to the 2027 celebrations.

Collective Worship Resources

We're pleased to continue providing our Collective Worship Resources around the key Christian festivals throughout the academic year. Our aim is to help children and young people engage with these important moments in the Christian calendar while also connecting with different members of the Education Team across the year.

Thank you to everyone who continues to use these resources and share feedback. Your ideas help us keep developing and improving what we offer.

Festival	Festival Date	Resource Release Date
Harvest	4 Oct 2026	11 Sept 2026
Advent	29 Nov 2026	13 Nov 2026
Christmas	25 Dec 2026	5 Dec 2026
Epiphany	6 Jan 2027	5 Dec 2026
Ash Wednesday / Lent	10 Feb 2027	15 Jan 2027
Easter	28 Mar 2027	5 Mar 2027
Ascension	6 May 2027	16 Apr 2027
Pentecost	16 May 2027	30 Apr 2027

If you'd like to talk about Collective Worship, explore how EQUIP can support your school or church, or share feedback on any of our resources, please do get in touch.

EARLY YEARS OFFICER

A Year of Growing Together



Over the past year, it has been a privilege to support St Philip's CE Primary, Atherton, as they have enhanced worship opportunities for their Early Years children and families.

The journey began with introducing Wiggle Worship into the school's weekly worship pattern. Designed for younger children, Wiggle Worship uses movement, music, storytelling and prayer to explore faith in engaging and age-appropriate ways. It was wonderful to see the children quickly grow in confidence and enthusiasm as they took part.

Building on this success, the school hosted its first Wiggle Worship Christmas Celebration, bringing children, parents and carers together for a shared experience of worship and celebration. The event highlighted the positive impact of regular worship and strengthened connections between school and home.

The year concluded with a special Lift Off transition session for children and families preparing to start Reception in September. Through story, song and prayer, families explored the reassuring message that God is with us through every new beginning, helping children approach this important milestone with confidence.

It was especially encouraging to welcome Rev'd Alex Peach, whose involvement further strengthened the partnership between church, school and home. Throughout the year, this shared commitment to nurturing children's spiritual development has been evident and provides a wonderful example of Church school distinctiveness in action.

St Philip's journey demonstrates the positive impact of intentional Early Years worship and strong community partnerships, and we look forward to seeing these foundations continue to flourish in the years ahead.

Wiggle Update

As we look ahead to the new academic year, we are excited to be exploring new opportunities and developing additional resources to support Wiggle Worship across our schools. Whether you are considering introducing Wiggle Worship for the first time, looking for support to develop and embed it within your worship provision, wanting to enhance your offer for SEND children, or hoping to train and empower younger worship leaders, we would love to work alongside you. Wiggle Worship continues to provide a powerful way of helping our youngest children engage with Bible stories, prayer and worship in a way that is active, meaningful and memorable. Wherever you are on your Wiggle Worship journey, please get in touch. We would be delighted to discuss how we can support your school and help your children flourish in worship. For further information please contact joannehaslam@manchester.anglican.org.

This **PADLET LINK** contains a selection of resources to support Early Years worship, including ideas, stories, songs, prayers, and activities linked to festivals such as Harvest. We hope it helps you create engaging and meaningful worship experiences for young children.

JO HASLAM

GROWING YOUNGER

Encounter

I joined the MDBE team as Encounter Project Manager at the end of May this year and have absolutely loved my first three months. It has to be said that no one goes into Youth Work to get rich or for career stability, and I have been made redundant more times than I care to remember. However, each time God has been faithful in providing the right door at just the right time, and this role has been no exception. My first impressions coming into the role is that the people I get to work with every day are absolutely amazing. And the more I meet people across the Diocese, I get a real sense that we are moving in the same direction, believing for great things, and recognise how immensely privileged we are to be a part of what God is doing.

It is because of this shared sense of mission running through everything we do, from Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Clergy, or Children's and Families workers, etc, that helps to create such an effective partnership between the Growing Younger team, schools, and churches. The Encounter Project under the Growing Younger banner, is moving through an exciting phase of development, as we embark on our vision to build on the immensely successful Places Project and ManDio project, to see the number of children and young people accessing intentionally Christian discipleship pathways double from 4,500 to 9,000, as we partner with churches to help turn their vision of reaching children and young people with the gospel into reality.

Gary

Encounter - Salford & Leigh

The Salford and Leigh Deanery have been blessed with a new Encounter team to support and initiate projects in our schools and the partnerships between school and church.

Examples of the projects the team will be supporting or leading include:

- The Archbishop of York Young Leaders Award (AYLA) within primary schools. We are hoping to encourage the local church communities to share in this project by encouraging and praying for the young people involved.
- Schools and churches starting Messy Church Partnerships. One school/church partnership is starting a hybrid "Brick Messy Church" which will involve crafts and Lego to share Bible stories; another community is starting an after-school Messy Church.
- We are continuing to deliver Values Days and the Lord's Prayer Days in schools and have developed a Values Day not only based on the school Values but also on the Saint or logo of the school.
- We are excited to be trialling new iSingPop Pop-Up churches as church/school partnerships.



If you would like any further information on these projects, please contact [Sandra Morris](#) - Salford Archdeaconry Lead

Encounter - MDGF

Loretta Leung | Rochdale Deanery

Although Rochdale Deanery does not have a specific focus on music, it has emerged naturally in several ministries. A music corner has been introduced at Hope Community Rochdale Youth Club; guitar play-along sessions have been added to the Family Service at St Thomas' Newhey; and the Breathe Service in Rochdale West (MC3) provides a space for people, especially those busy serving in church, to pause, worship and sing contemporary songs together. After the summer holidays, I will also be visiting the successful Singing for Tots at Christ Church Healey, with the view of sharing ideas with other churches interested in similar initiatives.

At St Margaret's CE Primary School, Heywood, the Bee-Yond after-school sessions continue to welcome former pupils back to spend time with teachers and younger school friends. It is a wonderful initiative that supports pupils as they move into secondary education, and it is hoped that funding can continue to be secured so that this valuable work can carry on.

Looking ahead, St Michael's Church, Tonge-cum-Alkrington, will be launching a new intergenerational service on the first and third Sundays of each month. The first service will take place on 20 September, with new elements designed to encourage participation from all ages.

Laura Tebay | Oldham and Ashton Deanery

Leesfield Parish schools enjoyed a huge offering of Y6 Beyond sessions as we closed out the academic year in July. Over 100 children from Hey with Zion, St Hugh's Holts, St Thomas Leesfield and St Agnes Knolls Lane took part. Sessions about foundations, building blocks and stepping forward enabled them to consider and explore how God has worked throughout their time at Primary School and continues to walk with them as they move up to Secondary School. We had a lot of fun and we hope and pray that those Y6 pupils are settling into Y7 well at their respective schools. Leesfield Parish hope to develop some exciting youth opportunities over the coming months, encouraging those faith journeys to continue in their local churches alongside their families. Thanks to Rev'd Kirsten Stott for her guidance and leadership and her fantastic, growing relationship with these schools and churches.

Brick Church is gaining momentum across the Diocese and continues to be a fantastic way of engaging children and their families in faithful worship and biblical teaching. Rev'd Hannah Currin and team at Oldham Parish Church enable the children of the church and local community to lead this special form of worship in prayer, expression and play. The children that return each month are gaining a depth with their own faith and the brick builds created are true visions of the Kingdom of Heaven and representation of God's love for them.

Rev'd Hannah is hoping to facilitate some training for Brick Church over the next term, all will be welcome and we hope to collaborate with Diocesan Encounter and Equip teams with this.



Sarah Bayliss | Manchester South and Stretford Deanery

Across Manchester South and Stretford, it has been so encouraging to see the ways in which children, young people and families are being given opportunities to encounter God. Over the past six months, I have spent much of my time getting to know churches, schools and communities across the area, listening to what is already happening and exploring where there may be opportunities to support and develop ministry. Didsbury CE Primary ran their first Forest Church during the summer term and are looking forward to continuing this in the autumn. What a wonderful way for children to explore faith, ask questions and encounter God in the midst of his beautiful creation!

In Wythenshawe, St Martin's Baby Bank continues to serve the local community faithfully each week, working hard throughout the summer to support local families. Alongside this ministry, the team also offers a short Toddler Church, creating a space for our youngest children to sing, pray and begin to discover something of God's love. It is a beautiful reminder that there is no age limit to experiencing God; even our toddlers can encounter the wonder of their Creator and begin their own journey of faith!

Amelia Brummitt | Bury and Rossendale Deanery

In the Deanery of Bury & Rossendale it was another fun packed term during the summer. A few highlights have been:

Forest School at Christ Church
Ainsworth Primary with Christ Church
Ainsworth church was a great success and we even managed to be outside in the very warm British weather. There was a focus on prayer, reflection and



moving up for the year 6's. We ended the day with a collective worship outside for students, staff and parents. All the students created this beautiful rainbow of hope. The launching of Campfire Church at Christ Church Walshaw in August, unfortunately due to the national alert there was no campfire but there was a wonderful tissue paper substitute. I have really enjoyed meeting with schools in the deanery and look forward to continuing to do this and working alongside schools and churches into this academic year.



AYLA continues to grow across schools and dioceses nationwide, equipping children and young people to become courageous, compassionate leaders who are empowered to make a difference within their communities and beyond. Rooted in the Church of England Vision for Education, the programme develops leadership, character, pupil voice, and meaningful social action through engaging and accessible resources for pupils from KS1 through to Post-16.

Schools delivering AYLA consistently report increased confidence, deeper pupil engagement, stronger opportunities for student leadership, and meaningful links to Personal Development, SIAMS, SMSC, and collective worship. At its heart, AYLA encourages young people to recognise that leadership is not reserved for a select few but is something that can be lived out through service, courage, hope, and action.

Whether schools are already delivering the programme or are simply curious to find out more, our upcoming webinars provide a fantastic opportunity to explore the resources, hear about the impact in schools, and ask any questions about implementation.

Use this [LINK](#) for more information.

PLACES PROJECT with Encounter

The last academic year saw some changes to our team and we are looking forward to all that's to come. Alison Adlum has stepped into the role of Bolton Encounter Archdeaconry Lead with Sarah moving into the role of Children and Families Lead, but keeping her focus on Early Years ministry. Kitty Emsall has joined us as Children's Worker and Steph Buckley will take on a ministry-focused role as Families Worker. Judith Lawson continues her ministry as Families Worker too. The Youth Team remains unchanged.

We are excited to be holding our next hub for those involved in children, youth and families ministry on Thursday 1 October at 7pm - venue to be confirmed. This will include a time of worship, teaching and breakout sessions with ideas and support for children and youth ministry.

We are also thrilled to announce that following our successful "Love Your School" week in 2025 we are holding a "Love Your School" fortnight from 1 – 14 February 2027. This will be promoted across Bolton Archdeaconry as we encourage parishes to grow and develop their church/school relationship. We are holding a training night on Tuesday 17 November, 7.00pm at Harwood Methodist Church. This will be for those who are new to schools ministry or those who want to deepen their relationship.



REGISTER NOW

As we look further ahead to Advent we will be working alongside Bolton Parish Church to hold an Advent Family Fun Day on Saturday 28th November from 11am – 2pm. Look out for more details of what will be an awesome ADVENTure! There are discussions taking place to run the event in Bury and Rossendale deanery too – look out for more details.

Children & Families Team



During the summer term, the Places Project team were delighted to deliver Lift Off and Beyond transition workshops. Lift Off supported nursery-aged children preparing to start school for the first time, and those in Reception moving up to Year 1, whilst Beyond worked with Year 6 pupils getting

ready to move on to high school in September. These sessions explored God's presence, love, guidance, and support during these significant life transitions, helping the children to approach their next steps with confidence and excitement.

Over the summer holidays, we had the privilege of partnering with four local churches to deliver a series of Summer Fun sessions for children and their families. Built around a faith-filled football theme, the sessions included a variety of games, crafts, and activities, alongside an engaging retelling of the story of David and Goliath. Our team also supported community events including at St James' Brightmet, where more than 200 people attended two special community days held within the church. These events provided valuable opportunities to connect with local families, build relationships, and share God's love within the community.

Youth Team

The summer term was a wonderful time of celebration for our Youth Team. As we reflected on the academic year, we were all grateful to have witnessed the resilience, growth and achievements of the young people we have journeyed alongside. Through a multitude of daily school chaplaincy opportunities, Shades, Spirit Blazers, Parish youth groups, residential and summer holiday camp, young people have continued to develop in confidence, finding and using their voices to share their ideas, experiences and aspirations. We have seen them step into leadership opportunities, support their peers and actively contribute to their communities.

It has been inspiring for us to see these young people grow into passionate changemakers, making a positive difference in the lives of others and demonstrating the impact that encouragement, opportunity and belonging can have. Looking ahead we are excited about continuing to strengthen our established work and also expectant of "fruit" as new opportunities to emerge.

SPARKS

SPARKS in Action is a four-week programme helping young people aged 11-18 explore leadership, service, and vocation through community action projects. Recently, young people from Ignite Youth hosted a Community Connections Café at St John Wingates Church, welcoming over 60 guests, while KTJC Youth Group organised a Community Sports Day attended by more than 70 local people. Both events showcased young people serving others, strengthening community connections, and putting their faith into action.

SPARKS Mentoring is a six-week school-based programme focused on building confidence, self-esteem, and key life skills. Students worked alongside mentors to explore their strengths, identity, and future aspirations. A highlight was a visit to St John's House in Bury, where they met inspiring staff, learned about different vocations, and reflected on their own goals for the future. The programme has helped students grow in confidence and recognise the positive contribution they can make in their communities. We look forward to working with more young people in schools and churches this academic year. For more information about both programmes please reach out to Olga at olgaMcAreavey@manchester.anglican.org



SHADES TEAM

Shades Holiday Club in Oldham



From the first session, the children explored racial justice and discussed how they can stand against racial injustice in school, church and the wider community. Through Matthew 18:15-17, we learnt that Jesus teaches us not to ignore wrong behaviour. Instead, we should address problems peacefully, lovingly and with courage. When someone is treated unfairly, we can help make things right by speaking up, showing kindness and standing alongside others.

The children explored different ways to stand against racial injustice by:

- 👉 Including everyone and celebrating differences
- 🗣️ Speaking up when they witness unfair treatment
- ❤️ Showing respect, kindness and empathy to all
- 🌐 Promoting equality in school, church and the wider community

Together, we are learning that every person is valued and created in God's image. By following Jesus' example, we can help build a community where everyone feels welcomed, respected and loved.

Welcome Tak Yu

I am delighted to be part of the Shades team and to grow in my understanding of racial justice and faith. It is a privilege to support children, young people, and adults in embracing their God-given identity, recognising the value of every person, and celebrating the diversity of our communities.

I am especially excited to work with students through the Shades Ambassadors programme and collective worship, creating opportunities for meaningful conversations about identity, belonging, justice, and faith.

Having moved to the UK, I understand some of the challenges of finding your place in a new environment. This inspires my passion for helping others embrace who they are and value the uniqueness of those around them.

I believe true unity is found through God's love and acceptance. I look forward to building relationships with students, staff, and clergy across Bolton, Bury, and Rossendale, and to seeing how God's love and truth inspire positive change in our communities as we learn and grow together.



Black History Faith Tour

This year's theme is Honouring our Communities, we will be shining a spotlight on some black history pioneers who have paved the way for marginalised communities. Creating moments for reflective worship and learning about the importance of us all being racial justice advocates.

NI-COLA SCOTT

EQUIP

Growing Together

EQUIP helps churches and schools work together to support children, young people and families in exploring and growing in faith. With thousands of children attending our Church schools each week, they represent a significant opportunity for mission and discipleship across the Diocese.

Working alongside churches, clergy, school leaders and volunteers, EQUIP provides training, resources, networking and tailored support to strengthen these partnerships. Support includes collective worship, chaplaincy, transition projects, volunteer development, young leaders and ministry planning.

Through eleven connected strands of support, including training pathways, leadership development, conferences and consultancy, EQUIP equips churches and schools to build lasting relationships that help children and young people encounter Jesus, grow in faith and feel part of the wider church community.

Meet the Team



We're delighted to welcome two new members to the EQUIP team.

Vicki Gow (left), our Diocesan Early Years and Children's Adviser, brings a wealth of experience and a real passion for helping churches and schools engage effectively with children and families.

Jacqui Dube (right), our Diocesan Youth and Chaplaincy Adviser, will be supporting ministry with young people and helping develop chaplaincy opportunities across our Diocese.

The wider EQUIP team also includes our diocesan officers: Jo Haslam (Early Years Officer), Lucy Brierley (Youth Officer) and Rick Otto (Children's Officer & EQUIP Programme Manager). Together, we are committed to supporting churches, schools and leaders as we seek to help the next generation grow in faith.

Coming Up

This October we are thrilled to welcome award-winning storyteller, author and ordained minister Bob Hartman for two special EQUIP Spotlight evenings.

The Power of the Story will explore how storytelling can engage children, young people and adults with the Bible and the story of God. These events will be particularly valuable for clergy, children's & youth leaders, chaplains, school staff, governors and anyone involved in collective worship or faith development.

- Tuesday 14 October at St Andrew's Hillock, Whitefield
7.00pm to 9.00pm (doors open 6.30pm)
- Wednesday 15 October at St Werburgh's, Chorlton
7.00pm to 9.00pm (doors open 6.30pm)

NEWS FROM SCHOOLS

Joint 150th Anniversary Celebrations

The Ethos Group at St Mary's CE Primary School, Droylsden have demonstrated courageous advocacy through their recent collaboration with the Mothers' Union as part of the celebrations for the 150th anniversaries of both St Mary's School and the Mothers' Union. The children worked together to create 150 care packs for patients at Tameside Hospital. The packs were thoughtfully prepared to provide essential items for those in hospital who may not have family or friends visiting them during their stay.

The children took ownership of every stage of the project. They raised money by selling raffle tickets to purchase the items needed for the care packs and thoughtfully designed postcards to include inside each bag. Their artwork featured uplifting images such as flowers, rainbows, and hearts, carefully chosen to brighten someone's day and show kindness and compassion to members of their community. The Ethos Group also attended church, where they worked alongside representatives from St Mary's Church and the Mothers' Union to pack the bags and they are excited to deliver them to the hospital. This project has given the children the opportunity to live out the vision of courageous advocacy by not only supporting others through charitable action, but also by recognising the importance of dignity, care and community for vulnerable people.

Through this meaningful project, the children have shown how advocacy goes beyond fundraising. They have reflected on the needs of others, spoken up through acts of kindness for those who may feel alone and taken action rooted in the Christian values of justice, compassion and equality. They have truly become agents of change within their local community.

The school community are incredibly proud of the empathy, commitment and love the children have shown throughout this project.



Ethos Group & School Bishops



The Year 6 Ethos Group and School Bishops at Newchurch St Nicholas CE Primary have had an exceptional year, demonstrating leadership, service and a commitment to Christian values.

From the difficult task of judging their Easter Egg and Bonnet Competition, to leading class worship on the value of friendship during SATs week, the pupils have shown maturity and dedication throughout. They have evaluated school spaces, developed plans to improve accessibility, and supported environmental action by improving recycling signage across school.

The group has also made a real difference in the wider community, raising over £400 to be shared between school, St Nicholas Church and Men's Shed, delivering Christmas hampers funded through their Tesco carol singing event, and organising popular film nights and Rainbow Day activities.

The School Bishops have also played an important role, auditing class worship books and providing thoughtful feedback to staff. Most recently, the Ethos Group shortlisted entries for the PTA badge competition.

The school leadership are incredibly proud of everything these pupils have achieved, they have been outstanding ambassadors for the school and their Christian ethos.

Training Calendar

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP



EARLY YEARS



HEADTEACHERS



RE LEADS



SECONDARY SCHOOLS



YOUTH & CHILDRENS WORKERS



WELLBEING



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