



Discovering and growing

Report of Truro Diocesan Board of Education



Becoming a significant partner for raising standards in schools in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

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Truro Diocesan Board of Education is a statutory Board that reports to Diocesan Synod. It was re-formed with the new triennium at the beginning of 2019. The diocesan bishop is ex-officio chair of the board but may appoint a chair to serve in their place. The members of the DBE are Stuart Renshaw, John Keast, Sue Dickenson, Anna Corbett, Elly Sheard, Carol Jerwood, Rob Cuffe-Fuller, and Sue Brownlow. They are a mixture of school and parish leaders, academics, and business leaders.

Why we do schools



With parish life often under increasing pressure it is right to ask why we continue to invest time, money and resources in work with schools.

The Church of England has long held that education is too important to be left to politics and chance. In a diocese where discovering and growing are at the heart of our ambition we naturally want to understand and proclaim the Good News in places literally full of discovery and growth.

For parishes and the Church House team much of our work is with community schools, while church schools remain the engine room and laboratory for our vision.

What we do We promote the Church of England vision for education.

It is important to remember that most of the work of the church in Cornwall in schools is done by parish clergy, leaders, volunteers, teachers, parents and indeed pupils, not by the Church House team.

Parishes encourage teachers and school leaders, they welcome schools to their buildings and they offer support as governors, trustees and volunteers. This diocese has more “Open the Book” teams than any other, and every week dozens of assemblies, acts of worship, and small but vital acts of mercy are offered.

Alongside all this, a small team (about 2.5 full time equivalent) work from Church House. Our aim is *becoming a significant partner for raising standards in schools in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly*. Schools in Cornwall tend to underperform relative to schools nationally - we believe strongly that every child should realise their God-given potential and that this is a Gospel imperative. By “standards” we mean something much richer than the narrow measures used by government and Ofsted. We are a small team, so we focus on two areas: leadership and governance. A lot of our work is with the 44 church schools in the diocese, but unusually for diocesan teams we are increasingly working with community schools.

What has changed in the last year?



- Church schools have continued to improve in key data, relative to other Cornish schools they have improved slightly more quickly, but the gap between church and community schools in Cornwall and national outcomes remains stubborn.
- We have recruited a full time “Director for Schools” Katie Fitzsimmons to continue the work of Jo Osborne and Mark Lees and to lead our school facing work.
- We have re-positioned ourselves to make a difference in RE across Cornwall, mainly through recruiting an RE specialist to the DBE and renewing networks.
- We have picked up the national challenge of “Growing Faith” - this will help us to integrate schools work in the wider life of the diocese and Church House.
- We work with even more community schools.

What are the challenges?



Schools still face acute funding challenges; this collides with very narrow measures of success and high-stakes accountability for school leaders.

Taken together this means that the system is under real stress, that means that people are under real stress, school leaders and staff, as well as the children and young people they serve.

Please pray for schools, children and young people.

- Our ambition is still bigger than our capacity, working out which important things we are not going to do - is a daily challenge.
- The “gap” in performance between Cornwall and England (even when we take deprivation and other factors into account)

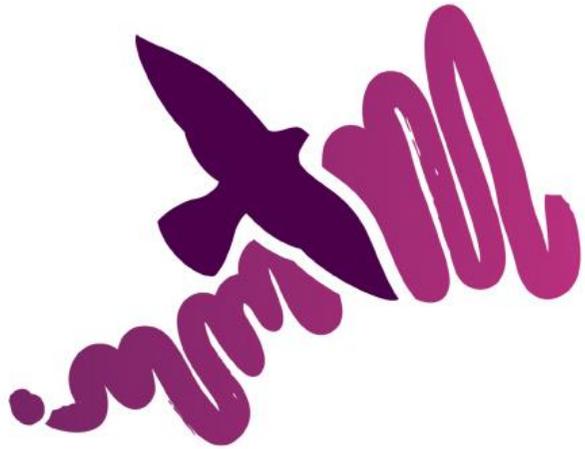
What are the opportunities in the next few years?



The “Growing Faith” adventure is something that we are going to hear much more about, it offers a way into the culture change needed if children and young people are again going to take the place that Jesus gave them - “he put a child in the midst of them”.

It may not always feel like it but, in general, schools in Cornwall are far more welcoming and open to the work of the church than less fortunate colleagues up-country report.

God continues to work wonders in the schools and colleges of Cornwall.



DIOCESE OF TRURO

DISCOVERING GOD'S KINGDOM
GROWING THE CHURCH

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