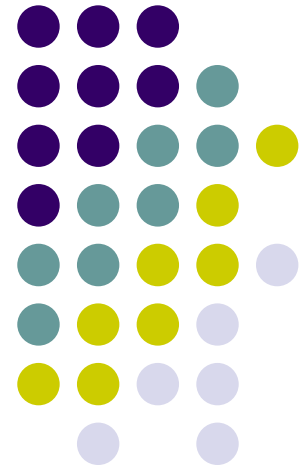


# Back to school: Churches connecting with schools

Bishop's Day for Laity  
18<sup>th</sup> September 2010

**The Board of Education**  
Serving Children, Young People and Schools



# A little history

- The National Society – founded in 1811
- The beginnings of universal education
- National Schools:
  - ‘education for the poor in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of the C of E’
- By 1851 census - 17,015 schools, 956,000 pupils



# 200 years on ...

The Church of England has:

- 4540 primary schools
  - VA 43% VC 57%
- 204 secondary schools
  - VA 66% VC 34%
- 1 in 4 primary schools
- 1 in 20 secondary schools
  
- 255 independent schools

# Everyone goes to school...

- There are 25,000 schools in England
- An 18 year old leaving school will have spent 12,000 hours at school!

# But not everyone goes to church...

- 155,000: the total number of young people attending church-based activities
- 1,000,000: the number of young people attending a Church of England school

# Church of England Schools In Local Authority of Kent

<b>LA</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>
Canterbury Diocese	100	3
Rochester Diocese	83	5
<b>Total</b>	183	8
Pupils	37,153	8,369

# General Synod resolution, 1998:

Church schools stand at the  
centre of the Church's  
mission to the nation



What makes a  
Church of England School  
distinctive?

Church of England  
School

Good Community  
School



Values (Implicit or explicit)  
Sensitive and caring  
Challenging and supportive  
Focussed on learning and standards  
Every Child Matters  
Focus on pupil well-being



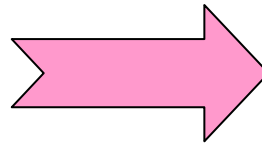
BUT...

# Church of England Schools

Christian beliefs and values



What we believe



Christian ethos: experience  
offered to all pupils



How that belief is worked out  
in practice

## Valuing the immeasurable...

In danger of avoiding the bigger issues by narrowly focussing on the measurable ones. Areas of well-being identified by Princes Trust Survey (2008); UNICEF 2007 survey and the Children's Society's *Good childhood inquiry* reveal:

Deep anxiety about self-image

- Fear (gang culture etc.)
- Family breakdown
- Lack of parental involvement
- Over exposure to the 'screen'
- Desire for meaningful relationships
- 1 in 10 feel life not worth living
- 25% have been depressed
- 25% Have no hope for future

Need to focus on children's:

- Identity
- Values
- Significance
- Self-esteem

Spiritual well-being: knowing our place in the wider Christian narrative:

### **Dignity and Destiny:**

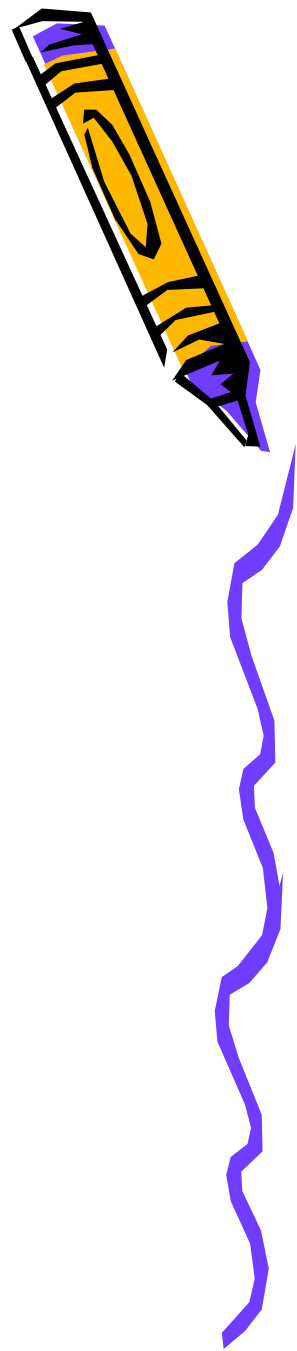
- Who are you?
- Where do you come from?
- Where are you going?

*In Church of England schools it is the Christian narrative that gives our values content, the story of Jesus that gives our values moral substance*

# Churches Linking with Schools

# Question for discussion

- How many schools do/could we have links with in our parish/deanery?
- What do those links consist of?



## Churches Linking with Schools...



Partnership in:

- Governance (The vital role of Foundation Governors)
- Valuing (Supporting Christians in Education)
- Prayer (For and with – Prayer days)
- Curriculum (Lessons, RE, Beliefs and Values)
- Extra-curricular activities (CUs, Breakfast clubs,  
After-school clubs)
- Collective Worship (Not just the vicar!)
- Community (Parenting classes, Holiday Clubs)



# Bringing Church into School



# Using your Church as a Resource for local Schools

## Some important questions to consider:

Do you move beyond the artefacts and open up a world of educational possibilities?

- A place of prayer and reflection
- Somewhere to just 'be' and wonder.

Are the children given the opportunity to pick out things which puzzle them?

Do they formulate questions they would like to ask?

Do they reflect on their feelings when they are in the building?



Do they explore why they might feel different inside this special building?

Can they identify a place in the building where they are most comfortable?



Do they leave with a sense of the 'other'?

Or do they always leave with a completed worksheet?



# Questions for discussion

- Do we actively see schools as being at the heart of our mission to the nation?
- What more can our church do to encourage Christians working in our school?
- How can our parish/deanery get more involved with its schools?
- What practical steps will I take as a result of this session?

