

EXETER DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

2013 – 2018



‘To nurture sustainable outstanding schools across the diocesan family through improving teaching and learning and developing effective holistic leadership at all levels’
EDBE School Improvement Strategy, 2012

EXETER DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

DBE STRATEGY 2013- 2018

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Schools' Strategy 2013 – 2018

I. Introduction:

'The Church of England clearly affirms that Church schools stand at the centre of its mission. It educates approximately 1 million of the nation's children in primary and secondary schools, which enables more direct engagement with children and their families than any other contact, including regular Sunday worship.' The Chadwick Report, 2012.

Introduction:

The introduction sets out why the Church is involved in education, historically and today. It outlines why our own church schools are central to the mission to all children and young people living in our diocese, whether linked to a church or community school. It also confirms the view that with parishes and Mission Communities at the heart of our mission to all, close links with all places of learning in a community are at the heart of that mission. This has important implications for clergy and parish workers, in their understanding, focus, training and development in the future.

Why is the Church of England involved in education?

The Church of England, through the National Society established in 1811 by Joshua Watson, led the development of universal education to enable people of any background to receive a proper education based on a commitment to fulfil human potential, meet the needs of society and transmit knowledge and culture.

To fulfil human potential is to enable children and young people to be fully what they have it in them to become: to be what God intends; to be the people they were created to be. This involves developing spirituality, self-belief, humility, and independence.

To meet the needs of society is a multi-faceted challenge which includes producing an educated workforce. Rooted in the church's teaching, meeting the needs of society will also mean enabling children and young people to live as responsible citizens, committed to democracy and the rule of law, committed to justice and peace, living lightly with the earth; it also involves developing empathy and purpose

and serving others,. For Christians this will also include playing a full role in establishing the Kingdom of God.

To transmit knowledge and culture is to enable the creating and exploring of personal identity and family/community relationships; it's a search for truth, the development of rationality and understanding the limits of rationality; test and challenge, subjects and content areal part of this but so is an understanding of faith and religion and working out a code or creed to believe in and live by.

(Source: National Society, 2013)

This commitment is achieved by ensuring that we support, facilitate and co-operate with others for the provision of the best educational opportunities available, with a particular focus on the development of spiritual and moral understanding in children and young people. This commitment is to all schools and is expressed through the provision of a range of advice and support. Through its central and commissioned services, EDBE promotes RE, Collective Worship and the spiritual development of pupils.

EDBE supports all Church schools and academies in developing a Christian vision of Education. It ensures that church schools are provided with specialist support for building and property development through our agreement with our Property Services Department and with legal advice through our diocesan lawyers. Within Exeter Diocese, the Board promotes church related education and provides advice for clergy, governors and parishes in support of their schools.

The Vision

EDBE Mission Statement:

As a Board of Education we are a fully integrated part of the witness, mission and ministry of the Diocese of Exeter seeking to serve all the people of Devon in accordance with the diocesan Mission Action Plan. We see a real opportunity for church schools (in partnership with all other places of education, training and formation) to serve the communities in which they are set and therefore we are committed to actively promoting creative relationships between the parishes/mission communities of the Diocese and all of the schools for which we currently have, or in the future might have, responsibility.

Specifically, our aims in support of those who engage with us in the task of educating and forming young people of the diocese are as follows:

- **To work with all of those involved in education to make our schools stand at the very heart of the mission and ministry of the Diocese**
- **Forming and creating community which gives testimony to the power of God's love**
- **Witnessing to God's love and being agents of that love in and for all people**
- **Telling the story of God's transforming love revealed in its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ**
- **Underlining the essential gift from God as being made in His image and therefore nurturing a distinctive understanding of what it is to be fully human.**

Nationally, there are about one million children and young people educated in church schools presently. In this diocese we have 130 church schools with over 22 000 children and young people attending them. We are, however, engaged in many ways with all children and young people throughout the diocese within the local government authorities of Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.

In short, we are committed to all children and young people wherever they are within our diocese, be they present in formal education in schools, colleges and universities. We serve all the community as the Church of England and have a presence in every place, so we carry out that service to all, wherever they are. This sense of service and mission to children and young people is especially relevant to the formation and development of the values and principles we believe are the truth of our faith and on which our society is based. Every young person is given the opportunity to flourish as a child of God. *'This is a sign and expression of the Kingdom and is at the heart of the church's distinctive mission.'* ('The Church School of the Future' report, 2012). Clergy and other parish workers will engage with any places of learning in their locality as part of that mission. The DBE Measure, which outlines how our Board of Education engages with education, does not separate church or non church schools nor does it focus on any one phase. However, we have our own church schools where our mission can be more specific, our expectations on an exploration of faith and other related issues are more explicit. Yet our Church schools are not faith schools. They, too, serve the whole community and mirror the faithful service to our communities and are not exclusive to worshipping families.

Within what was a very clear dual system of education, where church and state work closely together, it is quite clear that in the changing structures and landscapes our DBE, as any other, cannot nor should not replicate an old style local authority. We have always been engaged with the development of our schools' ethos and distinctiveness in areas such as RE, Collective Worship and the development of spiritual aspects of the curriculum. There has been a good deal of crossover with community schools. This is our area of expertise and we have been able to share this with all schools. In this diocese we have been working with mixed economies of school groupings for many years and there has, for example, been a growth in the

number of ethos groups in federated schools. We would be expected to cover this core service but not to replicate the structures and scope that LA's have now or in the past.

However, within this changing landscape, dioceses have been given the responsibility to ensure that there is a monitoring of standards of its schools and that underperformance is challenged. This has gone in parallel with the shrinking of capacity of most, if not all, LA's. However, dioceses, especially this one, haven't got the income or capacity for an LA type structure.

Exeter Diocesan Board of Education produced its second strategy document in 2008. This has been a very useful document and in particular, it has been very helpful in developing, providing and initiating:

- New school provision and engagement, particularly in secondary school provision
- Increasing access to church school education
- A new focus on developing church school leaders of the future
- Improving the quality of education in the areas of church school ethos and distinctiveness
- Encouraging collaboration between church schools and with community schools in a variety of delivery models.

2. The Current Context for determining this strategy:

However, the educational and political context we find ourselves in now is very different. We are part way through a Coalition Government's term of office which is characterised by the context of a severe economic downturn. The educational policy shift has been dramatic and the landscape is moving very rapidly. This strategy has to do several things in terms of response and ownership of the changing landscape more locally.

Firstly, it has to take ownership of the current landscape and plan strategically from it.

Secondly, it has to make a medium term projection on how things will develop during the next phase, post General Election in 2015.

Thirdly, it needs to make some space and time to consider structural changes to education implemented by the next government.

Therefore, this strategy will deliver a strong steer for three years and allow some flexibility for the subsequent two, with the strong conviction that ED BE will then be facing new and different issues to deal with that we cannot yet predict but which we will have to respond.

2.1 Exeter Diocesan Board of Education:

Exeter Diocesan Board of Education is set up by the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure and is a statutory body of the diocese. Its key functions are therefore statutory. From mid June 2013, it was re-constituted and with a smaller membership. This will enable each board member to pick up additional responsibilities and closer engagement with the on-going work of the DBE.

2.2 Diocese of Exeter context:

During 2012/13 the Diocesan Synod has produced a co-ordinated Mission Action Plan, which is supplemented by a Central Services Plan to deliver objectives of it. This plan informs the budget making process of the diocese so that only those tasks in the plan and other statutory work will be allocated resources.

The **Diocesan Mission Action Plan** has seven themed aspects, namely:

1. Evangelism
2. Discipleship
3. Vocations
4. Leadership and Ministry
5. The Local Community
6. Stewardship of Finance
7. Structure

These are explored in detail with access from the Diocesan website:

<http://www.exeter.anglican.org/assets/downloads/questions%20and%20answers/Strategic%20plan%20circulated%20to%20dio%20synod.pdf>

2.3 The Diocesan Central Services Plan:

Of the 28 themes, the DBE is directly or indirectly involved in six. These are:

- 2, 3: Children's and Youth work – a cross diocesan working group
- 15: Support parishes and Mission Communities to develop and sustain mutually beneficial relationships with their local schools, colleges and HEI's
- 16: Implement the existing Schools' Strategy and agree a new strategy for the next five years.
- 17: Plan for new church schools in new housing developments, incorporating a centre for worship.
- 18: A Multi Academy Trust to be established to provide a home for some church schools and community schools; including those referred by the Office of Schools' Commissioner.

2.4 National Church Education context:

Our previous strategies fell within the steer of the Dearing Report (2001) which has been very influential in shaping policy for church education in schools and whose importance for our recent thinking and work can never be underestimated. However, events have re-shaped our thinking and we must respond to the practicalities of the evolving church school story. This report has now been updated and refined by the Chadwick Report (2012).

The key issues addressed by the report are:

1. The challenges facing the church school system in the future
2. The defining characteristics of church schools
3. How the church school family might develop and grow
4. How schools should be supported at diocesan and national levels

'If our objectives as Christians are for good education then that itself is a mission' Chadwick Review contributor

The Chadwick Review made 26 recommendations. The main areas of interest for developing this Strategy were:

- The clarification and strengthening of the Church role as a major provider of education
- Challenges and opportunities in meeting the needs of all children in the Church system
- No dilution or compromise of the Church 'brand'
- Faith and Spiritual Development at the heart of the curriculum and Christian ethos permeating the educational experience
- High quality Religious Education and Collective Worship
- An excellence and effectiveness drive so children can flourish in their potential – taking responsibility for school performance with capacity for delivery
- Responsiveness to parental demand
- Greater central co-ordination of C of E Education in an advocacy role
- New types of support and guidance for Church schools through central/regional/diocesan structures that are collaborative and cost effective
- New partnerships in many situations – ecumenical links, rural issues, closer ties to church independent schools, better use of scarce resources, links with Free Schools
- Changes to the DBE Measure which will ensure the long term survival of the Church of England as an education provider

These fundamental questions are the basis by which we predicate our thinking and strategic action.

2.5 Local context:

Each of our three linked local authorities has responded to the reduced expenditure for local services provision, with some re-structuring and loss of staff. The largest LA, Devon, has the greatest capacity and has commissioned services with Babcock LDP. We continue to have very close working relationships with Devon, Plymouth and Torbay LA's and wishes those relationships to continue. The level of resource in both Plymouth and Torbay LA's is somewhat different and this has enabled EDBE to develop different ways of working together. The input of representatives to DBE meetings has been greatly welcomed and appreciated and will continue to be so.

There are strategic documents to which we refer in developing our strategic view with our local authorities such as Devon's: 'Championing Children' vision document.

In addition, new responsibilities have been given by central government to Teaching Schools. These schools are part of the government's drive to give schools more freedom and to give increasing responsibility for managing the schools system. As well as offering training and support for the alliances themselves, teaching schools will identify and co-ordinate expertise from their alliance, using the best leaders and teachers to:

1. Lead the development of a school-led ITT (Initial Teacher Training) system, through School Direct and in some cases by seeking full accreditation as an ITT provider
2. Lead peer to peer professional and leadership development
3. Identify and develop leadership potential
4. Provide support for other schools
5. Designate and broker specialist leaders of education (SLE's)
6. Engage in research and development

Currently, there is one Church of England Teaching School in the Diocese and we have worked hard to ensure representation on the strategic boards of all the others. This has significantly increased the number of strategic partners we work with.

2.6 Challenges to face:

The context also gives us questions as to how to plan for the following influences on our future work:

- The extent of academisation and the relationship with academy chains and providers
- The increased autonomy of schools
- Reduced funding for maintained Education
- Changes in Formula Funding for school budgets
- The re-focussed role of Local Authorities as commissioners of services
- Increased presence of the market place and other service providers for schools
- Annually raised thresholds for school performance

- The significance of Ofsted judgements, especially in Grades 3 and 4
- A review of Governance arrangements
- Changes to the curriculum and examination system
- All in the context of the national economic conditions

3. Development of this Strategic Plan

This plan has been developed in the following way:

- Identification by DBE/Bishop's Diocesan Council as a need
- Timescale agreed
- Consultation day with Scoping – May 2013
- First draft produced – June 2013
- DBE first draft- July 2013
- BDC first draft- July 2013
- Consultation with stakeholders (schools/PCC's)– September 2013
- Final draft for EDBE - October 2013.
- Final draft to Diocesan Synod – October 2013
- Production in final form – November 2013
- Implementation – December 2013/January 2014

3.1 Structure of the consultation:

This is included as Appendix I and it is significant as it tells the narrative of how the decisions for action made were derived and what constructs were used.

4. The Strategic Vision of the for the EDBE 2013- 2018

From the contextual and shared perspectives identified from our preparatory work, there are a set of key principles outlining our vision for the next five years. The following threads are outlined below for the next five years.

It is not possible, however, to second guess what the position might be after the General Election of May 2015. Therefore the first principle is that this plan concentrates on the next three years in detail, planning where we are now and would need to work from.

Key principles for determining the vision:

1. This strategy must support, enhance and develop from the Diocesan Action Plan and Central Services plan.
2. That the re-organised and newly elected EDBE has a more streamlined, strategic and engaged role to play in the activities of the working of the EDBE and of its working plan. With this in mind, the EDBE is very well placed to make further changes in line with the National Society's 'The DBE of the Future' Report, July 2013.

3. That the work of the EDBE does, and will continue to, add increasing value to the work of Mission throughout the diocese, not only to children and young people, but also to families and other members of the community.
4. That the work with schools is a vital part of the church's mission to the whole country – we are part of the Church for England as well as the Church of England.
5. That this time in our Church schools history that we have an opportunity to take back some control over our destiny.
6. Working in partnership with internal and external groups is an essential vehicle for ensuring success for our schools. School to school support is a very important part of this.

The Vision outlined in practice:

1. We embrace the Government's agenda for all schools to be high performing and that innovative ways of structural and improvement support are an important part of our policy for schools. We believe that this is the time when we are re-invigorating the Church's role and place in State Education.
2. All Exeter Diocesan schools to be graded either good or outstanding in Ofsted and SIAMS terms.
3. As the school system is now much more in the competitive market place, it is our desire to ensure that no school is lost to the diocesan family.
4. We expect to develop our mechanism for supporting sponsored church school academies through our Multi Academy Trust.
5. We will encourage non church schools to work collaboratively with us, taking advantage of the new conditions for schools wishing to be sponsored by us, or changing status to become church schools
6. We will prioritise and promote high quality teaching and learning in Religious Education for all schools and in all phases of education.
7. We will prioritise and promote the spiritual development of children and young people in all schools and in all places of education. In particular, we will focus on the delivery of high quality collective Worship in our diocesan schools.
8. We wish to identify, develop and support high quality school leadership in our church schools. We will encourage school leadership as a vocation and will similarly support Christian leadership in non church schools.
9. We will look at innovative ways of recruiting, training, support, cherish and develop church school governors so that they have the right skills and knowledge to undertake the support and challenge roles so critical for high performing schools
10. We wish to increase the number and proportion of church school places in the diocese by engaging with the statutory school and house planning authorities within Devon to identify areas of development where new and joint church school and worship facilities are needed. We have a robust policy in place to ensure internal and external decision making and scrutiny happen in a timely and effective way.
11. We will support and develop the understanding of what it is to be faithfully Anglican. This will cover many of the aspects mentioned above, but will also

include the ethos and distinctiveness of our schools – and the type, scope and focus of the planned and delivered curriculum in our schools

5. Thematics – Futures Planning: from Vision to practicality

The following is the route map of how we will attempt to deliver our vision. It uses a Development planning model so that the route map is identified, thus making the causal link between vision, strategy and implementation in a practical way. This model will enable monitoring and evaluation to be undertaken, by the EDBE and other stakeholders in a more effective manner. There is the opportunity for a subsequent, more detailed plan for each key priority, as required, which will be action planning activity for EDBE officers to work with.

Theme Focus I.		School Standards	
Link to Central Services Plan Priorities		1. Evangelism 2. Discipleship 3. Vocations 4. Ministry & Leadership 5. Local Community 6. Stewardship of Finance & Buildings 7. Structure/Mission Community Plus Income Generation	Nos: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7.
Key Outcome(s) (Success Criteria)		All Church schools to be classified as good or better by both Ofsted and SIAMS	
Baseline Indicators 2013		80% benchmark achieved in 2012.	
Risk Analysis		The reputation of all Church Schools and EDBE.	
Key Priorities		Milestones/Tasks	Timescales
I.	Develop greater intelligence about church school performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review timing and content of annual conversation with schools by DEO's (Diocesan Education Officers) Internal use of Data Dashboard fully implemented by DDE (Diocesan Director of Education, Youth and Children's Work) and DEO's Attend national training to enable Raise Online to be available for use by EDBE and disseminate to EDBE team by DDE 	Autumn 2013 then annually Report to EDBE Jan 2014 then annually – internal data trawl during July. Autumn 2013 Sept 2013, review with inductees June 2014

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve School Leader induction process • Improve local intelligence by developing better school to school working and earlier support strategies • Prioritise key schools based on annual and trends in performance data internally and with external partners • Liaise with LA's, National College, Church based NLEs/LLEs and Teaching Schools over support and challenge basis – review and develop present protocol • Measure the impact of support and challenge data by DDE 	<p>Ongoing – DEO's to be assigned hubs and report to EDDBE</p> <p>Annual Autumn term event – report to EDDBE in Spring term</p> <p>Annual – Autumn term</p> <p>EDDBE report each meeting</p>
2.	Commission a Church Teaching School as a main training partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in regular meetings with hub leaders/coordinators to ascertain activity, needs and priorities by assigned DEOs • Enter into negotiations with Blackpool Teaching School • Prioritise agreed foci • Commission EDDBE services • Set up liaison/management group 	Autumn 2013
3.	Signpost a variety of needs to different quality controlled places and providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of need • Liaison with Teaching hubs and School to prioritise action • Compile an agreed list of external consultants based on needs <p>Draw a protocol/SLA/contract as required</p>	<p>Spring 2014</p> <p>From Autumn 2014 – see KPI's</p>
4.	Monitor the impact of the commissioned service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a review group based on the membership of the Hub/School participation • Develop a monitoring and review policy and practice model 	Sept – December 2013 and then annually

5.	Encourage Foundation Governors, who are Chairs and who are eligible, to apply to become NLG's in order to be a mentor to other Chairs in order to further school improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review implementation of NLG roll out and impact in the South West • Set up advisory group between EDBE and known NLG's to produce action plan for engagement with Chairs 	Ongoing from 2013
6.	Develop a greater understanding of the effectiveness of church school governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up working group to prepare research on what effective governance looks like, led by Governance Adviser and report to EDBE with dissemination to all diocesan schools • Report of outcomes to reflect models of good governance and to outline areas of activity necessary to redress specific weaknesses • Apply model to CPD programme to deliver generic principles and practices • Prioritise key schools based on annual trends in performance data internally and with external partners, Ofsted and SIAMS reports • Liaise with LA's over support and challenge basis-review and develop present protocol • Record and measure the impact of support and challenge 	Spring 2014 and then reviewed annually
7.	Encourage and support schools to work in partnership: encourage the increase of the number of church school groupings – especially Federations; encourage those entering academy world to join MAT's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish revised EDBE policy regarding small schools • Establish clear ground rules/non negotiables for such groupings, ensuring no dilution and protection of existing church school status for each school 	Ongoing

8.	Engage fully with church school governors so that they can undertake their functions effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide appropriate training • Ensure that roles and responsibilities are fully understood • Ensure that foundation governors have the right skills • Engage with PCC's, Mission Communities, incumbents and Archdeacons to ensure that all vacancies are filled and roles are understood 	Ongoing
9.	Improve the supply and quality of leadership at all levels within Church Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with key strategic partners to develop a coherent pathway for teachers and leaders in terms of their understanding of what it is to work in a faithfully Anglican school for Initial Teacher Education, Middle and Senior leadership development, Headteacher and Executive Headteacher positions by DDE and DEO's (TW) with others 	ITE proposals by Autumn 2013 (T Wilson) Middle and Senior Leadership in partnership with NS, CES, NC and Jerusalem Trust – written Autumn 2013 in partnership with Blackpool Teaching School

Comments

The Diocesan School Improvement Strategy, 2011 (see Appendix 2) aims:

'To nurture sustainable outstanding schools across the diocesan family through improving teaching and learning and developing holistic leadership at all levels'

For our schools, we believe that this means engaging with partners they trust who can offer support and challenge and who they can also similarly support and challenge.

Theme Focus 2.		Capital Planning	
Link to Central Services Plan Priorities		1. Evangelism 2. Discipleship 3. Vocations 4. Ministry & Leadership 5. Local Community 6. Stewardship of Finance & Buildings 7. Structure/Mission Community Plus Income Generation	Nos: 4, 6, 7
Key Outcome(s) (Success Criteria)		A sustained, viable Church schools network across the diocese aligned to Mission Communities and reflecting areas of housing growth and related social need.	
Baseline Indicators 2013		Identification of new school areas of growth as agreed by DBE in 2013.	
Risk Analysis		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise of private sector companies a threat • Internal capacity to deliver may reduce the opportunities • Shifting patterns of need away from areas the church wishes to engage with 	
Key Priorities		Milestones/Tasks	Timescales
I.	Review of Church School Strategy as required, ensuring that priorities for growth and the mechanism for action are reviewed as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIP Group to monitor and share with Bishop's Group and BDC. • Continue to look for opportunities to increase the number of pupil places in existing church schools • Look to expand church school provision in areas of high deprivation and low achievement • Look to increase church school primary provision where it is sparse • Look to expand provision in areas of significant housing development • Look to align new school provision with Mission Community development 	Ongoing

2.	To maintain wherever practicable the provision of existing church primary schools, especially in rural areas but to develop a Christian approach to potential school closures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viability and sustainability to be considered in tandem • Identify which schools are in the right places 	September 2013 and ongoing
3.	Develop a clear strategy for capital investment and prioritisation linked to relevant grant funding streams and responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clear strategy for long term capital investment. 	Ongoing

Theme Focus 3.		Relationship with Strategic Partnerships, including Academies	
Link to Central Services Plan Priorities			
		2. <i>Evangelism</i> 2. <i>Discipleship</i> 3. <i>Vocations</i> 4. <i>Ministry & Leadership</i> 5. <i>Local Community</i> 6. <i>Stewardship of Finance & Buildings</i> 7. <i>Structure/Mission Community</i> Plus <i>Income Generation</i>	Nos: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7.
Key Outcome(s) (Success Criteria)			
		To develop effective working relationships with academies and other school collaboration structures	
Baseline Indicators 2013			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently formed Academies network All converting academies use the same lawyers as the DBE EDEN is a member of all academies with church schools 	
Risk Analysis			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The continuance of the Academy Project Officer post – the transfer to the new post holder Financial risk in the medium term Lack of understanding of academy policy within the diocesan structures 	
Key Priorities			
Key Priorities		Milestones/Tasks	Timescales
1.	Engage fully with Foundation Directors and Members so that they can undertake their functions effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide appropriate training by Governor Adviser Publish terms of reference and responsibilities by Governor Adviser Revise EDBE members roles and responsibilities by DDE Develop the significant relationship between EDEN and EDBE by DDE Improve internal workings of EDEN by DDE 	Ongoing from Autumn 2013 Spring 2014 July 2013 – by Summer 2014 Spring 2014 Ongoing with MAT Academy Project Officer (APO)
2.	Address the issues surround the secondary sponsored academies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a coherent management model by APO Meetings between small groups of representative governors by DDE Clarify the current DfE's views on the previous sponsored academies by APO 	Autumn 2013/Spring 2014 Spring 2014 Autumn 2013

3.	Review the current EDBE Academies policy and amend as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clarity about objectives and actions by APO • Review the outcomes of the current policy – including engagement with existing academies by APO • Identify further resources for developing its strategic role by DDE 	<p>Autumn 2013</p> <p>Spring 2014</p> <p>Summer 2014</p>
4.	Build strategic partnerships with/between diocesan church academies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop descriptors of strong strategic partnerships by APO • Review the current partnerships by APO • Improve the effectiveness of the academies network by APO 	<p>April 2014</p> <p>Summer 2014</p> <p>Summer 2015</p>
5.	Identify and mitigate the risks surrounding St Christopher's Primary MAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a financial model to sustain the centrally appointed staff by APO • Train the Directors to fulfil their functions effectively by APO • Develop a Risk Register by APO • Clarify the relationship with EDBE by DDE • Clarify the relationships with Local Governing Bodies by APO 	<p>Autumn 2013</p> <p>By April 2014</p> <p>Spring 2014</p> <p>By Summer 2014</p> <p>By July 2014</p>
6.	Develop stronger strategic partnerships with EDBF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open informal communication channels by DDE • Find a reporting route which doesn't compromise the agreed DBF/MAT firewall by DDE/APO 	<p>Autumn 2013</p> <p>July 2014</p>

Theme Focus 4.		Anglican Identity	
Link to Central Services Plan Priorities		1. Evangelism 2. Discipleship 3. Vocations 4. Ministry & Leadership 5. Local Community 6. Stewardship of Finance & Buildings 7. Structure/Mission Community Plus Income Generation	Nos: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7.
Key Outcome(s) (Success Criteria)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand what it is to be part of the family of schools in wider Devon, i.e. the Diocese of Exeter Key shared values about our church schools are understood and expressed by all stakeholders having been already negotiated Outstanding grades in SIAMS for all Church Schools Every school leader and Foundation governor understands that they are custodians of the Anglican Foundation of the school and they feel affirmed, supported and encouraged in their roles That parish/community/school/diocese are inter-connected and actively involved with each other in relevant and forward thinking ways 	
Baseline Indicators 2013		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIAMS indicators show that 100% of our schools inspected in 2012/13 were assessed as good or outstanding There is still need for a greater understanding and clarity about Anglican faithfulness 	
Risk Analysis		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the Anglican identity will weaken as more a more secular society is not provided with the accurate information about what our church schools are – and are not We miss the new opportunities to develop our Christian values in church and community schools 	
Key Priorities		Milestones/Tasks	Timescales
I.	Develop an understanding of what being fully human is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with external organisations and agencies to develop welfare support for identified areas of the dioceses and specific communities by DEO's Commission and develop specific projects and activities with outside agencies to support communities and/or groups where there is defined poverty/deprivation, as feasible (Narrowing the Gap project) by DDE 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>On going Develop current work on going with Children's Society, North Devon Teaching Alliance and Exeter University</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an explicitly defined and explained Christian view of the curriculum to follow up the 2013 School Leaders' Conference lead from Professor Cooling and his work • Develop coherence, shared language and practice between schools • Engage partners in projects and research activities that focus on what it is that faithfully Anglican education offers 	<p>CPD programme from Autumn 2014</p> <p>Further training offered 2013/14: What if learning Big Crib</p> <p>On going</p> <p>January 2014</p>
2.	Shape our Communities and reflect changing parochial organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support parish clergy in their developing understanding of a church school • Develop explicit models of good practice between parishes/mission Communities and all schools within them • Engage with clergy as part of the EDBE annual conversation with schools • Ensure that the concept of excellence in RE and Collective Worship is at the heart of our view of the strategic role of mission 	<p>Additional visits to schools 2013/4 to launch this initiative</p> <p>Work in partnership with CYP Group - from September 2013</p> <p>Learn, Teach Lead Project ongoing 2013/14 Continuing links with Diocesan Liturgy Group School Leaders' Conference 2014 Collective Worship CPD 2013/14 National Society Christianity Project 2103/4</p>
3.	Strengthen roles and responsibilities within the EDBE team and its associates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review EDBE staffing structure and roles • Review job descriptions after above • Develop commissioning roles for groups and individuals linked to EDBE for support and development • 	<p>Survey schools from September 2013</p> <p>Revise staffing following review January 2014</p> <p>From September 2013 as per Commissioning target</p>

4.	Broaden the Church faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more explicit about what Anglican Church schools are - and are not – to the local community and use all available media to promote this view • Participation and engagement in the delivery of the diocesan corporate plan – especially the children’s and young people’s area 	<p>Autumn 2013 onwards</p> <p>Autumn 2013 onwards</p>
5.	Be clearer and more explicit about our core values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the key messages EDBE wishes to give to its schools in a more concerted and effective manner • Develop a clarity on EDBE policies on vision and values; clarity on what a church school is and should be, curriculum guidance, effective governance and effectively deliver these key messages • Improve our communication with schools and partners through website development, briefing papers and regular newsletters of a high quality • Continue offering an annual training in all schools on SIAMS so that the school community is clear about what it is to work in a faithfully Anglican school 	<p>Reports to EDBE from Autumn 2013 – working group</p> <p>EDBE review and development from Autumn 2013</p> <p>Summer 2013</p> <p>2013/14 CPD programme</p>

Theme Focus		Generating Income	
Link to Central Services Plan Priorities		1. Evangelism 2. Discipleship 3. Vocations 4. Ministry & Leadership 5. Local Community 6. Stewardship of Finance & Buildings 7. Structure/Mission Community Plus Income Generation	Nos: 3,4, 6
Key Outcome(s) (Success Criteria)		That the designated income generation targets for 2013-2018 are achieved.	
Baseline Indicators 2013		2013 target - £60 000. Actual as at 30/06/13 is 80 % of that.	
Risk Analysis		Failure to reach income targets compromises core service delivery and threatens loss of specialist expertise within the team.	
Key Priorities		Milestones/Tasks	Timescales
1.	Develop a broad associates database to support delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run a procurement exercise Piggyback on to others Associates databases for a franchise fee 	January 2014
2.	Establish a working protocol with the Teaching School alliance for a connected delivery model of agreed CPD priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with TSA to develop the protocol 	Summer 2013 onwards
3.	Publish key units of CPD as off the shelf packages for sale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a focus group including NLE's etc to design and develop packages 	2013/14 onwards
4.	Publish SIAMS related resources for schools using print on demand technology that can be sold nationally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a focus group of schools to trial resources and EDBE QA procedures 	Trial of at least one quality EDBE approved resource a year

5.	Continue to work with partners on shared projects where income generation is possible and the work supports the priorities of the EDBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with establish partners as appropriate • New partner work established 	Annual review of partners by EDBE
6.	Ensure that the protocol with the three LA's includes co-operation and complementary provision for CPD		As previously identified in Income Generation target

6. The 6S Framework for Process Implementation of Business Plans

The following model has been adopted as a means of ensuring a structure for monitoring and evaluating the progress made. The summarising focus was that the planning group believes that EDBE does need to 'speculate in order to accumulate' in order to deliver an aspirational and transformational plan such as this.

'S'	'At a Glance'	Issues/Actions/Needs	KPI
S1 Structure(s)	Reorganisation Mergers Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDBE members to be portfolio holders for each of the different aspects of the plan in order to ensure speedy decision making • The DBE committee structure needs to be reorganised 	All linked EDBE members, Portfolio Holders, stakeholder representatives filled by 31/12/13. DBE reps report to and at each EDBE meeting by Summer 2014 Terms of reference for sub groups agreed by January 2014
S2 Staffing	Associates S2SS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit competent providers with a full range of skills • Develop a system for Quality Assurance for all external providers • Increase internal capacity through engagement with partners and projects, by outsourcing and brokerage • Revisit EDBE staff job descriptions 	10 providers by 31/12/13 20 by 31/07/14 QA system in place by January 2014 100 hours additional time generated by 31/01/14 200 hours by 31/07/14 Performance Management income generating targets by 31/01/14

S3 Systems	Innovation Transformation Develop systems for new income generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed of decision making is critical • Pick up the best of school governance and model it for others • Build systems at inception ready for accountability • Develop data repositories 	EDBE structure is embedded and swift decision making processes ensue as required Best practice models and focussed CPD based on need rather than interest EDBE responds to findings and proposals of 'The DBE of the Future' Report 2013 to add value to its effectiveness and an appraisal process introduced
S4 Specifications	QA Commissioning Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify the differences between FCR income and monies earned • Work out a specification model of core commissioned services to identify capacity levels 	Capacity evaluated; procurement process completed and commissioned services introduced at the levels outlined above
S5 Skills Sets	CPD Outsourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to manage the internal capacity and subsequent needs gap • Be opportunistic on income generating avenues • Develop the necessary skills to identify the appropriate allocation of time that a task can be completed in • Trust colleagues to the extent that anyone can be a representative at many meetings 	On going review Previous experience has given EDBE officers skill and insight here – building up expertise and knowledge of process Where appropriate
S6 Selling	Marketing Hearts & Minds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is fee generation a shared activity for all or an additional sole focus for a new person? • Ensure that schools understand why EDBE/diocese is doing what it's doing – so that the culture of 'no' is understood 	Discuss Business Development post Communications focus is key - see development activity above

7. APPENDICES:

APPENDIX I

The narrative:

A day's Conference was held with attendees ranging from senior school leaders, DBE members, governors, LA representative and DBE officers. It was facilitated by Judith Johnson of JJES Services. Prior to that there had been a planning meeting between Judith Johnson and Philip Mantell.

We arrived at our consensus by working on group activities of a variety of themes and groupings.

The following themes had previously been identified at a Conference planning meeting:

Anglican Identity
School Standards
Relationship with the Multi-Academy Trust
Capital Planning
Strategic Partnerships

Short briefings about the current position, issues and developments were given by officers covering each of these aspects:

Current status and impact
Horizon scanning issues
Future needs

These briefings were developed into:

Focus – including links to internal and external drivers
Key priorities
Milestones/tasks
Timescales
Leads/Resources/Issues

What do we want from our Strategy?

Delegates spent some time discussing what they wanted the Strategy to be like and concluded:

- It tells the story of who we are
- It is clear about who we serve and who the plan is for
- It is essentially hopeful, optimistic, energising, confident and memorable
- There is a strong sense that we control our own destiny
- It is flexible enough to withstand reality yet is responsive
- It does not over occupy the DBE team's capacity
- It has space to respond to the unexpected
- It is proactive

- It recognises wider priorities
- It enables working with others both formally, through commissioning and brokerage as well as informally
- It is written in such a way that others can take it up and run with it
- It is inclusive – with a focus on the poor and vulnerable
- It is pragmatic – being set in the real world

An identification of the Vision and Values underpinning our Strategy.

The Consultation group defined the following Vision and Values as a statement underpinning our strategy:

1. The encouragement for the development of a variety of communities – between parishes and Mission communities, between church schools, between community schools – the plan must encourage the fostering of a sense of community wherever it is possible, so as to enhance support and development rather than competition and isolation.
2. To foster a sense of what it is to be Outstanding in a church context – rather than being a ‘standing out’ community.
3. To shine as a beacon to stand up for and lead in the quest for wisdom.
4. To affirm what we believe is best for education and children’s growth.
5. To pursue excellence in all its traits and aspects.
6. To confirm the enduring truth, in recent terminology, that every child matters to God.
7. To affirm that our Church Schools are a vital resource for the church’s mission.

An evaluation of the current Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and Threats facing us as DBE and diocesan schools at the current time.

The group broke into Stakeholder groups for this piece of work, i.e. members, schools, officers. A summary of the outcomes is below:

STRENGTHS

- The long history of provision
- A National framework to work with and draw upon
- Our values are a given in perpetuity and are non negotiable
- There is a continuing acknowledgement of the quality of outcomes from our church schools - there is community confidence
- Some very strong parishes
- Schools’ team more engaged and proactive – with a very strong commitment and has good problem solving skills and operational flexibility
- The team has good relationships with both schools and the three LA’s
- There are good LA/diocesan partnerships

WEAKNESSES

- Not all church schools subscribe to the Schools' Offer
- There is a disconnect between synod/DBE/schools and parishes/Mission Communities – a lack of shared vision
- Too many Governing Bodies haven't got the right skills or knowledge to challenge- or know what to challenge
- Recruitment to Governing Bodies is also being more difficult
- Lack of accountability and owned responsibility for poorer performing church schools
- A lack of shared vision
- Schools understanding of the current DBE Strategy

OPPORTUNITIES

- Church Schools are defined as being at the heart of the Church's Mission
- Developing greater partnerships between schools – parishes- mission communities – diocesan mission
- Our Bishop to continue the policy of speaking up on the national debate on education as it changes focus and to engage with all our schools
- To establish the metrics that matter
- Make governors real partners in the school improvement process
- Use Ofsted as a catalyst for change
- Academisation/Federations/MATs and other partnerships, creating a new delivery system
- Earned autonomy for schools in proportion to their success
- A focus on value for money
- Growth of new church schools
- Supporting Community and Roman Catholic schools if in difficulty
- The vacuum in developing a revised strategy

THREATS

- The current political direction and interference
- Increased secularisation of society
- The pressures of a data driven measures system
- The balance between holding staff to account and the need to treat all with God's Love
- Not being able to recruit the right people – so settling for second best
- Funding and budget cuts: schools budgets being affected, in the diocesan affecting officer workload and effectiveness
- School failure – pressure on St Christopher's MAT to deliver
- Risk adversiveness
- Private company engagement
- Further reduction in the numbers and quality of church school governance

Strategic Partnerships.

What strategic partnerships do we currently work with?

Association of Diocesan Directors of Education
Babcock LDP
Bishops
Central Government – DfE
Children and young people of the diocese and their parents
Church Schools of the diocese
Diocesan senior officers and clergy – Bishop’s Group
Diocesan Synod
Diocesan Governance Group
Diocesan Admissions Group
Edison Learning
Exeter Cathedral
Exeter Episcopal Trust
Independent Church schools
Learn, Teach, Lead RE (funded by the St Luke’s Trust)
National College for Teaching and Leadership
National Institute for Christian Education Research
PCCs in parishes and Mission Communities
Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth
SCITTs
South West Diocesan group
St Christopher’s Multi Academy Trust
South West Teaching School Alliance
The Children’s Society
The National Society
The Office of Schools’ Commissioner
The three local Higher Education Institutions: Universities of Exeter, Plymouth and St. Mark and St. John
The three Local authorities – Devon, Plymouth, Torbay

What strategic partnerships do we need to engage with for the future to add value to the existing ones?

PCC’s and their local clusters
Headteachers and Governors
Local Authorities
National Centre for Christian Education (Liverpool Hope University)
ADDE/ National Society
Office of Schools’ Commissioner
Regional Church Alliances
Regional Christian events for young people e.g. Momentum festival, One Life Conferences
Central Government – DfE
The national bodies identified above
Leaders of education – including, but not exclusively, NLE’s, LLE’s, NLG’s, SLE’s

Who or what should we be nurturing as part of our quest to develop a sustainable and transformational future for EDBE?

Christian teachers and leaders
Christian teachers in non church schools
Centres of teaching and learning excellence
Foundation governors and Trustees
Exeter Diocesan Board of Finance
New Funding streams
Neighbouring dioceses
Political leaders
Teaching School Alliances

APPENDIX 2

**EXETER DIOCESAN
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
STRATEGY**

'To nurture sustainable outstanding schools across the diocesan family through improving teaching and learning and developing effective holistic leadership at all levels.'

INTRODUCTION

The School Improvement Strategy has been developed by the Diocese of Exeter in response to changes in the national and local context for schools. In Exeter Diocese there are 131 schools of which 127 are primary schools. There are currently (1/1/2012) 13 Academies (1 secondary and 12 primaries) with the remainder maintained. In addition there are 20+ community schools that are already a part of our Diocesan family through federations or multi-school academy trusts.

The role and place of Church Schools in the overall mission of the Church of England is of prime importance and the Exeter Diocesan Board of Education (EDBE) wishes to work with the governing body of a school to ensure the continued quality of provision. Church schools have strong internal binding, based on Christian belief and values, and this binding gives educational strength through effective team work, and through shared language and values, which help to create a community characterised not just by people caring for one another and the school serving others but also high quality of education and standards of attainment.

The Diocese is committed to working with governing bodies and school leaders on their drive for continual improvement. We believe in empowering people and organisations and are aware of the dangers of learned helplessness. In emergency situations the approach may need to be more direct and directed but we are clear that the end purpose is for schools to feel able to operate autonomously making their own decisions and seeking support rather than expecting the lead to be taken from the outside. Most of the time governing bodies, along with their Headteacher and other staff, are able to maintain and continually improve the standards and quality of provision in their school. The best schools recognise that they need support from outside in this task and the Diocese is ready to work with them. One of the objectives of the Diocese, expressed in the Strategy for Church Schools (2008) is *“to improve further the quality of church schools”*.

Unfortunately there are times when a school becomes particularly vulnerable for a variety of reasons. In some circumstances, associated with falling standards, the Secretary of State has powers which could result in the closure of a church school. In other circumstances the high standards of care for all expected in a Christian community may be reduced due to a number of factors. The Diocese wishes to reduce these risks and seeks to identify schools in such vulnerable positions at the earliest possible time, open discussions with the governing body and work with them to address the issues.

The Diocese has recruited and developed a very strong team of educational professionals with wide experience of leading and supporting schools. It has focussed on building relationships with church schools and developing strong partnerships between church schools and the parishes or mission communities that they serve as well as with the three Local Authorities (LAs) of Devon, Torbay and Plymouth and the Boards of Education in neighbouring Dioceses (Bath and Wells, Salisbury and Truro). The Diocese is working with church schools to develop an Associate Network

which would allow it to broker support between schools. This Associate Network will take advantage of national schemes such as Teaching Schools, and National and Local Leaders in Education (NLE & LLE) as well as recognising good practice at all levels within our schools. In addition the Diocese is in the fortunate position of having a church HE institution within its boundaries, University College Plymouth, St Mark and St John, as well as strong links with Exeter University. All of these factors put the Diocese in a strong position to provide direct support through its own resources and broker support from partners.

SUMMARY

- Exeter Diocese already has established links to over 150 schools within the area, the majority of which are church schools.
- We are committed to working in a way that enables all our schools to be sustainably outstanding.
- We are committed to working with our schools to build capacity within them to support each other.
- The Diocese has worked hard to improve its capacity to work more strategically on school improvement.
- We will utilise government strategies to provide resources for example encouraging NLEs and LLEs and supporting applications for teaching schools.

CONTEXT

The education policies of the new coalition government after the election in 2010, together with challenging economic conditions have resulted in local authorities becoming less able to support school improvement and in the case of academies are no longer responsible for doing so. Exeter Diocese has reviewed the relationship it has both with LAs and all of its schools and recognised that a development of the role it plays in school improvement is required.

The Education White Paper (The Importance of Teaching, Nov 2010) stated: "...our aim should be to create a school system which is more effectively self-improving" and introduced a policy of developing Teaching Schools. "Teaching Schools will be examples of the best schools in the country and of the highest quality. They will draw together outstanding teachers and leaders who are committed to supporting other schools in an area as part of an alliance of schools" (NCSL website). This concept fits very well with the Diocese's vision for a strong family of schools, supporting each other to become, and remain, outstanding. In the period 2008-2011 77% of church schools in the Diocese inspected by Ofsted were judged as good or outstanding with only 1% inadequate.

The new government's policy for tackling underperforming schools makes it even more of a priority for the Diocese since the Secretary of State (SoS) has powers to insist that a school becomes an academy in such circumstances with a sponsor that may not be the Diocese. In addition if a school is already an academy the SoS has the

power to intervene for reasons other than standards and either close the school or offer it to a different Academy Trust. All of these circumstances will cause emotional upset for the children, parents, staff and governors involved and could result in the loss of a church school. Part of the intention of this Strategy is to be able to identify schools early enough to provide appropriate support and reduce the risk of such dramatic outcomes.

SUMMARY

- There are many strengths within our schools.
- These could be utilised more effectively to address the small but significant proportion of vulnerable schools within the Diocese.
- Our strengths can be further developed to support other schools in our region.
- Some schools will become vulnerable for a variety of reasons and need additional support.

PRINCIPLES

- a. The Diocese believes that all children, their families and the communities in which they live deserve the very best schools. Outstanding schools are built by outstanding leaders and outstanding staff. Our definition of outstanding is wider than those of others, we agree with the Secretary of State for Education when he said:

'Some of the most important things that happen in schools cannot be tested, examined or quantified, no matter how sophisticated the method we are that they used.

How do you measure enthusiasm or love of learning?

How do you quantify the sense of joy or anticipation that a pupil feels when they arrive in a classroom knowing they're going to be entertained and inspired for an hour.

How do you quantify good citizenship?

How do you calibrate team spirit?

<http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/speeches/a00199197/michael-gove-to-ofqual-standards-summit>

- b. Central to the Diocese's strategy is the belief that in order to build sustainability we need to increase the capacity to support others in our schools and partners. Church schools already belong to our 'Diocesan family' but these links need to be strengthened and become more effective in supporting school improvement beyond SIAS.

Two are better than one,

because they have a good return for their work.

If one falls down, his friend can help him up,

But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.

But how can one keep warm alone?

Though one may be overpowered,

Two can defend themselves.

*A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12***

- c. It is the collective responsibility of the Diocese to support those schools that have a history of under-performance. Our students and their families are relying on us

to support them. This is important because the best thing we can do for children in challenging circumstances is to prepare them academically within a holistic Christian framework.

'Given that Church schools are at the centre of the Church's mission to 'open people up to what God desires for them,' they are places where children and young people should receive 'education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice.'

The Way Ahead: Church of England schools in the new millennium, (Dearing, 2001)

- d. In order for schools to work together effectively there needs to be high levels of trust with each other and to be able to share both their strengths and weaknesses.

'To acknowledge that there has been failure is to be true to the situation, which then has to be dealt with. At the heart of the Christian gospel is the belief that

God, the loving Father, is a forgiving God, offering a forgiveness that is transforming... This loving forgiveness helps us to be free of the fear of failure and to be willing to risk exciting new things – even if we might fail! Church schools above all should be places of hope, believing in the possibility of positive outcomes from bad experiences.'

More than Caring and Sharing: Making a Church School Distinctive (Cox, J. 2011)

- e. Schools need to own the improvement plans they are working on and outside support should aim to work with schools rather than to do unto them, empowering people to feel able to take the lead rather than building dependency.
- f. At the heart of school improvement is improving teaching and learning and developing effective leadership at all levels in a holistic way.

SUMMARY

- All children deserve the very best schools.
- In order to build sustainability we need to increase capacity in schools and partners.
- Diocesan support should aim to empower people to be able to do it for themselves.
- As a family of schools we have a collective responsibility to each other.
- Effective partnerships depend on trust.
- The Diocese will work with schools to strengthen teaching and learning and leadership at all levels.

MEETING OFSTED CRITERIA AND BEYOND

Our school improvement strategy works to improve all schools in a holistic way that nurtures learners' minds, bodies and spirits, drawing on our Christian heritage and foundation. It recognises that in order for schools to be sustainably outstanding they all need to have continued support and challenge. Church schools are subject to two

inspection frameworks from OFSTED and SIAS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools) and we will use these tools to enable our schools to effectively evaluate the effectiveness of their provision and to plan strategically and rigorously for improvement. The Teaching School Hubs and Diocesan Linked Advisors will both have a pivotal role in brokering the best appropriate support for our schools.

Where schools are vulnerable we believe this hub approach will enable earlier intervention whereby schools come alongside each other to support. Schools have welcomed this way of working and our broad working definition of vulnerability.

The Diocese would expect its family of schools to contribute to targeting support where it is most needed. Where schools are vulnerable additional strategic support will be brokered to ensure that standards rise and improved quality of leadership is secured at all levels. Church schools in the Diocese will be expected to give to a *time bank* to support the most vulnerable in times of need.

What is a vulnerable school?

Clearly, to be at the heart of the Church's mission, Church schools must be distinctively Christian, and at the root of that distinctiveness are explicit Christian views of personhood and of community.

"The Church school is a Christian community which must aim to be:

- *A community characterised by enthusiasm, in the sense of being inspired by God, having God within it*
- *A community in which the adults see the children as their sacred peers*
- *A community based on love, with people loving one another as Christ loves us, and one in which individuals are forgiven, as God in Christ forgives us*
- *A community characterised by the fruit of the Spirit which is 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control' [Galatians 5.22]*
- *A community, in which 'righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness' are pursued, in which hopes 'are set on God', in which all people 'seek to do good, to be generous, and ready to share' [1 Timothy 6]."*
(Exeter Diocese Church Schools Strategy 2008)

It is in this spirit of Christian Community that the Diocese uses the definition:

"A vulnerable church school is one in which their Christian community is at risk due to the impact of one or more factors".

Indicators of vulnerability may be very clear and objective, such as falling standards of achievement, removal of pupils by parents or illness of key members of staff. Others may be a lot more subtle such as unusual behaviour, avoidance of meetings or "something not quite right". In consultation with Headteachers and governors the Diocese has identified eleven main areas in which indicators seem to fall:

1. *Educational Performance and Curriculum Provision*
2. *The Safeguarding of Children and Young People*
3. *School Leadership and Management*

4. *Governance*
5. *Staffing*
6. *Geography*
7. *School Size*
8. *Buildings and Site Issues*
9. *Finance*
10. *Parental confidence and relationships in the community*
11. *Response to a critical incident*

More detail regarding our approach to supporting vulnerable schools is given in Appendix A.

SUMMARY

- The concept of being an outstanding school needs to be considered as broader than either OFSTED or SIAS measures although these are useful tools.
- The Diocese will provide support to all schools.
- Earlier recognition of a school's vulnerability will enable better targeted support.

A Framework for Support

Across the Diocese we hope to establish 4 hubs – each an alliance of teaching schools. The hubs will be regionally based, one in the East Devon, Exeter area, one in North Devon, one in Mid Devon, Torbay and one in the Plymouth, South Devon, Cornwall borders area. By strategically basing these hubs in 4 key areas of the Diocese we believe we can address the specific needs of this rural/urban region and build capacity sustainably and effectively. Each of our 131 schools will be aligned with at least one hub, in addition to any existing networks they belong to. Although this model focuses on church schools we also have some 20+ community schools that are already a part of Diocesan family through federations or multi-school academy trusts. There are also other community schools, special schools and early years teaching settings who have expressed an interest in being more closely affiliated with the Diocese.

Talent management and succession planning

All our schools have strengths and our ambition is to utilise these for the common good and to build on them so that all our schools are able to sustain themselves as outstanding centres of excellence. We will continue to work on recognising and encouraging talent through our succession planning programmes, utilising our National and Local Leaders in Education (NLEs and LLEs) and developing Diocesan Associates including outstanding staff in our schools through the Specialist Leaders in Education (SLE) and the National Leaders of Governance (NLG) programme. Part of the Diocese's role will be about identifying strengths within schools that can be shared with others as needed. A linked officer for each school will support this as well as understanding the development needs of each school.

School-to-school support

Creating geographical hubs will enable schools to work closely together by aligning aspects of their school improvement plan and identifying common strands for professional development. This should provide schools with affordable challenge and support in their locality for many aspects of school improvement. For example, we expect that many schools will align parts of their school improvement plan so that aspects such as moderation and lesson observation can be quality assured by peers across the hub. CPD can also be strategically planned e.g. for Headteachers, heads of teaching and learning, subject leaders, middle leaders, support staff, business managers and governors.

In addition we intend to develop better partnerships with the Special Schools in our region as we believe that strengthening the relationships between these and mainstream schools will enable us to provide even better care for some of the most vulnerable children in our communities.

As a Diocese we plan to have in place a *Strengths Matrix* constructed in partnership with all schools which will allow us to recognise the quality of provision within our schools and provide a quick way for schools to identify potential partners to help them address their needs.

Creation of strategic partnerships

We also consider that each localised hub being part of a larger regional alliance is a significant strength of this model enabling cross-hub collaboration and more effective brokering of support to all our schools. The fact that two of the hubs are based across more than one local authority means that schools can benefit from regional strengths and further develop their understanding of school improvement; more than if they were working within one LA.

Our model will also include partnering with other organisations including Universities; specifically The University of St Mark and St John (Marjon) and University of Exeter. We have chosen these two HEIs as main links because Marjon has a Church of England Foundation and is the southwest centre for the Teaching and Learning Academy whilst Exeter is a centre of excellence for educational research. These partnerships will continue to support the work of our schools with regard to Initial Teacher Education as they are both outstanding providers. Teaching Schools in our model will give students an appreciation of working in a variety of settings; large and small, and urban and rural, church and community schools.

Links with universities will also enable our schools to develop high level CPD programmes linked to the Teaching and Learning Academy, Master's and Doctorate level programmes. A significant number of schools nationally have a Church of England Foundation and this model allows schools to have a strategic voice and impact in growing teachers and school leaders of the future who have a secure understanding of what outstanding education in a church school context is.

Other strategic partners will include Diocesan Associates (existing school staff and freelance consultants) and organisations that schools are working with on specific programmes e.g. The Cambridge Primary Review Southwest Regional Centre.

Diocesan Central Support

The Diocese is currently revising the core offer provided free of charge to all church schools to ensure that it focuses on delivering our School Improvement Strategy. In addition there will also be a comprehensive package of purchasable support in order to complement what schools are able to offer each other. The focus of this will be meeting identified unmet needs.

As a Diocese we believe our role is in supporting hubs to work as effectively as possible and to support strategic planning across the region – especially identifying and supporting vulnerable and potentially vulnerable schools. We believe all schools, irrespective of an ‘outstanding’ label, should always seek further improvement and so our model continues to offer Diocesan support at a core level to all our schools. In doing this we hope to further strengthen the sustainability of our outstanding schools.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Each hub will be centres for CPD and opportunities will be provided to develop school leadership and support for improving teaching and learning at all levels. Much of this will be able to be arranged locally drawing on the expertise within our schools; and clustering individuals working on particular aspects of school improvement.

The Diocese currently runs a number of highly regarded training and CPD opportunities for its schools and will continue to do this. Hubs will be able to choose from a large selection what would meet their needs most effectively. The CPD offered is not intended to replace what schools already access and is working well, but rather address unmet needs in a cost-effective way. We envisage that each hub will continue to work with current partners as well as developing new relationships.

Similarly there may be times when it is appropriate for our Teaching School hubs to plan strategically with others in the locality and beyond. We consider this to be healthy and an important part of our desire for a culture of continuous school improvement.

SUMMARY

- Our model centres on 4 regional hubs that include at least one Teaching School.
- Each of our schools will be aligned to a hub, other schools may link also.
- The Diocese will support the collection of key data to enable hubs to work as effectively and strategically as possible.
- Schools within each hub will negotiate the best support available to them.
- The Diocese will address school's unmet needs and offer CPD within each of the 4 hubs.
- Hubs will have a key role in supporting Initial Teacher Education and Succession Planning.

Building the system

It is our hope that the Hubs will be an alliance of at least 2 teaching schools and we will actively encourage strategic application for capacity grants in order to accelerate this process. The additional funding available will enable them to work strategically more quickly. Other areas of work to ensure a fully functional model include:

- Continued consultation with all schools and other partners.
- Gathering of key leaders in each hub to develop a strategic vision.
- A linking of all schools to at least one hub.
- Detailed data gathering of strengths and areas of developmental need for each school.
- A clear picture of common strands that schools can work together on through the hub.
- Support for the realignment of some aspects of the monitoring and evaluation cycles of schools that want to work more closely together.
- The recruitment and quality assurance of Diocesan Associates, many of whom will be NLE, LLE, SLE, NGE in addition to other strategic partners.
- Successful applications for Teaching School Status and MLDP Trainers.
- Additional funding from Church School Trusts to support Masters level School Improvement Programmes.
- Building administrative capacity for these hubs to work both regionally and further afield
- Strengthening levels of trust and accountability between schools.

As our alliance grows and teachers and school leaders move on we think it will become natural for some schools to become partnered with other teaching school alliances as well and see no reason why this is not possible. In reality all schools belong to a complex matrix of different partners and we seek to support and develop this so that the impact of the good practice in our schools is disseminated as effectively as possible for the benefit of the children we serve.

SUMMARY

- The Diocese has further work to do with schools to develop capacity and build the alliances.
- The model should be up and running by the autumn term 2012.

Review of the Strategy

The Diocesan School Improvement Strategy was developed in consultation with Headteachers and governors. Views were heard from more than 60% of schools in a process that started in September 2011. The Strategy took effect from April 1st 2012.

The EDBE will ask the Collaborations, Academies and Federations Panel (CAP), consisting of representatives of Headteachers and governors as well as members of the Board, to review the operation of the Strategy. This review will begin 18 months after the Strategy started to operate fully and CAP will report to the Board within 6 months of that date. EDBE will consider the outcomes of the review including any recommendations and make the necessary changes.

Appendix A: Support for Vulnerable Schools

What is a vulnerable school?

Clearly, to be at the heart of the Church's mission, Church schools must be distinctively Christian, and at the root of that distinctiveness are explicit Christian views of personhood and of community.

"The Church school is a Christian community which must aim to be:

- *A community characterised by enthusiasm, in the sense of being inspired by God, having God within it*
- *A community in which the adults see the children as their sacred peers*
- *A community based on love, with people loving one another as Christ loves us, and one in which individuals are forgiven, as God in Christ forgives us*
- *A community characterised by the fruit of the Spirit which is 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control' [Galatians 5.22]*
- *A community, in which 'righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness' are pursued, in which hopes 'are set on God', in which all people 'seek to do good, to be generous, and ready to share' [1 Timothy 6]."*
(Exeter Diocese Church Schools Strategy 2008)

It is this spirit of Christian Community that the Diocese uses the definition:

"A vulnerable church school is one in which their Christian community is at risk due to the impact of one or more factors".

Indicators of vulnerability may be very clear and objective, such as falling standards of achievement, removal of pupils by parents or illness of key members of staff. Others may be a lot more subtle such as unusual behaviour, avoidance of meetings or "something not quite right". In consultation with Headteachers and governors the Diocese has identified eleven main areas in which indicators seem to fall:

1. Educational Performance and Curriculum Provision

- 1.1 Ofsted and SIAS reports.
- 1.2 Performance results and Value Added data, with trends noted over a number of years.
- 1.3 Assessment of SEN provision and quality at the school.
- 1.4 Analysis of behaviour and attendance data.
- 1.5 Assessment of the quality of curriculum provision.

2. The Safeguarding of Children and Young People

- 2.1 Internal procedures for emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing.
- 2.2 Serious allegations against members of staff.
- 2.3 Poor engagement with the Local Safeguarding Board and its activities.

3. School Leadership and Management

- 3.1 Assessment of the performance of the school leadership and management (evidenced using Ofsted data).
- 3.2 Assessment of the impact of any headship vacancies and/or long term illness in the senior management team.
- 3.3 Inappropriate stress levels indicated by unusual behaviour, general disorganisation or lack of focus.
- 3.4 Withdrawal of attendance at external meetings and training.
- 3.5 Concerns expressed by governors, staff or fellow Headteachers.
- 3.6 Assessment of current improvement plans including clarity of vision.
- 3.7 Quality of engagement with the Diocese.
- 3.8 Ability to appoint and sustain suitable senior leaders.
- 3.9 Capacity to continue to improve.

4. Governance

- 4.1 Consideration of performance of Governing Body.
- 4.2 Vacancies and attendance levels.
- 4.3 Engagement in Governor training.
- 4.4 Relationship between Headteacher and governors.
- 4.5 Availability and content of minutes.

5. Staffing

- 5.1 Assessment of any long term staff vacancies and staff retention difficulties.
- 5.2 Any capability, grievance or disciplinary issues.
- 5.3 Deployment of Reserved Teachers.

6. Geography - location and performance of adjacent Schools

- 6.1 Assessment of the location of the school as compared to the children attending, transport links etc.
- 6.2 Assessment of the distance to adjacent schools, category of adjacent schools (choice and diversity), parental preference for neighbouring schools and their educational performance, size and capacity.

7. School Size

- 7.1 Assessment of the school's size in relation to the local catchment and context.
- 7.2 Assessment of the numbers of pupils in the school's designated area, numbers of eligible pupils attending the school, predicted pupil numbers in the short/medium term (typically falling), plans for future house building and predicted number of births in the local area (typically rising).

8. Buildings and Site Issues

- 8.1 Assessment as to the condition of the buildings.
- 8.2 Assessment of the suitability of the building for their purpose.

- 8.3 Assessment of disabled access issues and other statutory responsibilities.
- 8.4 Assessment of surplus space at the school and potential alternative use.
- 8.5 The care and attention paid to the premises.

9. Finance

- 9.1 Considering the revenue costs at the school against the LA average, but in context of specific circumstances at the school.
- 9.2 Assessment of the school's performance in managing the revenue budget over a number of years in the context of specific circumstances at the school.

10. Parental confidence and relationships in the community

- 10.1 Consider the school's 'standing' in the local community, its popularity and local parental confidence (parental preference and oversubscription
- 10.2 Views expressed by Parochial Church Council or other local community groups.

11. Response to critical incidents

- 11.1 Substantial damage to building such as fire or flood.
- 11.2 Serious accident to a child.
- 11.3 Substantial attention from national media.

Based on work by the Sustainable Church Schools Task Group published Sept. 2008

What can the Diocese do?

The Diocese is committed to working with governing bodies and school leaders on their drive for continual improvement. We believe in empowering people and organisations and are aware of the dangers of learned helplessness. In emergency situations the approach may need to be more direct and directed but we need to be clear that the end purpose is for schools to feel able to operate autonomously making their own decisions and seeking support rather than expecting the lead to be taken from the outside.

For the most part the role that the Diocese will play in supporting school improvement will operate through encouraging relationships between schools and potential partners who will agree how they can work together for example over costs. In the case of identified vulnerable schools the Diocese will seek to take a more strategic lead to ensure the effective use of all of these resources.

What will happen?

For maintained schools the LA may take the lead in providing support and the Diocesan officers will contribute to both the planning and delivery of the support. The process described below is intended for those maintained schools where the Diocese has identified a vulnerability that would not be addressed directly by the LA and for all church academies.

Identification

1. The process of supporting school improvement is a continuous but not necessarily incremental one. It can often be quite “messy” influenced by a large number of factors but all of the evidence suggests that a common feature of successful school improvement is good quality self-evaluation moderated by external partners. Diocesan Officers should be part of this self-evaluation and will share concerns with the Headteachers and governors where appropriate.
2. Each school has an identified Diocesan Education Officer (DEO) who will build a comprehensive picture of the school using evidence from a variety of sources.
3. The DEO will raise concerns about the vulnerability of a school with the Diocesan Director of Education (DDE).
4. The DDE will work in partnership with national bodies such as the Office of Schools Commissioner (OSC) and The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) to ensure the earliest possible indication of any concerns about individual schools.
5. If the school is maintained the DDE will consult the LA over the concerns and agree who is going to take the lead.
6. The DDE will raise the school’s vulnerability at a meeting of the schools team which will agree the status of Vulnerable School.

Approach

1. The DDE will identify a Lead Officer to manage the process with the school.
2. The DDE will arrange an urgent meeting with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors to discuss the situation, clarify the indicators and describe how the Diocese will work with the governors to reduce the vulnerability. The DDE will agree priorities that need to be addressed and the formation of a governing body subcommittee to monitor the situation until the vulnerability is reduced.

Support

1. The Lead Officer will meet with the Headteacher and/or Chair of Governors to agree a plan of action including clear intended outcomes and resources available.
2. Working with the LA the Lead Officer will broker support for the school from an NLE, Associates, schools within their Hub and beyond, other partners and providers.
3. The Lead Officer will draw up an Action Plan identifying what each partner will do, including specific actions and timescales.

4. The Lead Officer will support regular meetings (at least every month) of the governors monitoring subcommittee to monitor progress on the plan, identify barriers and agree additional actions if necessary.

Accountability

1. The Lead Officer will present a report on progress to the Schools team every month.
2. The Lead Officer will support the Headteacher in presenting a report on progress to the Governing Body, each term.
3. The DDE will inform the Chair of the Exeter Diocesan Board of Education (EDBE) about all Vulnerable Schools and keep him/her informed about progress at regular intervals.
4. The DDE will report on all Vulnerable School Projects to EDBE each term.
5. After the conclusion of each intervention the operation of the Strategy will be evaluated by the DDE taking in to account the impact of the Action Plan and views of the Headteacher and governors. Outcomes of these evaluations will be considered when operating future interventions.