

Bishop's Visitor to Church Schools Information for schools and governors

Bishop's Visitors (BVs) are normally former head teachers and senior teachers who volunteer to support colleagues in schools across the Diocese by sharing the wisdom, insight and experience they have gained during their careers. The role of BV is essentially pastoral.

The purpose of Bishop's Visitors scheme is:

- a) to provide pastoral support to the school, especially the headteacher, as appropriate.
- b) to foster the link between the school and the Diocese.
- c) to encourage and support the expression of Christian beliefs, vision and values on which the school is founded.
- d) to foster good relationships within the school, and between the school, the local church and wider community.
- e) to encourage RE, Collective Worship and values education by sign-posting staff to appropriate officers, training and resources.

Bishop's Visitors will:

- a) have a full DBS check every 5 years completed by the Diocese of Gloucester
- b) establish links with designated schools using @glosdioc designated email - usually allocated on a deanery basis.
 - Clergy who are BVs will not normally visit schools in their own deanery.
 - BVs will not normally visit schools in their own parish.
- c) make a formal half-day visit to each school annually.
- d) where capacity allows, attend school events to foster relationships as a friend and pastoral support to the school.
- e) signpost schools to training, resources, officers and updates including the Diocesan Education Newsletter (DEN).
- f) write a letter to the headteacher reflecting on their visit and share with Director of Education
- g) support the annual church schools' leavers' service in the Cathedral.

- h) attend three training and update meetings each year, with a member of the education team
- i) attend Diocesan training (including safeguarding) and keep up to date with local and national guidance and initiatives.
- j) receive and read school newsletters (by email) to keep informed of events and other matters relating to the life of the school.
- k) view schools' websites regularly.
- l) Work in-line with the expectations and guidance from the DDE and GDBE Education Team

Diocesan Director of Education will:

- a) meet with BVs three times a year, for updates and training.
- b) liaise between the Bishop and BVs.
- c) hold BV to account and monitor letters to schools.
- d) signpost BVs to appropriate training, guidance and materials.
- e) provide pastoral support for BVs.
- f) provide advice regarding IT and GDPR.
- g) provide guidance and make clear expectations for visits and communications with schools.

Schools are asked to:

- a) agree half day visit date and be familiar with the BV letter template available online.
- b) introduce BV to staff and children as appropriate.
- c) invite BV to events and special occasions as appropriate, to foster the relationships as a friend of the school.
- d) inform BV if the Bishop has been invited to the school.
- e) inform BV of change of head and deputy head teachers.
- f) inform BV of any pastoral issues they would appreciate support with.
- g) share the annual BV letter with PCC and governors.
- h) contact education@glosdioc.org.uk if you have any questions, queries or concerns regarding this role.