

Diocesan Board of Education

Annual Report 2024 to Diocesan Synod

15th March 2025



Foreword



Dear Friends

I am pleased to present the Diocesan Board of Education's (DBE) Annual report for 2024.

Our work in education is central to the mission of Diocese, to Transform Church and Transform Lives, and the work of our Church schools and academy trusts is key to delivering our ambition for children and young people to learn and flourish in the parishes and communities where they grow up.

This year's report covers some new areas that the DBE and the Education team have been working on; our joint work with the Mission team on the Children & Families strategy, our School and Church partnerships initiatives which focus on growing the Christian faith of children and young people and our commitment to reducing the carbon emissions of our Church school estate through our Net Zero Carbon projects.

In addition to these new initiatives, the DBE and Education team continue to support our Church school and academy trust leaders, to ensure that every child that attends a Church school in our Diocese receives an excellent education within a framework of strong Christian values. The increasing number of Ofsted and SIAMs inspection outcomes which are judged 'Good' or better, are a testament to the hard work of our school and trust leaders.

I hope that the annual report provides an insight into the work of the DBE and the Education team, the different aspects of the DBE's statutory responsibilities and our wider work supporting the mission of the Diocese.

I would like to thank the members of the DBE and members of our sub-committees, who give up their time in a voluntary capacity to support, challenge and contribute expertise to the development of policy and practice.

I commend this annual report and the work of the DBE and Education team to Diocesan Synod.

Yours in Christ,

Canon Alex Tear
Diocesan Director of Education

DBE Annual Report 2024

Introduction

This annual report covers the Diocesan Board of Education's (DBE) operation and activity in 2024.

The report highlights the key aspects of the work of the DBE and the Education team who act as the Board's officers.

The DBE has oversight of 83 Church of England schools in the voluntary-aided, voluntary-controlled and academy sectors.

It seeks to serve the 20,880 children and young people who attend Church of England schools across the Diocese of Guildford.



The DBE sets its strategic priorities for a three-year period; the Board is elected to serve for 3 years and a new Board will be elected in March 2025

Our vision for education

“Together, we will enhance the quality of education, developing the Christian character of our Church schools and academies, nurturing all children, young people and families so they can flourish”

We will do this by working in partnership with our Church Schools and Academy Trusts to:

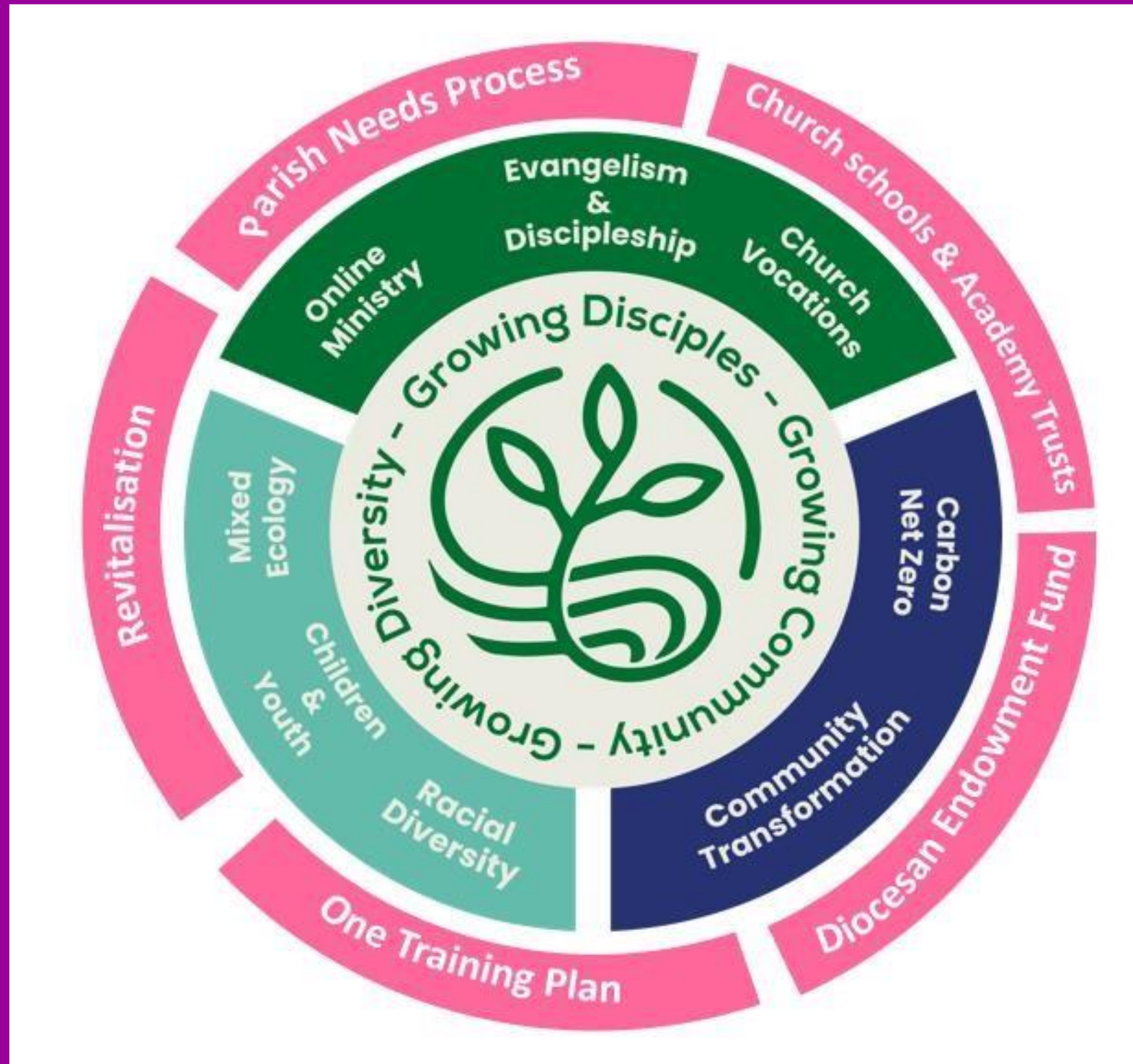
- Walk together with our school leaders, governors and trustees, supporting and lifting them up so they can lead effective schools which deliver high quality education and positive outcomes for pupils
- Be a distinctive, inclusive and supportive family of schools and academy trusts with Christian character where all feel welcome and have sense of belonging
- Create culture where the uniqueness of every school and community is recognised and celebrated, so that all children, young people and school staff can be nurtured and flourish



***Jesus said to them, “Throw your net out on the right side of the boat, and you will catch some.”
So they threw the net out and could not pull it back in,
because they had caught so many fish.***

John 21 verse 6

Partners in Diocesan Mission



Working in partnership with the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF)

- The DBE works closely with the DBF, Bishop's Council, Church House Guildford, to support the delivery of the Diocesan mission strategy TCTL and the three priorities of Growing Disciples, Growing Diversity and Growing Community
- Our work with Church schools and Church Multi-Academy Trusts is an enabler of TCTL and supports the work delivered through the eight strategic priorities
- In 2024, the work of the DBE has specifically supported the implementation and aims of the children and youth strategies, Net Zero Carbon and the Racial Justice focus group



DBE Statutory Duties



The DBE holds the contract for Standing Advisory Council (SACRE) for R.E. for Surrey CC and has created the R.E. syllabus for all schools in Surrey

The DBE Measure 2021

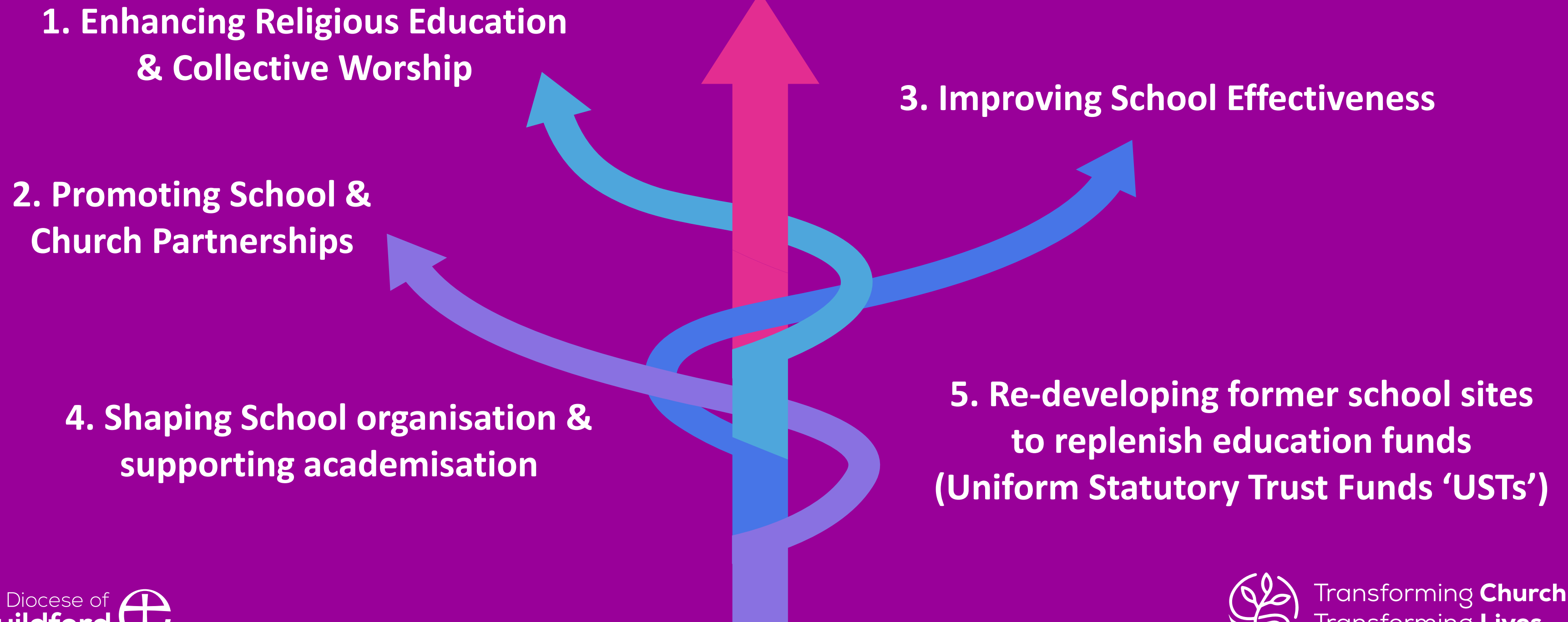
The DBE Measure 2021, defines the function and statutory duties of the DBE:

The DBE for each diocese must:

- promote or assist in the promotion of education in the diocese that is consistent with the faith and practice of the Church of England
- promote or assist in the promotion of religious education and religious worship in schools in the diocese
- promote or assist in the promotion of church schools in the diocese
- promote co-operation between itself and other persons concerned with education in the diocese

DBE Strategic priorities 2023-2025

Developing the Christian character of our Church schools



Religious Education (R.E.)

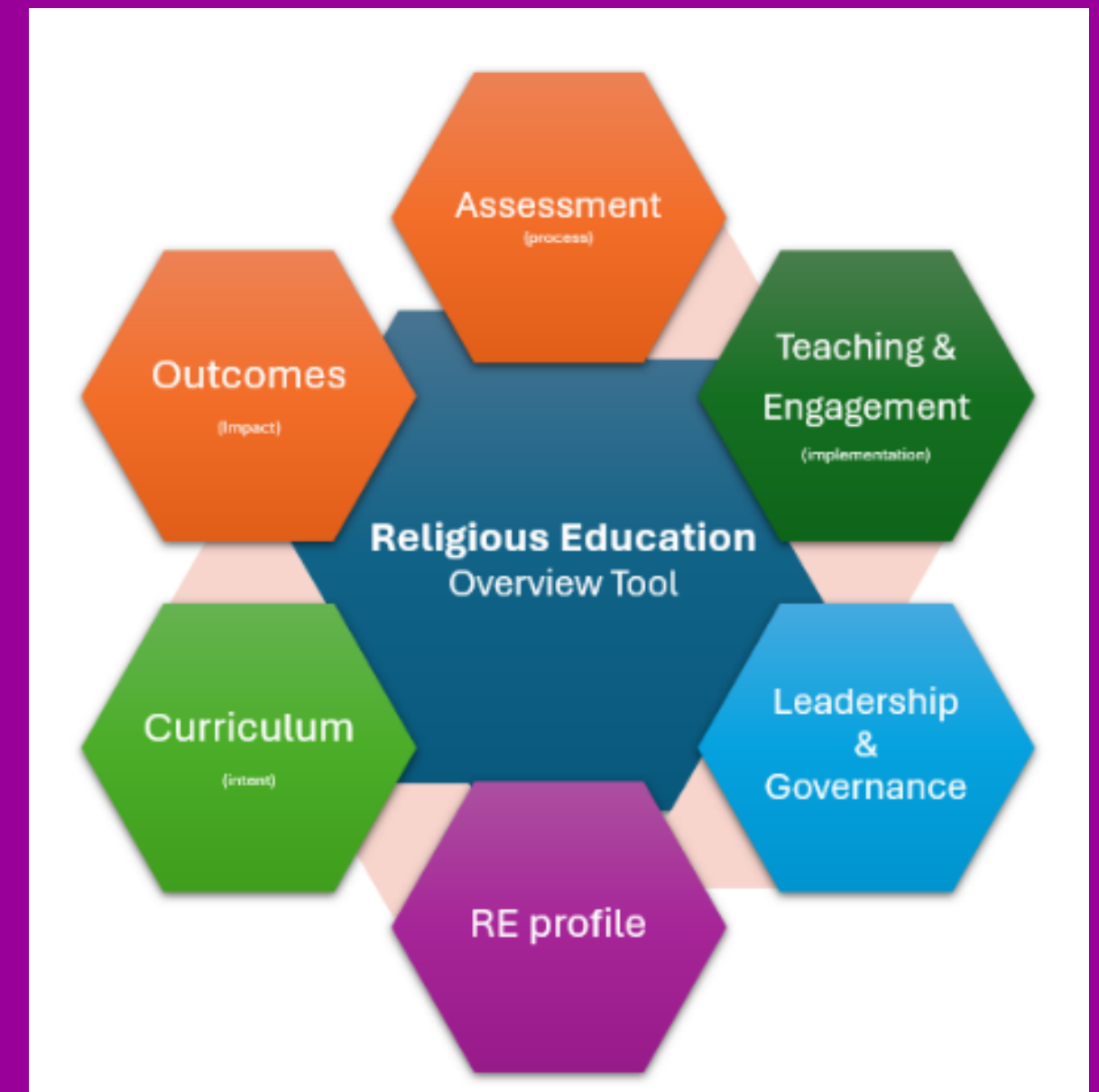
Implementation and quality assurance

The focus of our work in 2024 has been on the implementation and training of school leaders and R.E. subject leaders to deliver and embed the new Diocesan & Surrey agreed R.E. syllabus which was launched in 2023. The Education team has developed an R.E. self-evaluation toolkit for our Church schools to use to assist them with monitoring the delivery of R.E. and to target areas where the school needs to improve its provision.

Both the Ofsted 2024 subject review (Deep and Meaningful) and the annual 2024 SIAMS reports, RE was recognised as a complex subject area that is in the process of significant change. Consideration of all aspects of RE can now be facilitated through our new RE Self-evaluation overview toolkit. This can be used by schools as a framework for measuring school improvement across the 6 identified strands..

In addition, we have responded to the suggestion that schools would benefit from the creation of diocesan assessment protocols by producing a summary Assessment in RE document that highlights good practice and outlines our recommendations. This builds on the recommendations made within the new syllabus. Schools will continue to devise their own bespoke assessment systems that will be closely aligned to foundation subjects or MAT expectations.

The Education team also attended briefings and gave feedback regarding the roll-out of the National Society Christianity as a Global World Faith materials.



A snapshot of the R.E. self-evaluation toolkit developed for our Church schools

More details of the Diocesan R.E. syllabus can be found here:

<https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/religious-education-in-church-schools>



Transforming **Church**
Transforming **Lives**

Collective Worship

Exemplary resources to support schools

The law requires that all schools, irrespective of the religious denomination or faith designation, should offer all pupils a daily act of worship which is broadly Christian in nature.

In Church of England schools, collective worship should be inclusive of pupils and staff of all faiths and beliefs or none, invitational where all are invited, not required, to participate, and inspiring all to reflect on their lives and the world, wherever they may be on their journey of faith and belief.

Our Education team produced resources to support the delivery of Collective Worship in our Church primary schools. Each week schools were provided with a script, slides and material for a reflective prayer activity. In 2024 the themes were: 'Wise Words' a series based on the book of Proverbs, 'Going for Gold' a series linking Biblical materials to the Olympic values and 'Topsy Turvy Kingdom: How-to-Be'-at(t)itudes' based on the beatitudes.

These resources are downloaded from the Diocesan website free of charge for our schools and are used extensively by Church schools in other dioceses. Our online Advent Calendars for both primary and secondary schools were promoted by the Church of England's Education office to all DDEs for use in their schools across the country. The central team were impressed by the racial diversity of the images and videos that the team had used.



Examples of our Collective Worship resources can be found here:

<https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/education-schools/collective-worship/>



Transforming **Church**
Transforming **Lives**

Promoting the Christian character of our Church schools

Supporting schools with their Christian ethos, vision and values

This year the DBE has responded to the Department for Education's consultation on relationships and sex education and specifically on the draft guidance for gender questioning children.

The DBE's Christian Distinctiveness committee worked closely with a focus group of school leaders to respond to the guidance.

In September 2024, the final version of the Anti-bullying guidance for Church of England schools, [Flourishing For All](#), was published.

Schools have been made aware of the guidance and the broad content of the first 2 parts (part A and B) as well as the plans for future publications.

"Every child deserves to learn in an environment where they are loved, supported and respected."



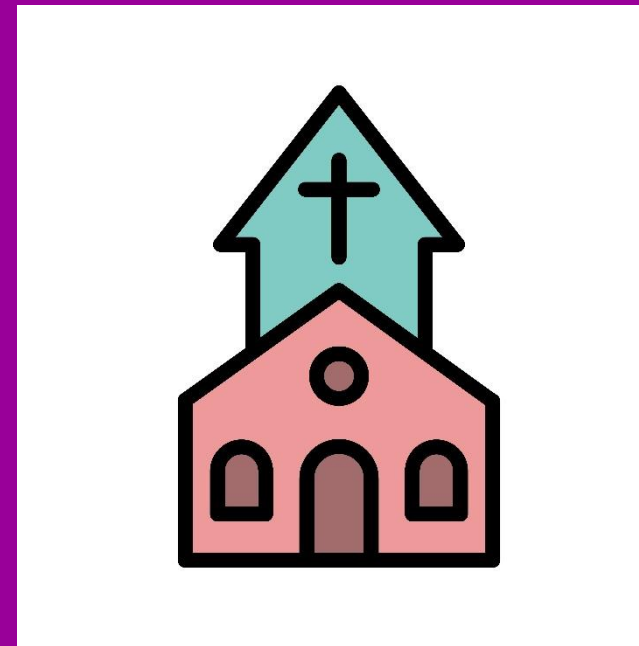
School & Church Partnerships

Growing Faith in the school and church

This year we have worked closely with the Mission team to develop the relationships between church leaders and school headteachers.

A Clergy Study Morning in May created the opportunity to present our Growing Faith Research Project findings, illustrating them with stories from around the diocese. This led to increased interest in working with schools and stories of new activities being shared by churches and schools.

In the autumn term, we launched our School and church partnership audit tool which was well received by schools and churches. This was followed by the first 'planning the journey' workshop for incumbents and headteachers to work together on their plans for the academic year. 19 partnerships were represented in 16 parishes. Community schools were well represented.



“A reason to come together with both head teachers of our church schools for concentrated time to look at the partnership we have and how to build it up further”

“I really enjoyed the space and time to speak with my vicar and although we have many things right and going well, we still discussed things we were both committed to improving”



Did you know?

There are 19 schools (15 maintained schools & 4 academies) with 90 or fewer pupils on roll

There are 47 schools (33 maintained & 14 academies) with 210 or fewer pupils on roll

We have 36 schools with an executive headteacher or part of a shared leadership arrangement



Hampshire 9 schools
8 Maintained
2055 pupils

2240 pupils
1 academy
185 pupils

Support for schools and academies

The education team is currently working with a total of 66 schools/academies through service level agreements or trust agreements

Kingston 1 school 170 pupils

11



83 schools
3 Local Authorities
5 Academy Trusts
1 Stand-alone Trust



**10 headteachers have joined
their school since September 2024**
(including interim leaders and newly arranged shared
leadership)



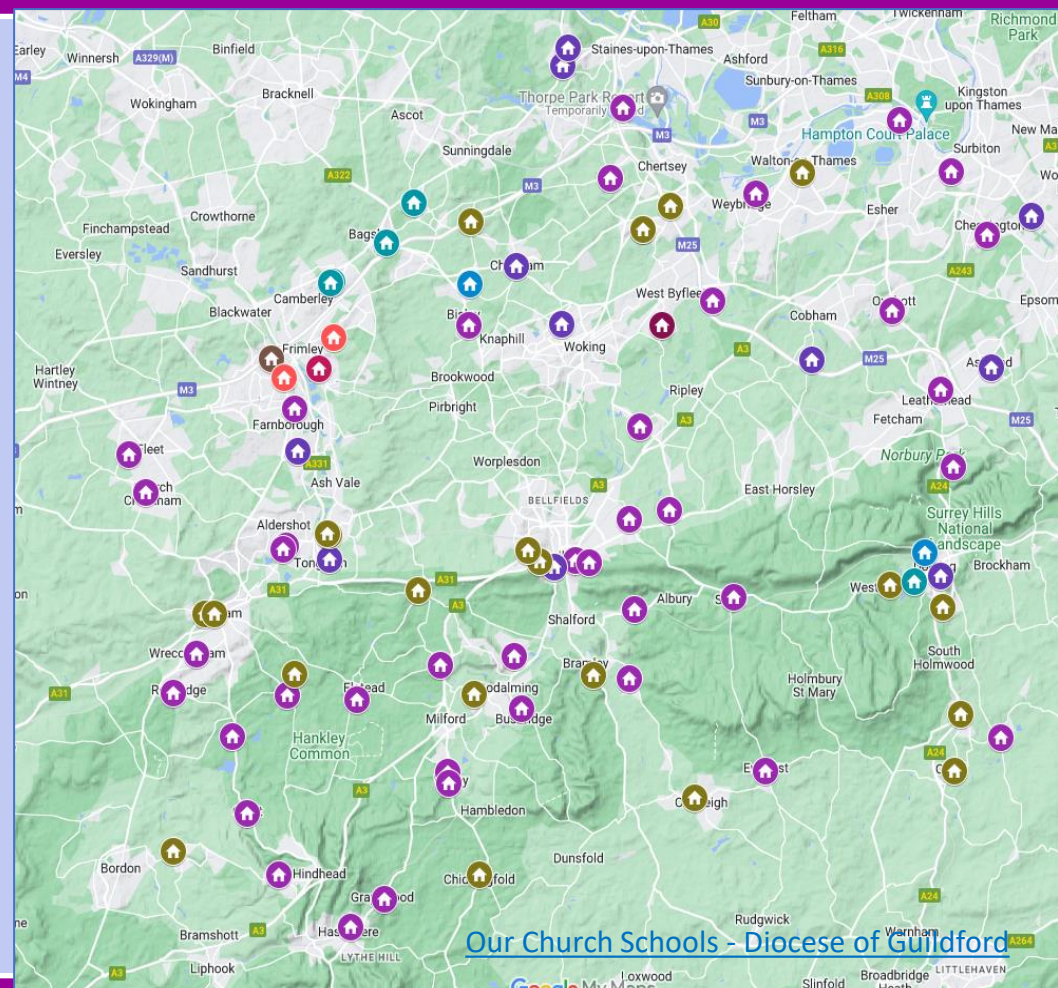
83 schools – 20,880 pupils
50 Maintained Schools – 10,265 pupils
33 Academies - 10,615 pupils

Ofsted Ratings

Grade at most recent inspection (including academy conversions)

10 Outstanding
67 Good
5 Requires Improvement
1 Inadequate
93% Good or better

Based on overall effectiveness judgement prior to September 2024 and on quality of education judgement from September 2024 onwards



SIAMS

Strengths

- Vision and leadership
- RE
- Collective worship
- Provision for pupils with SEND

Areas for development:

- **Spiritual development**
- **Understanding of Christianity as a global faith and worldviews**

There are now more pupils attending church academies than in maintained church schools within our diocese.

There are 9 schools receiving additional LA support

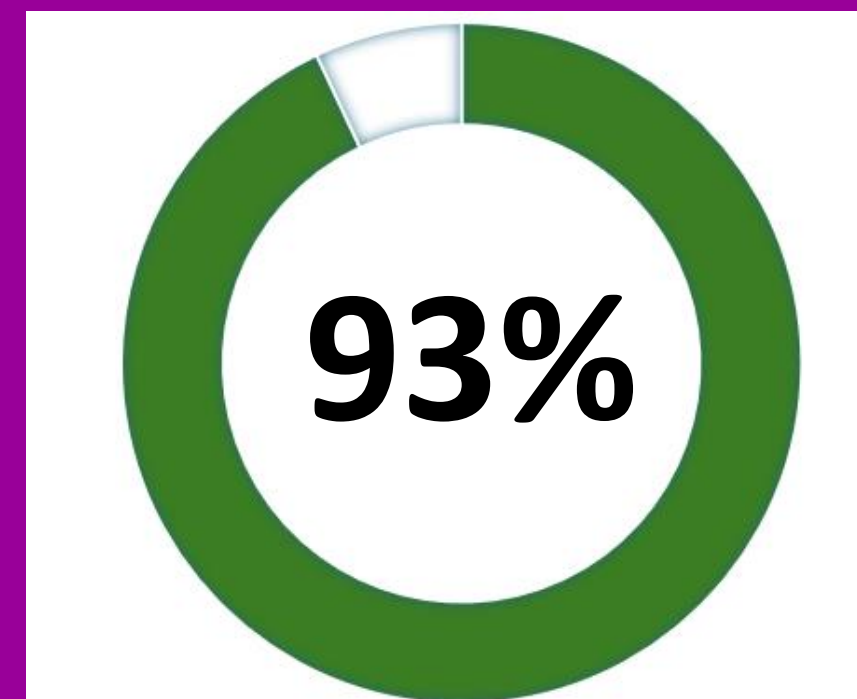
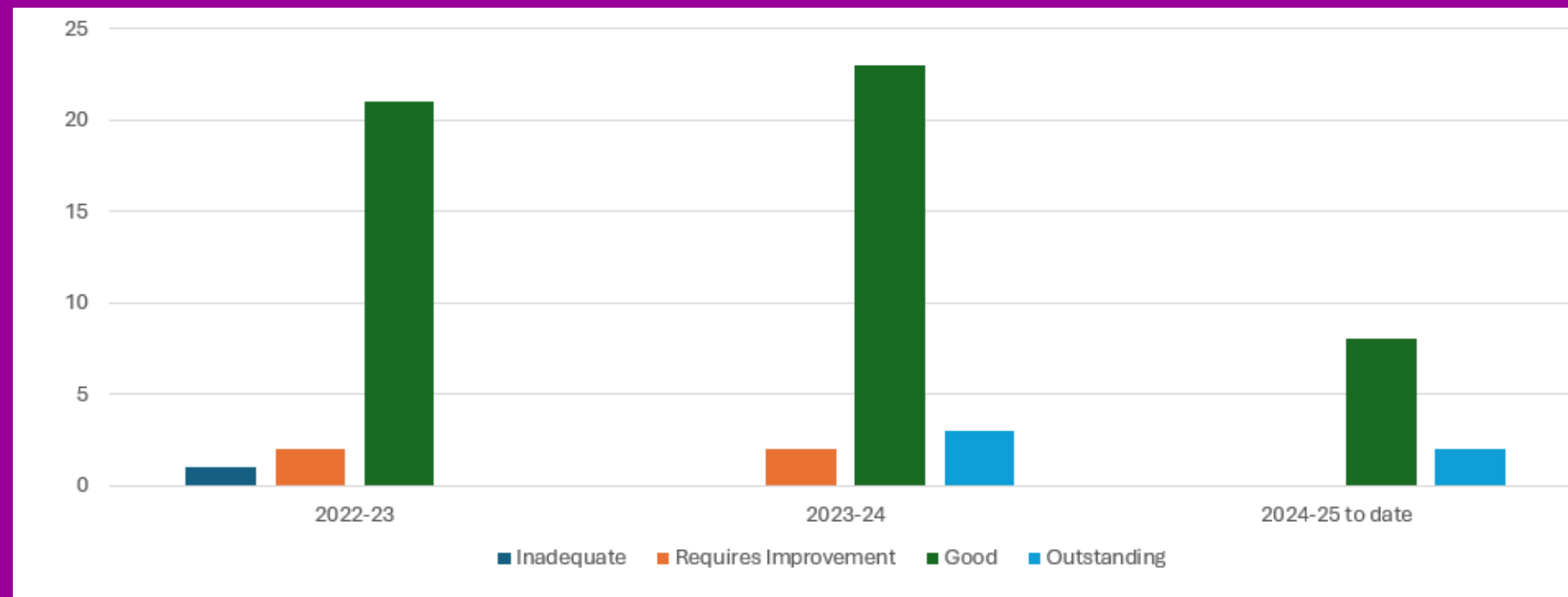


Surrey 73 schools	18,470 pupils
41 maintained	32 academies
8040 pupils	10,430 pupils

School Effectiveness

Ofsted Inspection outcomes by academic year

93% of GDBE Schools judged good or better by Ofsted at their last inspection.



All Guildford Diocese schools' Ofsted inspection outcomes in 2024-25 to date have been good or outstanding for quality of education.

The figure of 93% of schools with a good or better outcome is in line with local authority figures and slightly above national average.

Comparison

National – overall effectiveness at their last inspection in August 2024: 14% Outstanding, 76% Good, 8% Requires Improvement , 2% Inadequate. (90% Good+)

Surrey - overall effectiveness at their last inspection in December 2023: 19% Outstanding, 76% Good, 4% Requires Improvement , 2% Inadequate (94% Good+)

Hampshire - overall effectiveness at their last inspection in December 2023: 12% Outstanding, 80% Good, 5% Requires Improvement , 2% Inadequate. (92% Good+)

SIAMS Inspection Outcomes

School Effectiveness – Christian character

In September 2023, the framework for inspection changed. Previously, SIAMS inspections resulted in each school being awarded one of four grades: most recently 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Requires Improvement', and 'Ineffective'.

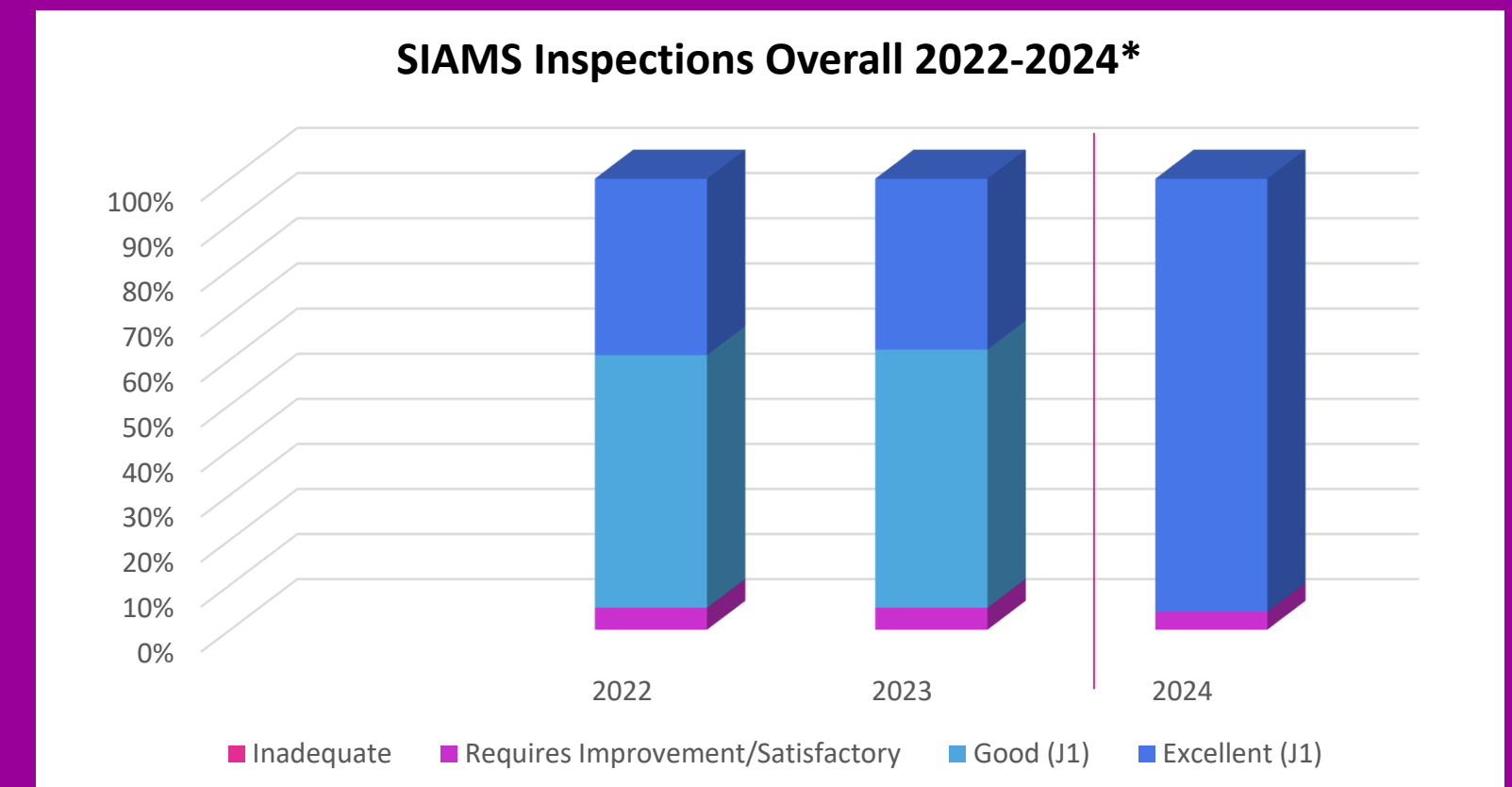
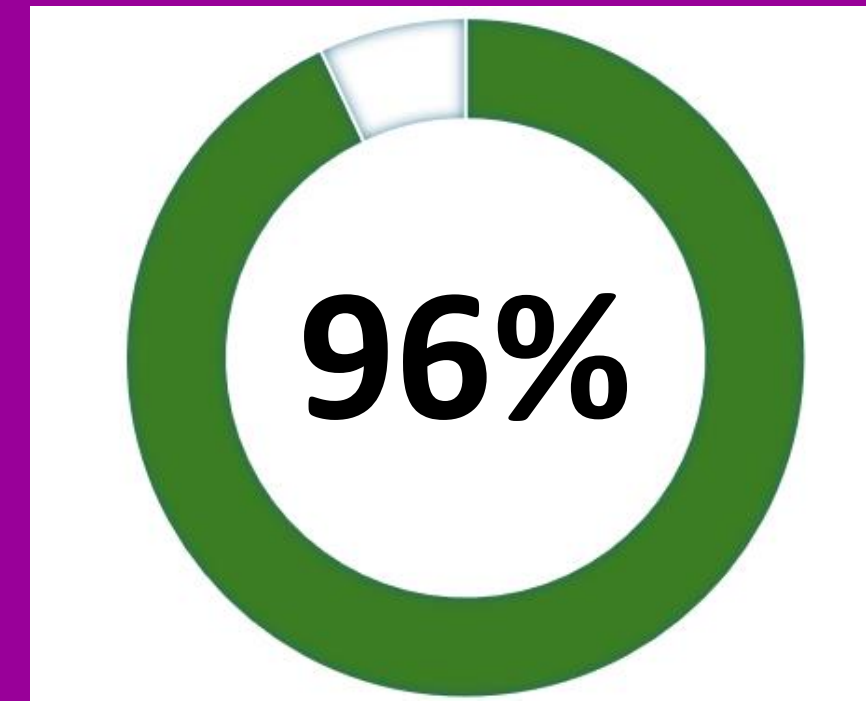
Since September 2023, inspectors make a judgement on whether the school is living up to its Anglican/Methodist foundation as a Church school. This is approached through evaluating how effectively the school's Christian vision enables all pupils and adults to flourish under 6 (VC) / 7 (VA) inspection questions. Leaders are expected to demonstrate how the vision is being worked out in practice and in response to the school's unique context and needs.

The outcome is given one of two evidence-based judgements: The school is either deemed to be living up to its foundation as a Church school - J1, or the report sets out the reasons why it is not fully doing so - J2. The school's strengths and development points are detailed for both judgements, along with a narrative that provides further detail of the evidence base.

January - December 2024

100% of Diocese of Guildford schools inspected were deemed to be living up to their foundation as a Church school – J1.

By December 2024 96% of Diocese of Guildford schools were judged to be J1 / good or better in their most recent SIAMS inspection. This figure is an increase of 1% from 2023.



***The SIAMS framework changed in September 2023. Grade outcomes are no longer given and instead schools are given a J1 or J2 judgement.**

School organisation & Academisation



St Mary's Church of England Primary in Chiddingfold joined The Good Shepherd Trust (GST) in November 2013 in Special Measures – it is now judged 'Good' in all areas by Ofsted

Shaping Our Future Together to 2030

The Diocesan Board of Education is required to publish a Diocesan academy strategy as part of the national arrangements agreed between the Department for Education and the Church of England. The current strategy is published here:

<https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/content/pages/documents/gdbe-academy-strategy-2030.pdf>

In 2024 the DBE has reviewed its academy strategy to focus more intentionally on shaping the distribution of Church schools based on pupil pathways and the local geography of the Diocese. It has created a 'Memorandum of Understanding' between the DBE and our Church Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) to guide and shape the direction of future academy conversions of our Church schools.

As the academy sector goes through a period of consolidation, the DBE is expecting that some of our Church Multi-Academy Trusts will merge in order to achieve scale and become sustainable in the longer term. The DBE has developed a set of merger criteria to ensure that any mergers of Church MATs and Community MATs protect the religious denomination, the Christian character and ethos of our Church schools.

DBE officers continue to work closely with the three Local Authorities in Surrey, Hampshire and Kingston to tackle the challenge of the falling demographic in primary schools. For our small, rural Church schools their future is safeguarded by structural collaboration through partnership, federation and joining a family of Church schools such as a MAT and the DBE continues to support these initiatives.

School Support & Services

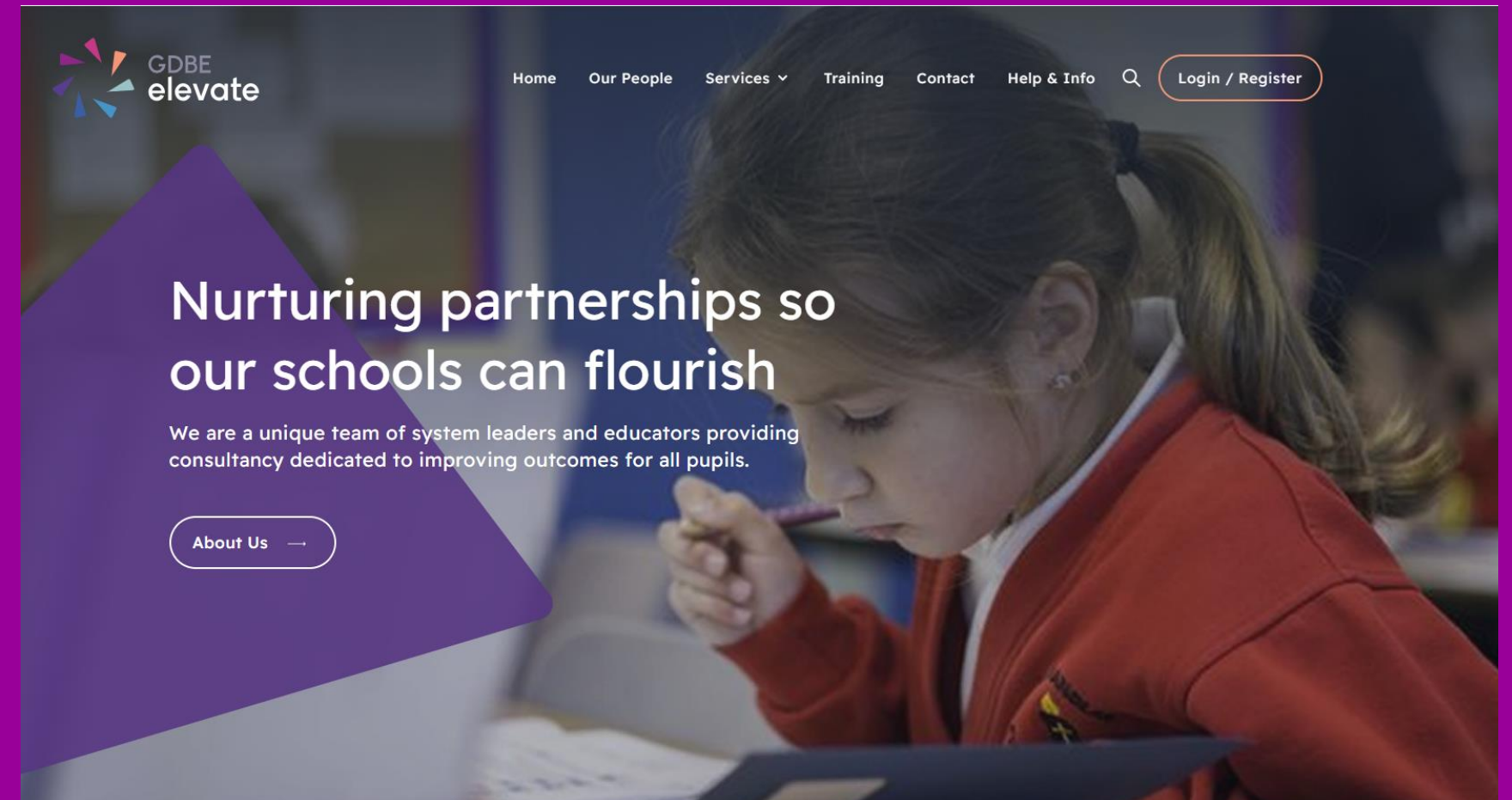
GDBE Elevate – Education Consultancy

The DBE offers three different Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to our Church schools and Community schools.

These agreements enable the Education team and our group of Associate Consultants to provide support beyond the statutory duties of the DBE and ensure that we are pro-active in identifying schools which needs additional support and intervention in the following areas:

- **GDBE Elevate Core - Christian distinctiveness & school effectiveness**
- **GDBE Elevate People - Human Resources (HR)**
- **Property Services Support Agreement (PSSA) - Buildings and Estates**

The agreements generate some additional income to support other areas of the Education team's work including the hosting of networks for school leaders, training for class teachers and diocesan wide events such as our annual Diocesan Schools Leadership conference.



Some of these services are provided by an experienced team of Associate Consultants who work on behalf of the DBE and can be booked through the GDBE Elevate Schools portal which is managed by our School Services Manager, Jane Whittingdale.

Finance & former school sites

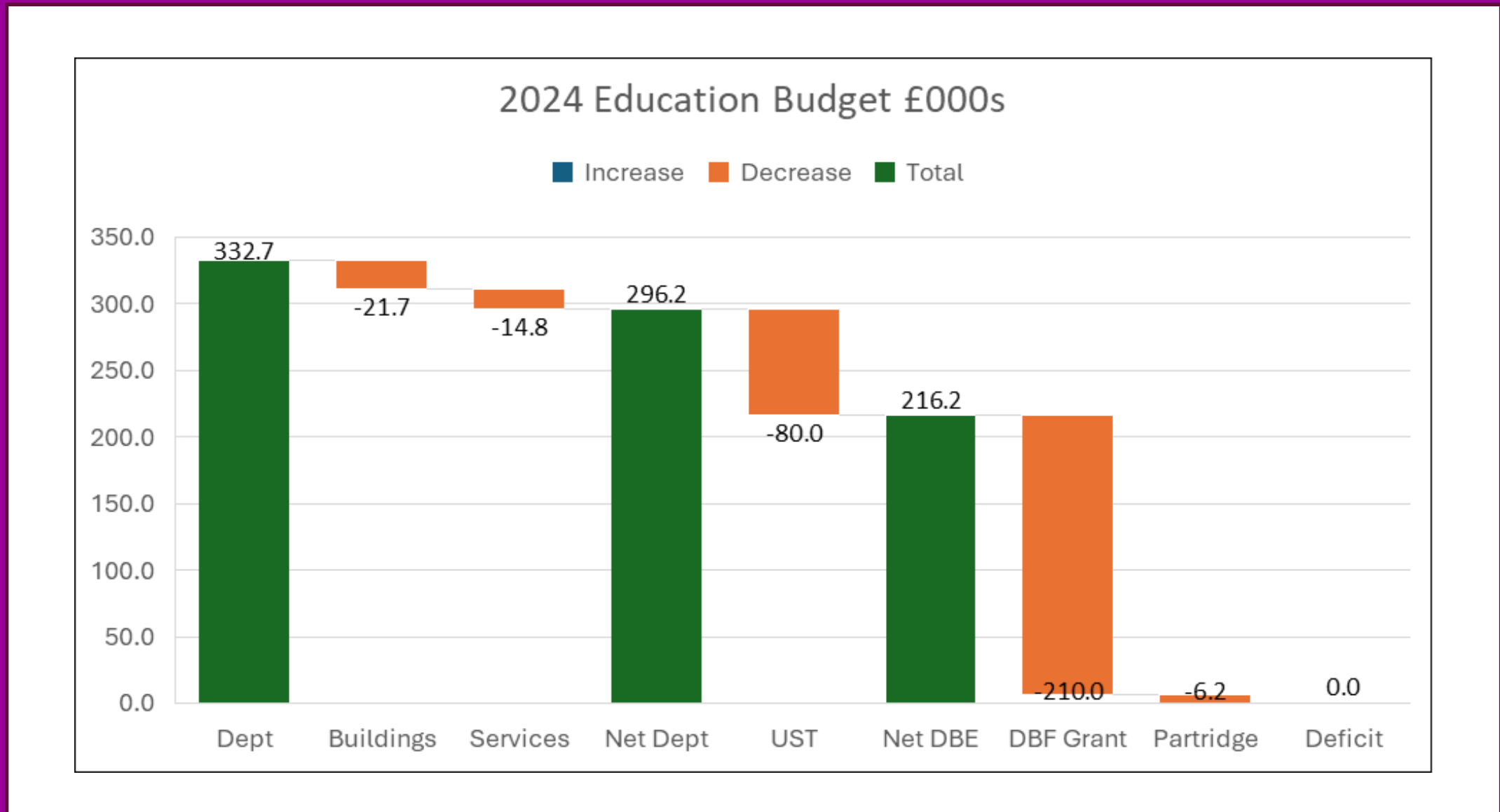
How is the work of the DBE funded?

In 2024, the DBE received a grant from the DBF for £210K to fund the statutory work of the Education team.

In addition, the Education team generated additional income from its services to schools and through its GDBE Elevate consultancy which supplements the DBF grant.

The DBE draws on the interest (£80K) from its Uniform Statutory Trusts (USTs) educational endowments to offset its operation with a further small contribution of £6K in interest from the Partridge Fund.

Going forward, the aim is to replenish the UST funds from the sale proceeds and lease income from our former Church school sites, in order that we can draw down on the interest as additional income to enhance our work with schools, children and families.



What are Uniform Statutory Trust (UST) funds?

Uniform statutory trusts are a standard type of statutory trust which may be incorporated in an order made by the Secretary of State in respect of a closed Church school, to allow the relevant Diocese to apply the proceeds of sale for the benefit of other Church schools.

School Buildings & Estates

Reducing the carbon emissions of VA schools

Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS)

The DBE secured £3.7 million of grant funding through this scheme to replace ageing boilers across our Church school estate. Working with consultants Re-Energise, the DBE has worked in partnership with a specialist supplier Viessman, to install air source heat pumps in 11 of our Church schools, significantly reducing their carbon emissions and making a contribution towards the Diocesan Carbon Net Zero target for 2030. The heat pumps in these Voluntary Aided Church schools are now operational and significantly reducing their carbon emissions.

School Condition Allocation (SCA) Funding

In 2024 the DBE was allocated £1.4 million pounds of SCA funding by the Department for Education (DFE) to contribute to capital projects to improve our Church school estate. Projects have included removing cladding, replacing windows, improving insulation, upgrading LED lighting and refurbishing children's toilets. The DBE uses specialist project consultants to manage this projects on behalf of our Church school governing bodies.



The Education Team

The DBE Officers

The Education team act as the DBE’s officers and help to ensure that the DBE’s statutory duties are implemented.

In September 2024 we welcomed Paula Bliss to the team as our new School Officer for Christian Distinctiveness who will continue the work of Canon Jane Whittington who leads on School and Church partnerships.

The DBE has also appointed a property consultant, Tom Archer, to advise and progress the plans for its former school sites.

It is a privilege to lead such a professional and experienced team of colleagues who are committed to serving our Church schools.



Canon Alex Tear,
Director of Education



Susan Costa,
SIAMS Officer



Canon Jane Whittington,
Schools & Church
Partnerships Adviser



Matthew Rixson,
Deputy Director



Paula Bliss
Schools Officer



Helen Dean
Admissions Adviser



Jane Whittingdale,
School Services Manager



Rachel Boxer,
R.E. Adviser & SACRE



Mike Giles,
School Buildings Manager



Delphina Rose,
Net Zero Project Officer



Mark Cripps,
Academies Officer



Tom Archer
Property Consultant

Diocesan Board of Education members

DBE Member	Appointed by
Canon Keith Malcouronne (Chair)	Diocesan Synod
Alison Bateman	Diocesan Synod
Mike Boddington	Diocesan Synod
Reverend Jeremy Brown	Diocesan Synod
Dr Clare Brunet	Diocesan Synod
Right Reverend Paul Davies	Co-opted by DBE
Mrs Sarah Dunning	Diocesan Synod
Reverend James Hanson	Diocesan Synod
Anna Shaw	Diocesan Synod
Rebecca Stacey	Diocesan Synod
Mike Pocock	Bishop's appointment
Reverend Neil Roberts	Bishop's appointment