**To           :              Headteachers; Chairs of Governors; Foundation Governors; Ex-officio clergy; Deputy Headteachers; RE Coordinators**

(and please forward widely to your contacts & networks)

**From     :               Jeff Williams**

**Date      :               8th June 2022**

**Re           :              Fortnightly bulletin and resources from the Diocesan Education Team**

Dear colleagues

**Book-burning and book-banning** for political or religious ‘reasons’, incredibly, still happens today.

When it comes to reading, I used to be laughed-at as a ‘purist’! Not in terms of what I read, but my preference for hard copies! Clearly I read a lot for work online, but in terms of books for both enjoyment, knowledge or challenge, I prefer physical, hard copies – even if it means that pages get damp while reading on a beach or mountain! My wife gave me a Kindle about 12 years ago – I have only read two short books on it……………….

For many years, due to ignorance, I also couldn’t understand the phenomenon of adults reading what I thought were **‘comic books’**. However, I learned they are properly called **‘graphic novels’** and, like traditional novels, have complex plots, well-developed characters and are engaging and evoke the full range of emotions. While searching my bookshelves this week for a particular biography, I came across one such adult graphic novel that I first read in the late 90’s. I re-read it instantly!

The author **Art Spiegelman’s Pulitzer Prize-winning two volumes of ‘Maus’** follows his father’s life, from youth and marriage in pre-war Poland to imprisonment in Auschwitz. Volume I ‘Maus – A survivor’s Tale : My Father Bleeds History’ is stark and unembellished. Volume II ‘Maus – and Here My Troubles Began’ gives the reader even more to consider. ‘Spiegelman portrays the Nazis as cats, the Jews as mice, the Poles as pigs, and the Americans as dogs. They are terrifyingly human’ (The Times). This is not a children’s book, but it prompted me to ask perhaps any ‘purists’ to consider buying and enjoying children’s graphic novels with your nieces, nephews, children, grandchildren.  We know that such books develop and reinforce vocabulary; skills like inferencing; good punctuation and grammar; and specifically help children with autism learn about emotions by observing and considering the images.

In a world where ‘fake news’ persists, where online partisan information can appear as factual, we all exist in a time that is far more complex in terms of our access to story, to learning through books/Kindles/websites.  In some countries and regimes, access to some books is denied. As educators and supporters of Church Schools, we have the privilege and responsibility of carefully engaging children and young people in reading a **significant and important collection of 66 books** (Biblos). We do this in an inclusive, respectful and sensitive way, choosing age-appropriate sections in an edifying manner. There are parts that under particular regimes would be censored; sentences that would be re-written; specific verses or chapters that would be removed. We however, approach some challenging passages in an informed and proper way.  And if you’ve never done so – why not consider reading a **21st Century Graphic version of The Bible** – there are adult and children versions aplenty!.

With best wishes for all you do, and who you are in your places of presence and influence.

**Jeff**

**Affordable School Uniforms :** The Children’s Society have been working tirelessly to have the law changed to support parents in purchasing school uniforms, and this has been achieved. They are asking if you might be able to prin / circulate the attached information poster please.

**Global Neighbours :** You are invited to a meeting at Milford on Sea CofE Primary School on **Monday 13th June** from **3:30 – 5:00pm** to learn more about the [Global Neighbours accreditation scheme.](https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/schools/global-neighbours-accreditation-scheme?msclkid=995222b3d15411ecb84902d99fec5470) Milford on Sea recently gained the gold award and will be sharing some of their journey and answering your questions about the award process. There will also be practical support with introducing global learning into your school, or embedding what you already do. Strand 3 of SIAMS looks at how we equip our pupils to be agents of change in their local communities and the wider world, and Global Neighbours is a great way to provide evidence for this and to celebrate the good work taking place in your school. For further details, or to book a place at the meeting, please contact Jane.Kelly@portsmouth.anglican.org

**Living Difference IV**

There will be a final opportunity to find out about the changes to Living Difference IV on **Thursday 9th June from 4:00 to 5:0pm**. We will discuss how to include the golden threads in your RE planning and ways to broaden the range of religions you teach. Please contact Jane.Kelly@portsmouth.anglican.org for further information and the Teams link. The revised syllabus will need to be in place by September 2022 for Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight schools, so please get in touch if you have any queries about the implications for your school.

**RE Network Meetings :** Please see the **attached flyer for details** of RE network meetings in Term 6. Most of these will be held in person and will be an opportunity to meet up with other RE leaders, carry out some work moderation, review the year and hit the ground running in September. If anyone will be taking over RE leadership in September, this would be an ideal opportunity to start thinking about your goals for RE in the new school year.

**Picture News Impact Awards :** Picture news are looking for schools that have made an impact in their local communities or the wider world. Please see the attached flyer for further details or go to the [Picture News website](https://www.picture-news.co.uk/blog/the-return-of-the-picture-news-impact-awards/) to download a pack.

**School Values – worship resources for 2022-23** I recently circulated by a separate email lots of resources for worship (including some linked to our Education Project and Worship on the theme The Trinity) but also the Values Worship Resources we will continue to produce – with a different set of values for next academic year. The overview is attached for ease. All of the resources are available on our websites.

**Agenda for Summer Term Briefings :**

1.**Jeff’s regional and national update** on matters emerging from meetings with the Regional Schools Commissioner; The National Schools Commissioner; the DfE; +Paul Butler (CofE Education Lead); Baroness Barron;

**2.Becoming Adoption & Fostering Friendly Schools and Parishes** : with inputs from one of our Secondary Headteachers who has significant experience of emergency and long-term fostering of teenage boys; the manager from a not for profit fostering charity with resources, training and support for schools; one of our Primary Headteachers who has developed a school approach to supporting adopted and fostered children that benefits the entire community.

**3.Academy Headteachers’ perspectives** : reflections from two of our Diocesan Headteachers leading academy schools to inform the Consultation on The Government’s White paper (item I covered at the last Briefings)

**4.Bereavement Support** for children and significant adults – a charity representative offering resources and training.

**Summer Term – Briefings - June :** Please book with my pa Sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org Thank you.

Wed 15 June evening  – 6pm online; Mon 20 June afternoon – 1.30pm online; Mon 27 June morning – 9.30am online; Thurs 30 June  – 2pm in person at St Katharine’s CofE Primary School, Rolls Drive, Southbourne, Bournemouth, BH6 4NA

**Academisation Consultation Meetings - July :** It’s important that places are **booked in advance** – please contact my pa Sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org Thank you

Monday 11th July,  10am-12pm, St Pauls Church, The Green, Tadley, Basingstoke, RG26 3PB; Wednesday 13th July, 10am-12pm – Cornerstone CofE School, Bader Way, Whiteley, Fareham, PO15 7JH ; Wednesday 13th July, 2.30-4.30pm – St Barnabas Church, Fromond Road, Winchester SO22 6DS specific focus on Small Schools - the most commonly used definition is ‘fewer than 210 = small school’ (i.e. smaller than one class of each year group) and ‘fewer than 105 = very small school’ (i.e. smaller than half a class of each year group). This is the definition which the CofE uses and the definition which the DfE seem to have last used in their guidance on academy funding.; Wednesday 20th July 6pm-8pm & Thursday 21st July 6pm-8pm – online

Jeff Williams

Director of Education

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