



Working alongside the Archbishop of York and his team, the Diocesan Children, Youth and Schools team is resourcing a variety of diocesan wide events and activities designed to support churches in their engagement with children and young people in our diocese.

The **Children of Light Festival** hopes to empower young people to grow in and share their faith and the Archbishop of York will be commissioning the children and young people as bearers of the light of Jesus in March. There are several events taking place as part of this festival, and we would like the churches in our diocese to consider ways to celebrate the commissioning of its children and to be able to use this opportunity to outreach to the community, including local schools.

The first event is an **art competition** exploring the theme of 'being light in difficult times'. The idea is that local competitions are organised by parishes, benefices or deaneries. Winning entries of these competitions are then sent into the Diocesan wide competition by 5th July. The prizes for this will be presented by the Archbishop of York during afternoon tea at Bishopthorpe Palace (when gatherings like this are allowed again), and then the entries will be exhibited around the Diocese during the Autumn.

You can offer prizes as part of your local competition and we recommend that you talk to local businesses who might be willing to support a community venture like this by donating a prize and being part of the judging panel. You might also be able to involve them and/or local artists in your judging panel.

Schools are under a great deal of pressure at the moment, and it is hard to foster our church-school relationship when we are unable to visit, but this is a great opportunity to work with your local school, and providing them with a home learning opportunity. Do talk to them about whether they want to co-ordinate entries from their pupils and present awards within the school.

In this pack you will find a sample letter that you can use to contact your local school, detailing the art competition being run and introducing the Children of Light Festival. You will also find a copy of the art competition details and a poster that may be reproduced in order to advertise the festival.

Things to consider

- *Is your local competition going to be parish, benefice or deanery based?*

This will depend on how many schools there are in your area and what kind of relationship you have with them, and what your capacity is. It might be worth talking to your Children of Light Festival Deanery Champion.

- *What deadlines will I need to set?*

Entries to the Diocesan competition need to arrive at Diocesan House by 5th July, so you need to have decided on your winners by 28th June to be able to send in 1st, 2nd and 3rd for each key stage by then. Depending on the number of entries judging might take a couple of weeks, particularly if you are unable to gather.

- *How do I publicise the event?*

There are downloadable samples of letters and a poster that you can download and overprint with your details. There are also logos etc you can use on facebook and websites, etc. Unfortunately we are only able to upload pdf documents to the website, so if you would like the originals to edit, then please [email Carolyn Edwards](mailto:carolyn.edwards@dioceseofyork.org.uk).

- *How do we judge the entries?*

We recommend that you put together a panel to decide and award a 1st, 2nd and 3rd for each of the three or four age ranges. Your criteria for judging should include expression of the theme as well as artistic ability. The easiest way to ensure fairness and protect address information, is to create a numbered list of the child's name, address, age, school/church, etc. and to only identify the picture/photo by its number.

- *Safeguarding and GDPR*

The person collecting the entries must be DBS checked and preferably have completed the Safer Recruitment Safeguarding training, as they might be handling children's addresses. Working with the school does make this easier, but if not then addresses can be kept on file until the winners have been announced and then dealt with as per your normal GDPR procedure.

- *Where do we send our winning entries?*

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