



*He answered, "Love the LORD
your God with all your heart
and with all your soul and with
all your strength and with all
your mind; and, Love your
neighbour as yourself."*

Luke 10:27



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York Diocesan Board of Education

Service Level Agreement

for the

Diocesan Family of Church Schools and Academies

2025 - 2027

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Message from the Diocesan Director of Education

The Vision of the York Diocesan Board of Education (YDBE) is that it 'seeks to build flourishing communities in its schools, parishes and homes where every child, young person and those who care for them has a transforming encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ'. This has been the rooting of our work over the last few years with our churches, schools and households and now sits within the Diocese of York's wider vision of Living Christ's Story (LCS). The vision of LCS is for all involved in the life of the Diocese to be more like the person of Jesus Christ; reach people we currently don't; grow churches of missionary disciples; and bring transformation to parish and diocesan finances and structures.

Locally each Church school or academy has the following as part of its ethos statement in its Instrument of Government or Funding Agreement:

"Recognising its Christian foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character according to the principles of the Church of England in partnership with the Church at Parish and Diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers all its pupils".

Therefore working together in partnership is something that lies at the very heart of a diocese. The high level of take up for the Service Level Agreement (SLA) over the last 2 years has been a real encouragement, with 99% of our schools and academies subscribing. It has been a privilege to have so many opportunities to work with you in developing your schools. We are grateful for your ongoing commitment to a scheme that supports all of the work we do in education as well as benefiting your own school, especially at this time of change in the way Church schools will be judged in SIAMs inspection.

In the Church of England's Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good, the Church set out its vision for education. Our core service and SLA continues to support this vision with education for wisdom, hope, community and dignity being at the heart of what we provide. The SLA helps to underpin a range of adviser visits; training (both for Staff and Governors); SIAMS, collective worship and RE support; wider school effectiveness advice and support, particularly for schools that are more vulnerable; headteacher recruitment and induction; and support on buildings, admissions, academy conversion and much more.

After reviewing the SLA offer at the latest Business over Breakfast meetings, the offer remains the same in terms of advisor support though we intend to enhance our training offer slightly by attempting to remove some of the barriers to attendance e.g. not holding BoBs meetings on a Monday.

Your membership of the SLA is an important part of making this happen and allows us to provide a Diocesan Education Team to support our schools. As we receive no public funding, our provision depends on contributions from the SLA; income derived from investments held by the YDBE; and, funding from the wider diocesan budget.

Therefore, I am pleased to say that we have been able to keep the increase in the cost of the SLA for 2025-27 to a minimum, mindful of the financial pressures faced by schools at this time. We have maintain a single charge for both maintained schools and academies, with the option of purchasing further training as required, and the cost of our support to schools and academies remains heavily subsidised. Through subscribing to the SLA for the next two years, you will help to commit your school to working in partnership with the whole family of diocesan schools and academies.

We hope that you will continue to support a SLA that does so much to provide the best possible education for the children and young people in our care as we work together in partnership.

Mari Palmer

Diocesan Director of Education
March 2025

The York Diocesan Board of Education

Set within the context of the wider diocesan vision of Living Christ's Story, the vision of the York Diocesan Board of Education (YDBE) seeks to build flourishing communities in its schools, parishes and homes where every child, young person and those who care for them has a transforming encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ.

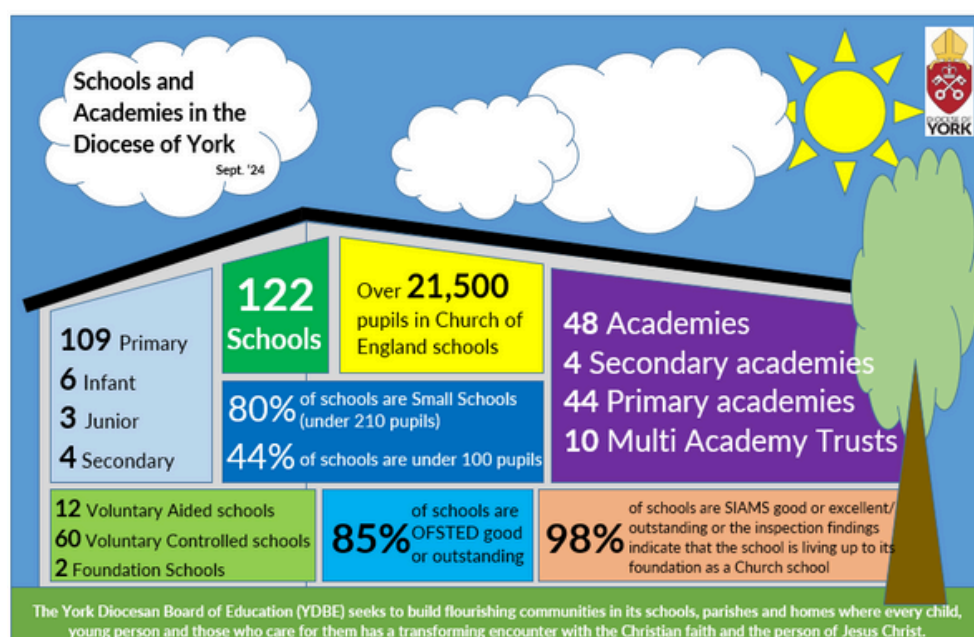
This vision is aligned to Growing Faith, the affirmation from the Church of England that, 'there is national commitment to achieve a significant culture change within the church so that every aspect of mission and ministry is seen through the lens of what it means for ministry with children, young people and households'.

Therefore, the mission of the YDBE is to work in partnership with schools and academies, in order to support you in your vital task of providing high quality education inspired by the Christian faith, infused with Christian values and displayed through a clear Christian vision.

Diocesan Boards of Education are statutory bodies with responsibilities for the promotion of Christian education and for Church schools and academies. In this Diocese, we aim to carry out those responsibilities in a spirit of Christian service to those who work and learn in schools and academies and to all those who seek to support them.

The YDBE aims to provide high levels of support and guidance to all Church schools and academies within the Diocese. This document outlines the range of services that we provide and the additional and enhanced services that we offer under our Service Level Agreement.

We firmly believe that the services we offer will help you to make a positive difference to the lives of the children and young people you nurture in schools and academies across the Diocese.



Introduction to the Service Level Agreement

The York Diocesan Board of Education offers the Service Level Agreement to all Church of England schools and academies within the Diocese of York.

Our aim is to provide a Service Level Agreement that is:

- Shaped to support the needs and mission of Church schools and academies;
- Supporting high quality education infused with and inspired by Christian values and vision;
- Professional, affordable and value for money;
- Transparent and equitable across different school sizes and type;
- Flexible and responsive to change;
- Sustainable and encourages genuine partnership working.

Those schools subscribing to the Service Level Agreement are entitled to expect the Education Team to:

- have a pastoral concern for the staff, governors and pupils of the school;
- provide quality advice and assistance in the areas listed;
- broker school improvement services and signpost school leaders to wider health and well-being support as required;
- signpost staff and governors to appropriate third parties to seek further guidance and support where necessary;
- deliver the services listed upon request and to a high standard;
- respond promptly and courteously to requests for assistance;
- act with discretion and safeguard confidentiality;
- be responsive to individual schools and their distinctive ethos;
- act with integrity and in accordance with Christian beliefs and values;
- promote at all times the Church of England foundation and Christian vision of the school;
- deal promptly and courteously with any complaints about the level of service provided.

In return, all Church schools and academies subscribing to the agreement are expected to:

- keep the Education Team informed of the current situation in relation to the service required and developments at the school;
- be available, given adequate notice, for meetings and/or visits to ensure progress is maintained;
- give adequate notice when requesting visits, meetings and training;
- pay due attention to advice given by the Education Team or wider consultants;
- give at least 48 hours' notice if they wish to cancel or re-schedule a visit;
- pay invoices promptly;
- act in the spirit of genuine partnership working.

'And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.'

Colossians 3.17

Our Core Support for the Church's Mission in Education

The York Diocesan Board of Education provides all its Church schools and academies with a range of services that form the core level of our support. These are free to all schools and academies at the point of delivery and include:

Leadership and Management

- The attendance of a member of the Education Team at meetings and interviews for the appointment of a headteacher/principal;
- Advice and support with headteacher job descriptions and person specifications, particularly with regards to the school's Christian character;
- The facilitation of an informal mentoring scheme for new headteachers or headteachers who are new to headship in a Church school or academy;
- Monitoring the performance of schools through published performance data; liaising with local authorities, MATs and the DfE on school improvement on behalf of schools and academies; and providing additional support to RI schools and those in Ofsted categories;
- Attendance at SIAMS and Ofsted inspection feedback and support for headteachers and governors during the inspection process (either in person or virtually).

Governance and Admissions

- Guidance and support on Admissions for Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools and those academies that were previously a Voluntary Aided or Foundation school;
- Guidance and appointment of Foundation Governors;
- Informal mentoring of new Chairs of Governors by facilitating partnership with more experienced Chairs if required or by direct support from the Education Team (as agreed);
- A twilight session in school (once in a 5-year SIAMS cycle) that provides governor training and support on effective governance. Designed for all Governors in Church of England schools and academies, these sessions will explore the distinctive nature of Church schools and the special responsibilities of school governors with a SIAMS focus, bespoke to the school's needs.

School Structures

- Liaising on changes to the status, size and age range of schools;
- Facilitating and assisting in the development of collaborations and federations;
- Providing induction training for Trustees in Multi Academy Trusts focusing particularly on Trust responsibilities for Church Academies.

Religious Education, Collective Worship and SIAMS

- A diocesan syllabus for RE for Voluntary Aided schools and formally voluntary aided academies;
- Collective Worship guidance and support for all schools and academies.

Our Core Support for the Church's Mission in Education, *cont.*

Training and Development

- Access to training courses, conferences and consultancy arranged by the Education Team and the wider Diocese;
- Telephone and video-conference support from the Education Team;
- A weekly email from the Director of Education with key information for Church schools and academies;
- Access to the YDBE website with information and guidance relating to Church schools and academies and current national education policy;
- Access to summary information on DfE and Ofsted updates from the Academy and School News Update Service.

School Buildings and Land Issues

- The management of property and trust matters for schools and academies in our roles as trustee/in support of site trustee and to signpost legal support relating to trust property issues;
- Support with School Condition Allocation (SCA) bids and co-ordination for approved projects (VA schools);
- Liaison with project architects, consultants and contractors related to approved projects (VA schools);
- Cash flow and administration support for approved projects (VA schools).

Please note that the TPM (Total Property Management) scheme is not part of our SLA but is offered to all schools and academies as a separate scheme delivered through DBE Services Ltd, of which the Diocese of York (through the York Diocesan Board of Finance - YDBF) is a member. Information on this scheme and its costs can be accessed via our website or by contacting Simon Quartermaine on 01904 699513 or at simon.quartermaine@yorkdiocese.org.

In addition, the Education Team will act on behalf of our Church schools and academies with:

- our national and regional diocesan networks;
- our close links with the National Society/Church of England Education Office and the wider Church;
- our contacts with the Department for Education, including the Regional Director;
- our association with the Teaching School Hubs and national NPQ providers;
- our partnerships with local authorities and MATs; and,
- our links with clergy across the Diocese.

We make no charge for any of these core services at the point of delivery, though the list of things for which dioceses are responsible continues to grow and these services are increasingly costly to deliver efficiently and to the high standard we would all expect.

Your membership of the SLA supports the whole diocesan family of schools and academies by enabling us to maintain a Diocesan Education Team with the capacity to meet your needs and provide both the core and developmental services that help you to flourish as Church schools and academies. It also provides a framework for the kind of routine regular contact between the Education Team and your school that builds relationships and enhances the personalised support we are able to offer you.

Headteacher Appointments

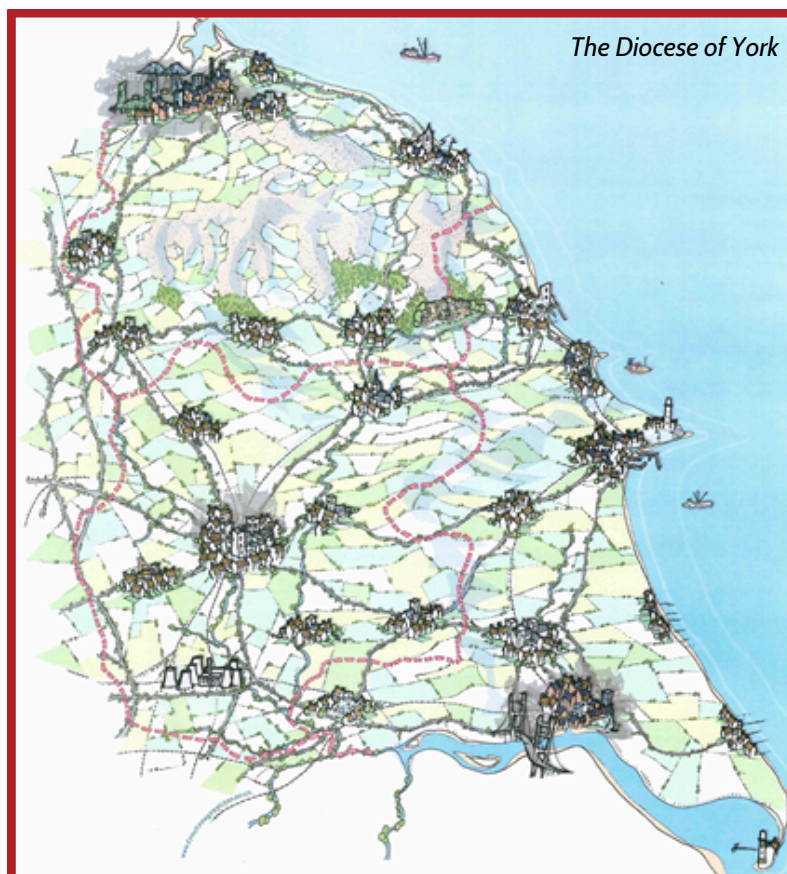
- including other senior leadership roles such as Chief Executives, Executive Principals and Heads of School

The York Diocesan Board of Education takes its commitment to supporting the process of appointing a new headteacher of its Church schools and academies very seriously and should always be involved in the appointment process.

As soon as the Governing Body are informed of the current headteacher's resignation, the Chair of Governors should contact the Diocesan Director of Education (via the Diocesan office) so he can nominate a member of the Education Team to join the recruitment process and advise the panel.

It is important that no dates are set for the recruitment process with Local Authority officers or MAT colleagues until the Director of Education has been consulted and agreed a date that a Diocesan representative can be present.

Appointing a headteacher is a time consuming process which requires many days of adviser time. This time is included by the York Diocesan Board of Education in our core service at no charge, providing that our Church schools and academies consult the Diocese at the beginning of the process. **Failure to advise the Diocesan Board of Education could result in additional charges being made in order to facilitate attendance at meetings at short notice.**



Service Level Agreement 2025 - 2027

Membership of our Service Level Agreement gives access to a range of additional support for schools in the form of visits and training along with a contribution to the core offer. The type and number of visits you will receive will depend on your chosen support package as described below.

All the York Diocesan Board of Education advisers have relevant knowledge and experience of Church schools and the SIAMS framework and leadership experience of working with schools and academies on broader school improvement issues.

The different types of visit we provide are:

Development Visits

A half-day visit* providing advice, support or training on any of the following relating to the Christian character of the school:

- Religious Education
- Collective Worship
- Spirituality
- Christian Vision – provision and impact
- Vision driven curriculum
- Governors and Governance
- Church school leadership, including subject leadership
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education including Valuing all God's Children

Advisers will undertake any necessary preparation prior to the visit and provide a written report after the visit.

Critical Friend Visits

A half-day visit* in school to provide an in-depth review of self-evaluation linked to the SIAMS schedule. It is good practice for the incumbent and/or another foundation governor to be present wherever possible.

The review will focus on:

- progress towards school improvement priorities (SIAMS)
- school self-evaluation judgements (SIAMS)
- a range of available data

Advisers will undertake any necessary preparation prior to the visit and provide a written report after the visit.

*Half-day visits are up to 3 hours; twilight sessions are up to 2 hours; and full day visits are up to 6 hours. Visits may be 'in person' or virtual dependent on the needs of the school and the focus of the visit.

Service Level Agreement 2025 - 2027

In addition, schools and academies buying into the SLA will receive:

Annual Autumn Term Meeting

This will be a virtual meeting using MS Teams with your named School Development Adviser to catch up at the beginning of the new school year and plan out the needs for the SLA over the following three terms.

Training

The following training and development opportunities are included as part of the SLA:

- Free access to Leadership Online training sessions for school leaders covering all aspects of SIAMS, DfE and Ofsted briefings;
- Free access to termly RE Online Network meetings for those who lead RE in school;
- Free access to an induction programme for new headteachers, including an adviser visit to school; an induction programme (training sessions and access to the online Bible Course for School Leaders); and the resources (and facilitation if required) for a commissioning service.

Governance Support

In addition to our core offer, schools and academies in the SLA will receive:

- Free access to all Governor Online network meetings for an unlimited number of governors. These hour-long sessions help support governors in Church schools from both a SIAMS and Ofsted perspective;
- Free access to development and 'digging deeper' training bundles of governors;
- Free annual online induction training session for all new Foundation Governors;
- Free online module for Foundation Governors in Church schools and academies to help them carry out their role as a governor.

Additional Services

The Diocese can also provide or broker the following services at an additional cost:

- **Headteacher Appraisal and Performance Management** – this will include a review of evidence and any other preparation; pre-meetings with the headteacher and review governors; provision of advice and support at the review meeting; a finalised, written review statement (if required). Interim visits can also be offered, subject to an additional charge.
 - Cost: £650 per cycle – schools sign up for the 2-year period and are charged for each yearly Performance Management cycle.

Service Level Agreement 2025 - 2027

Additional Services, *contd.*

- **RE Specific visits** – we can provide a RE specific focused day or half day to support subject leadership, curriculum design, implementation of the RE syllabus, including the use of Understanding Christianity, or to review general RE development work.
 - Cost: £225 for a twilight session, £330 for a half day and £550 for a full day.
- **Reviews of Governance** – we can broker associates who are able to conduct a full review of governance. This is often done following an Ofsted inspection or Local Authority Health Check and our associates will use nationally recognised frameworks to ensure objectivity and impartiality.
 - Cost: bespoke

All of the above are offered at an additional cost and reflect the time and preparation involved in such visits, including a written note of visit.



Service Level Agreement Packages

Schools are invited to select one of the following support packages. Please see pages 9/10 for a description of the different visit types.

Standard Package over 2 years	Enhanced Package over 2 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An annual school development visit.• A “Critical Friend” visit once within the 2-year period.• An annual Autumn Term virtual visit.• Training and governance support as indicated above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two school development visits each year.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ The two visits may be combined into one longer visit if appropriate – this is particularly useful for training purposes.• A “Critical Friend” visit once within the 2-year period.• An annual Autumn Term virtual visit.• Training and governance support as indicated above.

The sharing of visits and training in federations and multi-academy trust settings is encouraged, however this will be on the understanding that there will be a limited number of participants. Larger scale training sessions will not be included in this arrangement and are charged at the usual additional twilight, half-day or full day costs.

Service Level Agreement - Annual Charges

We were delighted that there was near 100% take up of the SLA by all 123 Church schools and academies over the last 2 years and we hope that this is an indication of the benefit schools and academies receive from being in the SLA.

Looking to the next period, we are asking schools and academies to commit again to a 2-year SLA (charged on an annual basis) to allow the Diocese to again plan its provision most effectively for our schools and academies. A 2-year SLA has the benefit of fixing the charge with schools and academies being invoiced for the beginning of each academic year. All charges are calculated on pupil numbers as of January 2025.

The annual charge is calculated on the ‘number on roll’ bands as shown overleaf, as this is generally considered by dioceses to be a fair way to calculate the annual contribution.

Service Level Agreement - Annual Charges, *contd.*

We do believe that the SLA continues to offer excellent value for money, particularly as the full commitment from Church schools and academies enables us to continue to provide the same level of advice and support and employ a full complement of advisers.

Size of School	Maintained Schools and Academies* (Annual Charge)	
	Standard	Enhanced
NOR 49 or under	£505	£640
NOR 50 - 149	£770	£990
NOR 150 - 299	£950	£1170
NOR 300 - 499	£1130	£1365
NOR 500 – 599	£1285	£1510
NOR 600 - 699	£1460	£1690
Over 700	£1805	£1995

Schools are charged on an individual school or academy basis (including those in federations or shared headship arrangements). Additional visits can be delivered above the SLA, subject to availability, at a cost of £225 for a twilight session, £330 for a half day and £550 for a full day.

The Diocese produces an annual training programme giving details and costs of training opportunities on offer – this is posted on the website www.dioceseofyork.org.uk on an annual basis. Some of this training is included free of charge to schools in the SLA and access to additional training is at a reduced cost.

***Additional information for academies**

Even though this is an agreement that relates to particular schools, the SLA is classified as a related party transaction between your Multi Academy Trust (MAT) and the York Diocesan Board of Finance Limited (who supplies the services under the DBE's SLA). MATs must report all transactions with the Diocese to the ESFA in advance of the transaction taking place, using the ESFA's on-line form, and, in cases where the ESFA guidance requires this, obtain ESFA's consent in advance of the transaction taking place. Further details in relation to the Diocesan context specifically can be found here: Declare or seek approval for related party transactions: guidance for church academy trusts - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). We would ask that you therefore speak to the MAT's Finance Director/equivalent prior to sign up to ensure that all relevant notifications are made, and any necessary consents are obtained, prior to committing to the SLA.

Please note: For the purposes of reporting the SLA transaction to the ESFA, the relevant supplier details are: York Diocesan Board of Finance Limited, Company number: 00225234, Registered Address: Diocese of York, Amy Johnson Way, York, United Kingdom, YO30 4XT.

Complaints Procedure

In the event of a school or academy being dissatisfied with any part of the Service Level Agreement, the first point of contact is the school's named School Development Adviser. If this does not resolve the issue, the school should approach the Diocesan Director of Education.



Please note: The services under this Service Level Agreement are provided by the York Diocesan Board of Finance (YDBF) Limited, a company limited by guarantee (Company Registration: 225234) with Charity Registration (England & Wales): 244976.

The registered address is: Diocese of York, Amy Johnson Way, York, United Kingdom YO30 4XT.