
Exeter Diocesan Board of Education Committee

The Exeter Diocesan Board of Education Committee (DBE) is a committee of the Diocesan Board of Finance. It is a statutory body responsible for Church of England schools and academies in the diocese.

VISION AND STRATEGY

For the triennium period of

January 2026 – December 2028

Education

DIOCESE
OF EXETER

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
IN DEVON



EXETER DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

DBE Vision – the why...

To enable all, through the love of God in Jesus Christ, to ‘live life in all its fullness’

(John 10:10b)

Nurture vision-inspired education, **Nourish** personal and spiritual growth, **Enable** connected communities that **Flourish**

The Board of Education and its officers will support our diocesan family of schools in seeking to:

Nurture vision-inspired education

We believe in a vision for education which is deeply Christian, serving the common good. We aim to support our multi-academy trusts, federations and schools as they develop, embed and live out their own Christian vision for the education of the whole person, embracing excellence and academic rigour within the wider framework of spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development. We aim to help schools nurture wisdom, hope, community and dignity in line with the Church of England’s Vision for Education.

Nourish personal and spiritual growth

We aim to support schools in providing a welcoming, inclusive and inspiring education in which all can grow and flourish. We are committed to ensuring that children and young people have a rich experience and understanding of Christianity and the opportunity and encouragement to be spiritually curious, exploring and developing their own worldview. We seek to enable our school communities to grow in prayer, providing invitational pathways to faith and discipleship whilst offering all members of those communities, whatever their personal beliefs, an encounter with Jesus Christ and with Christian faith and practice in the Anglican tradition in a way which enhances their lives.

Enable connected communities that flourish

Schools sit at the heart of our local communities and we aim to support their work with the wider community in serving the people of Devon with joy and making a difference in the world. We seek to develop strong, vibrant and sustainable partnerships between schools, homes, and local churches which celebrate diversity, honour human rights, encourage mutual responsibility, and build one another up in love. We aim to help schools become communities of courage, resilience and thankfulness. Taking our part in the mission of the Diocese of Exeter, summed up in our diocesan Vision and offered through Mission Communities as local networks of churches, church schools, chaplaincies, and other forms of Christian community life, we seek to serve the Christian hope for lives and societies transformed and flourishing together in the love of God.

Nurture, Nourish, Flourish

DBE Context and Membership

The DBE fulfils statutory responsibilities as set out in the DBE Measure 2021, the legislation that formalises the partnership between the Church of England and the State in the delivery of non-selective primary and secondary education.

The DBE Committee has a board comprising of the Bishop of Exeter; four members appointed by the Bishop; one member of the House of Clergy and one of the House of Laity, as elected by Diocesan Synod; and five co-opted members. Membership is as follows (from left to right):



The Right Reverend Dr Mike Harrison, The Bishop of Exeter; The Venerable Douglas Dettmer, Archdeacon of Totnes (Chair) and EDEN Director; Deborah Eveleigh, retired Exec-Headteacher (Vice-Chair) and EDEN Director; Alex Walmsley, Chair of Directors in First Federation Trust and a Director in the Ted Wragg Trust;

Zoe Batten, CEO of CAST and EDEN Director; The Right Reverend Moira Astin, the Suffragan Bishop of Crediton and EDEN Director; the Reverend Laura Selman, Vicar in the Sid Valley Mission Community; Matthew Shanks, CEO of Education Southwest, Member for St Christopher's Academy Trust and Director for Alumnis Academy Trust;

Anna Venables, lay member of Diocesan Synod; Dan Polak, Deputy CEO at TEAM Academy Trust and Director at DMAT; the Reverend Scott Angell, Assistant Curate in Honiton Mission Community, member of Diocesan Synod and Governor at Fort Federation; Jayne Peacock, Exec-Headteacher at West Exmoor Federation and SIAMS Inspector.

The DBE is supported in its work by three sub-committees with members drawn from the main board, leadership and governance from within schools and school groupings, Local Authorities and churches. The sub-committees are as follows:

- Standards and Ethos Group (SEG),
- School Organisation and Governance Group (SOGG)
- Resources and Assets Group (RAG).

The DBE also works closely with Exeter Diocesan Education Network (EDEN - Company number 07712752).

As a committee of the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF), the DBE's vision and strategy supports and has synergy with those of the DBF. [Pray Grow Serve 2035](#) is the diocesan 10-year strategic plan based on the Diocese of Exeter's vision to grow in prayer, make new disciples and serve the people of Devon with joy.

DBE Strategic Priorities 2026 – 2028

The DBE strategic priorities are as follows, with objectives shown on the following page:

- The DBE is responding positively and contributing to the changing educational landscape as a system leader
- Leaders foster a positive environment, creating sustainable practices that promote long-term success
- As anchor institutions, Church schools seek to serve the Christian hope for lives and societies transformed
- Governance is skilled, knowledgeable and effective
- Church schools are distinctively Christian and living up to their foundation as a Church school
- Creation Care and Climate Action planning is supporting the journey towards sustainability

The DBE is responding positively and contributing to the changing educational landscape as a system leader	Leaders foster a positive environment, creating sustainable practices that promote long-term success	As anchor institutions, Church schools seek to serve the Christian hope for lives and societies transformed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DBE and EDEN will review its own policies, guidance and practices in light of the Schools Whitepaper: Achieving and Thriving. • The DBE and officers contribute to shaping DfE and NSE policy and guidance, and implementation. • The DBE amplify the voice of Church schools / groupings with Church schools, speaking into the wider landscape and protecting their foundation. • The DBE, working with site trustees, (within charitable objects and law) seek to support local, well-researched and considered solutions for Nursery provision and Resource bases. • Schools and groupings are supported / appropriately challenged to come together in formal partnerships. • The DBE works with schools and school groupings to consider the sustainability of small schools. • New Church school opportunities are explored. • The DBE embraces technological advances to bring increased capacity and efficiency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DBE’s vision and strategy provide clear direction and a sense of shared purpose, and are regularly monitored to evaluate impact. • Officers of the DBE are supporting, challenging and championing schools/school groupings to nurture vision-inspired education, with Church of England schools conducted in accordance with the principles, practices and tenets of the Church of England. • A positive culture permeates settings enabling children and adults to flourish, with a focus on purpose, relationships and wellbeing. • Collaborative approaches support the exchange of professional expertise, build collective capacity and support sustainable progress / improvement. • The DBE offers leaders opportunities for spiritual refreshment and personal reflection and wellbeing. • The DBE highlights and supports schools / groupings in understanding their responsibilities to maintain and appropriately use site trustee assets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church of England churches and schools are working together to build community and belonging. • The DBE is supporting opportunities for school, church and home to come together, including through Growing Faith hubs / FLOURISH worshipping communities, and learning is shared. • Intentional opportunities and pathways to explore discipleship and faith are provided for children, young people and their families. • The DBE, working with site trustees, (within charitable objects and law) seeks to enable localities to meet the changing needs of children, young people and the community. • Children and young people are given a voice and leadership opportunities, as modelled in the diocese. • Equity, diversity, inclusion, justice and courageous advocacy are championed by the DBE and officers. • Churches and schools signpost or offer support to those who are most vulnerable or disadvantaged.
Governance is skilled, knowledgeable and effective	Church schools are distinctively Christian and living up to their foundation as a Church School	Creation Care and Climate Action planning is supporting the journey towards sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DBE and EDEN are fulfilling their responsibilities as set out in the DBE Measure (2021) and EDEN Articles of Association. • Academy trust governance is legally compliant with all levels understanding their strategic responsibilities and working collaboratively to fulfil these and advance the trust’s object. • DBE Officers offer support and guidance to maintained school governance and work with Local Authorities to ensure it is effective. • Governance is outward looking, monitoring, evaluating and triangulating impact, including through benchmarking. • The DBE promotes school / school grouping governance as a vocational opportunity and is pro-active in recruitment and placement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DBE’s officers support, challenge and champion schools to embed a theologically informed and contextually appropriate Christian vision, with approaches employed to make this a living reality. • Every child and adult is valued for their unique qualities and given opportunities to contribute to the whole and flourish. • Provision for religious and non-religious worldviews education provides pupils with an understanding of different beliefs/perspectives, with an emphasis on Christianity as a global world faith. • Collective Worship is the heartbeat of the school. • Prayer is visible, with wide invitational opportunities. • Spiritual development is planned and implemented. • Opportunities to encounter Jesus Christ and the Christian faith underpins the work of Church Schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools have an active sustainability lead. • The DBE is offering guidance to Church schools with their climate action planning and implementation to addresses adaption and resilience; biodiversity and nature; climate education and green skills; and decarbonisation and net zero. • The DBE will encourage all schools to switch to green energy tariffs at the point of contract renewal. • The DBE will prioritise SCA funding distribution for VA schools by giving importance to decarbonisation, net zero and resilience to climate change. • The DBE, in partnership with the NSE and site trustees, will seek to address barriers to solar and energy efficiencies measures. • New build design specification address sustainability. • The stewardship of nature is promoted by the DBE.

Objectives and Key Results

On a termly basis, objectives (falling within each of the 6 strategic priority areas) will be considered and key results agreed which will aid the move towards making the objective a reality. These key results will give direction and focus to the DBE, its sub-committees and its officers in the Education Team, and support monitoring and evaluation of impact.

The Education Team will work collaboratively to review success in achieving previous key results, identify the next objectives to be focussed upon and agree the key results to which we aspire.

At termly DBE meetings, success in meeting the key results or otherwise will be reported and the 'next steps' outcomes (key results) shared.

Reporting to Diocesan Synod

On an annual basis, the DBE reports to the Diocesan Board of Finance through providing an annual report to Diocesan Synod.