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## **BISHOP'S CHURCH & SCHOOL AWARD**

**This award is to recognise innovative working between church and school; engaging children, young people & the wider community in an extended Christian activity. Both parties need a positive commitment to & involvement in the activity, with the aim of drawing the church & school communities closer together.**

### **PROCESS**

**Upon receipt of application form, please follow guidance below. If any help is needed completing the application, or for further clarification, please contact your Church & Schools Officer (contact details on page 6.)**

1. The Vicar and Headteacher should agree that the school and church apply for this award.  
(i) PCC should discuss and look to consider applying for the award. (ii) Governing Body agreement is required.
2. Please supply any evidence you feel supports your application. (i.e. photographs, magazine articles, children's work, video footage, etc.)
3. Please send the completed application to your Church & Schools Officer (see address on page 6)
4. Your application will be acknowledged and if necessary a visit arranged by your Church & Schools Officer.
5. Closing date for applications 24th April 2015.

### **CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

**Your application will be judged on the following:**

- Level of joint working and shared commitment in the running of the club.
- Quality of core activity.
- Quality of spiritual input.
- Impact on relationship with local church & wider community.
- Increased interactions with families.
- Follows good practice & up-to-date safeguarding guidelines.

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## **CHURCH & SCHOOL ACTIVITY:**

**1. Please give details of the club/ activity; i.e. venue, frequency, times, dates, etc.**

At Beetham School we have two clubs that we would like to be considered in applying for this award:

a) *Edward Bear Club* - this takes place in Church on the first Thursday of each month for 45 minutes at the end of the school day. It has been running for 18 months.

b) *Easter Eggsplorers* - this after-school club focused on Lent and took place weekly. Sessions lasted one hour, and were focused on a simple programme of study put together collaboratively between the school and the church. It has provided a framework for additional clubs linked to Christian festivals in the future.

**2. Please give contact details for school, activity leader & link church person:**

Beetham CE Primary School, Stanley Street, Beetham, Milnthorpe, Cumbria. LA7 7AS

Activities leader: Ms W.E Nicholas (Headteacher)

Link Church Person: Rev Linda Lonsdale, Priest in Charge, St Michael's and All Angels Church, Beetham

**3. Who attends? (average numbers, ages, adults/ parents)**

- a. a) Edward Bear Club is currently attended by all Year One (13 children), supported by two members of staff. In addition, the club is advertised to the local community via the Parish magazine and typically attracts 3 / 4 pre-school aged children with their parents. The sessions are led by the Parish priest, with support from 2 / 3 church helpers.
- b. b) Easter Eggsplorers involved 12 children aged from 3 to 8 years. Each weekly activity was delivered by 2 class teachers, the Parish priest, and 4 / 5 church volunteers (who shared and rotated responsibility for the key activities)

**4. Please briefly outline the core elements of your activity:**

- a. a) Edward Bear Club follows simplified elements of an act of worship, in that it is aimed at teaching Christian Values to young people through age-appropriate stories, activities, songs and prayers. Each session focuses on a specific Christian value (linked to the values studied in school each term), and uses storytelling to initiate structured group discussion. The children then take part in a short craft activity (which they take home and discuss with their family), followed by a period of prayer and reflection. The club concludes with refreshments and social time for everyone involved.

- b. b) Eggsplorers Club 'led' children through Lent with a series of activities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Easter Story. Each week began with a snack to initiate discussion e.g. Pretzels, hot cross buns, which in turn introduced a theme. Stories, songs and craft activities were at the core, and a reflective period of questions / answers took place.

### **5. Please give details of the prayer support :**

At both clubs, prayers are adult-led by the Parish priest, with support from church volunteers. Prayer time, focused on the theme each week, allows children an opportunity to reflect on their experiences. The use of prayer pots made at Eggsplorer Club in the first week, provided a focus for children to continue to use prayer as part of their everyday life at home.

Adults who supported the club and shared in prayer time are now a familiar face in our weekly Celebration Assembly where they contribute by reading a prayer of their choice, which can be made available to share on our school's website. This has initiated a decision to create a dedicated Prayer / Reflection space on the website.

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## **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

### **1. Please give details of how the school and church(es) / other organisations partner in the activity:**

a. Edward Bear Club – this is planned and led by the Parish priest, with support from church volunteers, and in liaison with the Headteacher. Parents are informed via the school newsletter, and other families in the Parish whose children are on the Baptism register are sent a personal invitation (via the Parish Priest)

b. Eggsplorers Club – this was planned jointly by the Headteacher, Parish priest and members of the School Liaison Committee, with advice and guidance from Sarah Hulme (Diocesan Children's Worker)

### **2. Describe the Christian element(s):**

Both clubs have shared elements: shared worship time; Christian-themed craft; reflective prayer time and refreshments. For specific examples from each club, please see attached service sheet and club plan.

### **3. How does this enhance the spiritual growth in school life and link into the wider community?**

Both clubs link to the Christian Values at the heart of the school ethos, and bring members of the church and wider community into regular contact with the children and adults in school, regardless of family beliefs. As a result, there is a shared understanding of how we demonstrate

Christian Values in our everyday lives, be it at home, school or in church.

#### **4. How does it link in with the parish vision/ MAPping and the diocesan vision to ‘grow disciples of all ages’?**

Beetham PCC reviews its Mission Action Plan at each monthly meeting, and evaluates progress. A priority in the 2014-15 plan is building stronger links with school through the following:

- Rota for prayers in weekly worship time
- Strong and pro-active presence on the Governing Body
- Edward Bear Club
- After- school clubs
- Maintaining Baptism contacts
- Specific events (e.g. celebrating festivals in the Christian calendar / fundraising events)

To ensure thorough and regular evaluation, and to ensure effective planning of future activities, a school liaison committee meets together termly, made up of school staff, governors and members of the church. Together, we are working with the children to give / reinforce a Christian education. Frequent use of the church for activities means it is a comfortable and familiar place for them, and they have a sense of ownership and belonging. In turn, the children are keen (and proud) to bring their families into church, in a role-reversal of historical church attendance, where children become involved via parent involvement.

#### **5 How often does the PCC/ wider church receive an update?**

Details of all activities which involve a partnership between school and church feature in the ‘School Corner’ article written by the Headteacher, which is published in the monthly Parish Magazine. This publication is distributed, free of charge, to everyone in the Parish and all families at school. It contains invites to school events including school worship taking place in church and acts as an attractive and positive update for everyone involved in our school, church and village community. In addition, the Headteacher writes and presents a report for the PCC at its Annual General Meeting. Members of the PCC attend our weekly Celebration Worship along with families and governors and share a prayer with everyone as part of the workshop. More indirectly, details of school activities are presented to the Governing Body, the minutes of which are freely available for all to read.

The school has a display area in the church which is updated regularly and provides a visual reference point for all church visitors to find out and be kept up to date with the activities that take place in school.

## **6. Who is responsible for training & safeguarding?**

Both the school and church have strong safeguarding policies which are regularly evaluated and updated. All adults are required to have DBS checks at enhanced level, the results of which are monitored by the Headteacher. All volunteers from the church who work in school are briefed by the Headteacher about the Child Protection Policy and Safe Working Practices for Adults in School. Risk assessments are in place where necessary (for example when children access the bell tower), and all activities are evaluated with amendments to policy if necessary.

Training is the joint responsibility of the Headteacher and the Parish priest. Informal training in the form of sharing expertise and experience occurs within the School Liaison Committee or during planning meetings for organised activities.

The Headteacher completed the Christian Leadership Course in 2014 and as a result has worked with both staff and church members to further develop the Christian ethos and distinctiveness of the school. Governors receive training during the termly School Improvement Meetings, where they receive information and take part in workshops/discussions focussing on the development of our church school.

## **7. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the work you do together?**

The school and church are closely linked and enjoy a warm and supportive relationship. Regular visits from the Parish priest and the wider church community ensure the children develop positive relationships, and feel pride and 'ownership' of their church. Many see it as an extension of the classroom. Although we have focused on two activities for the purpose of this application, it is important to acknowledge the regular and wide-ranging events that take place:

- School is closely involved with services throughout the year. Most recent examples include children working with church volunteers to make posies for Mothering Sunday, and a parade to church following a donkey from the local farm park as part of Easter celebrations.
- Four members of the church visit school each week to deliver one-to-one support programmes for individual children. The volunteers have been trained and provide additional activities in reading, basic maths skills, spelling and writing. This work is assessed termly and has shown that it makes a considerable impact on progress for the children involved.
- Using the liturgical colours, all pupils in school, together with their siblings, were invited to contribute to three Worship Table cloths, which are used in daily Worship. The cloths have been blessed by the Priest during our Ash Wednesday Service in church or during our daily Worship Time.
- The school has a permanent and regularly updated display in church, which showcases the work the children do. It is clear from comments in the church's visitor book that this display is well received.
- School fundraising events are supported by the church and vice-versa. An example is the village Duck Race and fete which attracts visitors from a wide area, and raises significant funds for both church and school. On a smaller scale, but of equal

importance, the church community assist with school projects by donating time and / or materials.

- As part of our after-school club programme, once again the positive relationship between church /school is essential for success: Gardening Club is assisted by two keen and knowledgeable members of the church, and last term the church hand bells club offered to help run a club at school. Both clubs are over-subscribed, offered free-of-charge, and are set to be a permanent fixture on our programme of activities.

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## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**Please list the additional information that you are providing to support this application.**

**Please find attached:**

- 1. Sample service sheet from Edward Bear Club**
- 2. Outline scheme of work for Eggsplorer Club**
- 3. Sample risk assessment for Bell Tower**
- 4. Blessing used for Assembly cloth with photographs**
- 5. End of Year School Blessing**
- 6. Example of Reflection time at Eggsplorer Club**
- 7. A small selection of photographs showing examples of the diverse activities that have taken place this academic year**
- 8. An example of the School Corner section of the monthly Parish Magazine**

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## **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

**Please visit the Church & Schools section of the website:-  
[www.carlisediocese.org.uk](http://www.carlisediocese.org.uk)**

**Or contact:-**

**Emma Richardson & Sarah Hulme, Church & Schools Officers The Board of  
Education Church House West Walls Carlisle Cumbria CA3 8UE**

**As this is a job-share post we cover the following Deaneries:**

**Deaneries Church &**

**School Officer**

**Contact details**

Brampton, Calder, Carlisle, Derwent & Solway

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## **CHURCH & SCHOOL RESOURCES:**

**Here are some suggested ways in which Churches & Schools can work innovatively together to set up & grow their activity:**

1. See the Church & School FAQ's <http://www.carlisle-diocese.org.uk/schools-and-young-people/church-and-schools/church-and-schools-faq.html> for any further help starting a club. 2. For up to date information about safeguarding, training & CRB's, please see the diocesan website: <http://www.carlisle-diocese.org.uk/people-and-structures/committees/safeguarding.html>
3. Establish a Prayer/Support Group for the School, for more information see [www.prayerforschools.org/](http://www.prayerforschools.org/)
4. Hold a monthly prayer event/group in school for governors, parents, clergy and teachers to join together.
5. Set up a 'Prayer Space' in school, for more information see [www.prayerspacesinschools.com/home](http://www.prayerspacesinschools.com/home)
6. Include the school in the parish Mission Statement and Mission Action Planning process.
7. Ensure there is feedback from Governors and a regular 'school' item on the PCC agenda.
8. Hold termly or half-termly 'open' clubs, to encourage and build links with those parents who do not usually attend the club. 9. Church & school liaise over dates and planning of 'big events' (fêtes, fund-raising etc.) - perhaps including some joint events.