

Peterborough Diocese Board of Education Affiliated School Status



DBE/14/441

Affiliated School status builds on existing relationships and good community practice. It makes a statement to parents and the wider community about a school's values and aspirations. It speaks of teamwork and interdependence. It gives the school access to the wider community of the Diocese that many have found enriching to school life.

Affiliated school status operates in a number of dioceses. Peterborough Diocesan Board of Education has decided to offer affiliated status to schools (and academies) who would like to be more closely associated with their local Anglican Church and the wider community of the Diocese. Affiliation is open to schools in both the primary and secondary phase.

What is an Affiliated School?

Affiliated schools are community schools which have a close relationship with the diocese and their local parish, a link that has been confirmed by an informal, time-limited agreement.

A requirement of Affiliation is that the school includes a clear statement of its commitment to Christian values, in line with the Diocesan ethos statement in its statement of aims or mission statement:

"... in partnership with the Churches at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an 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 to all its pupils."

Affiliation is only appropriate where there is already a good and productive working relationship between a community school and its local church or a community school and a church school.

What are the benefits of Affiliation?

- it is a clear statement that the school identifies with, embraces and promotes Christian standards and values. This sends a clear message to parents and the wider community;
- it is a recognition that the school values the development of body, mind and spirit and that a spiritual dimension is part of the essence of being human;
- it is an indication that the school places emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural education which is part of the Ofsted inspection framework;
- it develops or builds on existing positive links between the school and the local Anglican church or churches;
- it recognises the positive and beneficial relationship between the school and local clergy and encourages further development;
- it opens up the possibility of developing relationships with the wider Anglican community;
- it is a tangible recognition of shared spiritual values between school and church whilst also recognising the distinctive contribution of people of other faiths or no faith;

- it makes clear the importance of faith, worship and spiritual life in the corporate life of the school;
- it benefits the pupils/students and their families by strengthening existing links between school and church life;
- it is seen as significant for a local parish church. The clergy and congregation will welcome the desire of a school to be more closely linked and will seek to build the relationship sensitively;
- newly appointed clergy will become aware of the Affiliated status of a school and respond accordingly;
- it is popular with many parents as they like the clear message it gives about a school's open attitude to wider community links and the emphasis on values, worship and spiritual life;
- many parents value the church link and the ethos and values that this implies
- it benefits the school by inclusion in the network of Diocesan Church Schools, with access to the support services and training provided through the Diocesan Education Team;
- for a community school federated with a church school, it adds a deeper dimension to their relationship;
- for secondary schools, it provides a natural progression from church primary to church linked secondary education;
- it can be a practical demonstration of diversity of provision, as a way of being distinct from other local schools.

What affiliation is not

- It does not give the Diocese any power or influence in the school's executive functions.
- It does not give the Church the right to promote Christianity within the school.
- It does not provide access to additional funding.
- It is not a means of seeking to poach pupils from other schools.

What has to be done prior to affiliation?

There are various stages in the process as set out below:

- begin by raising the possibility of Affiliation in conversations between headteacher, senior staff, governors and local clergy and seek agreement to consult and explore further;
- inform staff of the possibility and invite comment;
- arrange a meeting with the Diocesan Director of Education to explore opportunities in some depth. Invite the local clergy, Chair of Governors and others as appropriate;
- prepare a document that sets out the perceived benefits to your school;
- inform the wider school community. The greater the number of people who understand the concept and the benefits, the stronger the partnership will be. The diocese can provide a specimen letter for parents (Appendix 1) to help in the consultation process;
- when the governing body, after full discussion and consultation, is satisfied that there is sufficient interest to proceed with Affiliated status, pass a resolution to draw up an

Affiliated Scheme Agreement, endorsed by local clergy and the diocese. This agreement can be adapted as required from the specimen Agreement Form (Appendix 2).

How does a school benefit from affiliation?

- Affiliated schools receive information on training, support, resources and activities provided through the Diocesan Education Team;
- Affiliated schools have access to special training opportunities to strengthen RE and Worship;
- the school will be able to buy into the Diocesan Service Level Agreement offering support for admissions, RE, Collective worship, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education and governance and curriculum training opportunities;
- pupils are invited to the annual Schools' Day at the Cathedral;
- the partnership will be seen as a trigger for new discussions between school and local Anglican church(es) for future co-operation and support.

How does a school celebrate affiliation?

- it is recommended that a governor be appointed as "Link Governor" to the Diocese for the duration of the Affiliation;
- decide whether to have a launch event. The Diocese may be able to arrange for one of the Bishops to be present;
- decide what would be the most appropriate outward sign of the new status. This could be, for example, a logo on school notepaper, a banner or a plaque.

How long does affiliation apply?

- the Affiliation Agreement lasts initially for four years
- the Affiliation is renewable
- it can be reviewed by the headteacher, the governing body, local incumbent or the Diocese at any time. Such points would be a change in headship or a major change in the composition of the governing body.

Appendix 1: Specimen letter to parents

Dear Parent/Carer

As a school we are constantly looking to ensure that we are offering the best possible educational opportunities for all our children. In our modern materialistic world with an emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and skills it is all too easy to forget that as human beings we are made up of body, mind and spirit and that the spiritual side of our nature needs to be nourished and developed if we are to become well-rounded human beings. In considering how we currently make provision for the spiritual development of our pupils and how we can enhance this, governors are currently considering affiliation to the Diocese of Peterborough.

Peterborough Diocese Board of Education offers affiliated status whereby community schools can take advantage of the resources offered by the diocese – governor training, staff professional development, resources, advice and guidance on religious education and collective worship. We believe that by establishing this link, this will better enable the school to provide more effectively for the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of our pupils.

Should you have any comments you would wish to make we would very much welcome hearing from you. You can contact us by writing to the Chair of Governors c/o the school.

We will in due course confirm the outcome of our discussions.

Headteacher

Appendix 2: Specimen Affiliation Agreement Form

Draft (to be customised as appropriate)

Affiliated Schools Partnership

Agreement between

..... School,

..... Church

and the Diocese of Peterborough

As a school we will as appropriate:

- build upon our existing relationship with the local Anglican Church/ Churches (name/s), clergy and congregation, for the benefit of our pupils, families and the wider community;
- value and seek to develop high standards of Religious Education, Worship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education;
- make reference in our Prospectus of our Affiliation and links with the local church and diocese;
- seek to celebrate and develop the contribution of faith to our school life
- nominate one of our governors to be a 'link governor' for the diocese/parish, who will seek to maintain and build the relationship;
- make mention as appropriate of our affiliated status in publicity material.

As a diocese we will:

- place as central the building of personal relationships with the school and local church(es);
- through the service level agreement, provide access to CPD opportunities, our Governor Training programme and officer support;
- make periodic visits to the school, in the spirit of a shared enterprise, upon invitation from the headteacher;
- offer the support of the Bishop's Vicar for Schools during a clergy vacancy.

As a local church community we will:

- seek to support and enrich the spiritual life and worship of the school in consultation with the headteacher and the governing body;
- maintain and develop our existing strong links with the school in close co-operation with the headteacher and the governing body;
- support the school in practical ways in consultation with the headteacher;
- regularly pray for the school and make available individual prayer and other support as requested;
- support events organised by the school and help publicise these when possible;
- make mention of the school’s affiliated status on any ‘Statement of Needs’ at the time of the appointment of new clergy;
- offer to set up a Chaplaincy whereby the incumbent or other mutually agreed person, can be available to pupils, staff and parents, to provide spiritual support in times of need, serious illness, bereavement etc, subject to the setting of protocols and the availability of time.

Together – school, parish and diocese, we will:

- seek to support each other in the spirit of Christian fellowship and service of young people;
- take opportunities for networking among ourselves;
- share information and extend invitations to each other’s events;
- seek to find innovative ways to work together and learn from each other, in keeping with the spirit of this Agreement.

Signed:
Headteacher

.....
Chair of Governors

.....
Incumbent/Clergy

.....
Diocesan Director of Education

This Document formally sealed (date)