

Leadership, management and governance

The headteacher

- 8.1** Church school headteachers are spiritual and academic leaders of the school. Excellence in headship requires visionary, inspired leadership and management centred on the school as a worshipping community, where educational and academic excellence for all pupils is pursued in a Christian context. Although not formally recognized as such by the Church, it is arguable that since Church school headship involves religious and spiritual leadership, to the Christian it comprises a form of lay ministry, which is complementary to the Church's ordained ministry.
- 8.2** It is the creation of a distinctive Christian community that marks out the role of a headteacher in a Church school. It is a particularly challenging and demanding role, and its purpose cannot be achieved by command. It is rather something that has to be achieved by the headteacher living the values that she or he seeks to establish and winning a willing acceptance of those values by staff in particular, but also by children and parents, all of whom, even though it may not be explicitly recognized, will relate individually to the headteacher.
- 8.3** There is no one right model of leadership. Headteachers need to respond to time and circumstance, capitalizing on their inherent strengths and seeking support from colleagues in their areas of weakness. Each will develop a distinctive style. In view of the special dimension of leadership in a Church school identified in the preceding paragraph, we think it may be helpful to offer an insight into elements within this distinctive leadership which has been suggested to us during our work.
- 8.4** This suggestion is that one possible approach to understanding the headteacher's leadership role is to see it as encompassing three main aspects. Firstly, the headteacher can be viewed as a *servant*-leader, working to encourage the educational and spiritual growth of pupils. Secondly, the headteacher has a pre-eminent role in setting the overall tone of the school, and in ensuring that Christian values permeate the whole life of the school. This role could be described as *transformational* leadership, in that the headteacher will take the lead in nurturing the development of a Christian community, encouraging its spiritual growth and awareness and offering a clear and recognizable sense of Christian purpose. Thirdly, the headteacher will provide *invitational* leadership, welcoming all into the school, offering reassurance and affirmation, recognizing the value of individuals, and inviting the school community to share the good news of the kingdom. We do not offer these insights in a prescriptive sense, but as a basis for reflection by those preparing for, or reviewing, their own personal approach to leadership.

8.5 Headteachers need support in their roles, both through prayer and in practical terms. We know that the short induction programmes offered by some dioceses for new headteachers are very much appreciated by them. **We would suggest that where it is not already the practice to do so, dioceses should arrange for new headteachers to come together to review their experiences after, say, three months, and that if they wish it an experienced headteacher is asked to be a guide, counsellor and friend for the first year. There may be occasions when these mentoring arrangements can be worked out on an ecumenical basis.** At the secondary level, the Association of Anglican Secondary School Headteachers provides a valuable forum for fellowship and the sharing of experience and good practice. One diocese in its comments has advocated the creation of a parallel organization for primary school heads.

Governors

- 8.6** We have stressed in Chapter 6 the key role of the governing body in developing respect for teachers and securing support for them from parents. A strong, well-led governing body, supportive of the school, its teachers and its mission makes an important contribution to the school's well-being and effectiveness. The foundation governors will have an especial care for the school's Christian character. With the increased devolution of responsibilities from local education authorities to governing bodies, governors' duties are onerous. There has been much public comment on the need to reduce the administrative burden on teachers. It applies with equal force to governors and was the source of comment in the responses to consultation. We therefore welcome the measures government has announced to cut back the flow of paper to schools. It is fundamental to good governance and to the willingness of busy people to accept the responsibilities of governorship. **Cutting back the flow of paper into schools is a matter which we recommend the Church of England Board of Education should keep on its agenda in its dealings with Government on behalf of governors and teachers, as relevant both to the effectiveness of schools, as well as to the recruitment, retention and motivation of teachers and governors.**
- 8.7** In governing bodies this applies in particular to the Chairs for whom the time commitment is particularly demanding. We have commented in paragraph 7.10 on the issue of whether the incumbent should take the chair. The time commitment must be a factor in the decision, and may be a compelling one where the incumbent serves several parishes with schools. This is especially relevant in rural areas.
- 8.8** For those coming into school governorship some short, practical training through the diocese is a great help and we note that this is the practice in a number of dioceses. With the busy lives people lead this will be as much as is possible for most governors. But for some, and we hope an increasing number, a more formal programme to develop skills and knowledge will be welcome, leading to formal recognition. This may come from a National Vocational Qualification, but there have been recent moves to create a version of the Church Colleges' Certificate in Church Schools for Church school governors providing a well-structured course of training which goes beyond immediate utility. It is a useful response to those willing to

commit time and energy to train as a governor that this should be recognized by an award that has value in academic and employment terms. Set at this academic level, for some it could serve as an access course to higher education. For those at a distance from a college, the provision of material through distance learning, including web-based modules, could be particularly helpful. We believe that in collaboration with LEAs etc., **dioceses should encourage and facilitate practical training for governors**, and for foundation governors in particular, and encourage the taking up of the Church Colleges Certificates by those seeking a high level of training, carrying with it formal recognition.

8.9 When there is difficulty in filling governors' places, especially from candidates with a Christian commitment, we suggest seeking candidates from elsewhere in the diocese, at least on a temporary basis. This strategy would not only assist in safeguarding the nature of the foundation of the school, but would also widen the sphere of participation across the diocese, creating a greater sense of involvement and ownership.

8.10 The prime personal responsibility of the Chair is the effective conduct of business by the governing body. We recommend therefore that the Chair is amongst those always consulted by dioceses about filling vacancies so that the needs of the governing body in terms of skills balance, values, experience and ethnicity are fully taken into account. We understand that this is not the invariable practice and consultation showed that not all dioceses agree with this recommendation, arguing that the consultation should be with the incumbent, the PCC and foundation governors, or that consultation with the Chair may be inappropriate. We are not arguing, however, that the Chair's view should carry the day, but that the Chair should be amongst those consulted.

The role of Diocesan Boards of Education (DBEs)

8.11 The functions of DBEs are stated in the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 1991 and are to:

- promote education in the diocese, being education which is consistent with the faith and practice of the Church of England;
- promote religious education and worship in schools in the diocese;
- promote Church schools in the diocese;
- advise governors and trustees on any matters affecting Church schools;
- promote cooperation between the Board and other groups and agencies concerned with education in the diocese;
- undertake functions assigned to the Board by the Diocesan Synod.

It should be noted that the Measure provides for a structural partnership between the Government and the Church through the DBEs.

8.12 The Measure, to a great extent, gives commonality to the core work of DBEs in their involvement with schools, but the nature, range and scope of the work of individual Boards bring a measure of complexity that inhibits adoption of a single model. A survey made in 1995 by Culham College

Institute pointed to an ‘increasing differentiation between schools and non-schools work, with the former operating increasingly under a different set of rules and in a different environment in terms of both market and finance’. This reflected a trend away from holding together in dioceses statutory and voluntary education work. Some Diocesan Boards regret this trend and one has stated quite strongly its view that a single Board of Education and training with responsibility for adult, youth, children and continuing ministerial education as well as schools and further education makes possible real collaboration and reciprocal insights. By retaining the traditional association between statutory and voluntary work, the Board and presumably the diocese would be helped to think of the school and parish as an organic whole. **We would encourage dioceses to reflect on the benefit to be gained from a single broad structure**, not least in the context of a society committed to the practice of life-long learning where schools have the potential to become family learning centres. As one diocese put it, ‘We’re powerful connected, wasted apart.’

- 8.13** The work of the DBE needs to be fully integrated into the strategy of a diocese. One diocesan director of education (DDE) in evidence has warned of a danger that ‘Church schools [might] become a technical enterprise that a diocese is grateful that somebody “fixes” on its behalf’. This danger could become a reality with the increasing legislative framework and its plethora of attendant codes of practice, circulars and statutory instruments requiring a greater range of technical understanding and attention by DBE officers. To counter this possibility, it is essential that the diocese recognizes this work as an integral part of an overall strategy for seeing Church schools as central to their mission. In the light of these comments, **we suggest that dioceses review their present arrangements for education and training.**
- 8.14** The other essential partners of the DBEs are the local education authorities, the Church of England Board of Education and the DfEE; a point that has been reflected again and again in the evidence presented to us. There is strong recognition by DDEs of the necessity to work very closely with their local education authority colleagues and of the value they place on their professional advice, support and collaboration. Reciprocally the responses by the local educational authorities and the DfEE show how warmly the level of collaboration that has been established by dioceses is welcomed.
- 8.15** The resourcing and staffing of DBEs becomes an immediate issue if our recommendations on the expansion of provision are to be successfully implemented. A major increase in provision will have a commensurate increase in the level of work generated and the technical expertise needed to carry it out effectively. The financing of the work of DBEs is complex, possibly requiring a separate piece of research, but evidence, both written and verbal, from a number of sources, including headteachers, calls for more resourcing of DBEs in order to maintain and strengthen further their quota of staff that will be credible, experienced and professional. This is particularly relevant when an expansion of school provision is taking place (see Chapter 5).
- 8.16** With increased resourcing, more focused accountability may be required. The evidence received does not present a clear picture of accountability processes. However, we welcome the development of a model for this

by a small group of diocesan directors of education. This is based on self-evaluation and review, enhanced by external evaluation. Some argue that dioceses are too disparate a group for a common review model for use across all dioceses. However, using the framework of the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure mentioned above, some areas of commonality may be identified. **We suggest that, for the purposes of credibility and authority, such a model for accountability could be used nationally, with modification where necessary, and put into practice in consultation with National Society/Church of England Board of Education officers. This is a matter we invite dioceses to consider when they next review their arrangements.** In making this suggestion we would emphasize that the purpose of accountability of this kind is to assist hard-working people to stand back from day to day pressures and make a dispassionate assessment of their own stewardship, with external evaluation offering encouragement and insights as well as identifying areas for potential improvement.

- 8.17** To obtain the best use of scarce resources **the sharing of specialist and technical expertise by DBE officers on an inter-diocesan level has also been suggested in Chapter 5, possibly on a regional basis, and possibly, as appropriate, extending to Roman Catholic dioceses.** We illustrate how this might be realized for the proposed expansion of secondary provision incorporating the consequent expertise needed for such an enterprise in paragraph 5.27. It could also be a vehicle through which the collaborating dioceses support a diocese with a school in difficulty. Regional teams could provide the initial pool of technical support needed by diocesan directors of education (DDEs) as appropriate to their circumstances. In turn, the respective DDEs will have the essential local knowledge and credibility at both diocesan and local education authority level. We believe that the synergy created by such combined forces may well provide a model for future work in other areas of the DBEs' range of responsibilities. **We recommend the creation of such capabilities by groups of dioceses.** But we add, it is important that any such capability, and especially a regional task force, works through and in support of the dioceses concerned: it must in no way become an alternative source of support and advice to the diocese.