



SDBE SPOTLIGHT

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JUNE REFLECTION

The Beatitudes kick off the most significant sermon ever given – Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. The wisdom they offer is challenging and counter-intuitive as they call ‘blessed’ those who we would not naturally consider blessed. The poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek and so on are all named in Jesus’ “most blessed” list. His list is not about those whose lives are fortunate in a worldly sense, but instead about those who God draws near to. Their “blessed” state is not about having good things but about having God things. We too are blessed as we open ourselves up to God and allow God to draw near to us in our lives.

Reflection from Rev Sarah Simpson, Immanuel and St Andrew’s Church, Streatham

COMING SOON ...

TRAINING OPPORUNITIES

25 June	Handling Complaints in Schools
25 June	The Role of Governors in Headteacher Performance
27 June	Diocesan Primary Religious Education Subject Leaders' Summer Conference
05 July	Secondary Headteacher Meeting
11 July	Secondary RE Subject Leaders Network Meeting

SDBE WELLBEING CONFERENCE

Jesus said “Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest”. There are fewer people in the world of education heavier laden than headteachers and school senior leaders. Finance, staffing, buildings, policies and procedures... and that’s before we focus on the pupils!

It was with this in mind that the SDBE held its first wellbeing conference in the middle of June. Receive, reconnect and refresh were the watch-words as headteachers and deputies were welcomed to Whitelands College, Roehampton University.

The conference opened with a welcome from the College Chaplain, Rev Dr Daniel Eshun. This was followed by a keynote presentation from Prof. Cecilia Essau. Prof. Essau is an expert in Developmental Psychopathology at the University of Roehampton and has created “Super Skills for Life”, a research-based resource to increase resilience in children and young people. The keynote was followed by an “interesting and thought provoking” panel discussion reflecting on how resilience principles can be used to help ourselves. The gathered wisdom in the room provided a rich opportunity for sharing. Representatives from The Association of College and School Leaders and the National Association of Head Teachers also shared their observations.

Workshops included managing a heavy workload and Space Makers, a contemplative toolkit designed for schools. One delegate commented that their workshop was “a beneficial reminder to stand by the principles that we hold dear and know we are right for the benefit of the children we serve”. The day was rounded off by Eucharist in the College chapel, followed by a reception on the veranda, overlooking the grounds and Richmond Park as the sun came out!

We hope to be back in June 2025. So, if you are reading this as a senior member of school staff in a diocesan school, we look forward to seeing you next year!



SIAMS WEBSITE REVIEWS

Our guide to support school leaders with reviewing school websites with a particular focus on Christian vision is now available on [our website](#) or through your Education Adviser. The document is designed to be a starting point and support a reflective process that establishes whether the detail you provide ‘shuts down’ rather than ‘opens up’ lines of enquiry. Whilst this is useful for inspection purposes, it is also helpful to consider how your website is the window on your school for all visitors.

SCHOOL FOCUS

TENISON'S THROUGH TIME 1714 - 2024



ARCHBISHOP TENISON'S SCHOOL CELEBRATES ITS 310TH YEAR!

An exhibition has been held at the Museum of Croydon celebrating the 310-year history of Archbishop Tenison's School, Croydon. The exhibition provided an insight into the school's foundation and its history from 1714 to the present day. A Tenisonian tradition is that once a year the entire school gathers to celebrate the anniversary of its foundation, the life of the founder Thomas Tenison and the achievements of the past academic year.

On Friday 3 May this year, the whole school celebrated together at a special service at Croydon Minster. The service began with a warm welcome and processional hymn sung by the wonderful senior and staff choir. There was a lovely period of reflection when Richard Parrish (Headteacher) interviewed Simon Tenison (Chair). The choir sang Don Besig's "Flying free" and "Footprints", a song composed especially for the occasion by Mr. Martin, Head of Music. The service included former and current students of the school and the prayers were led by the youngest and oldest pupils and newest and longest serving members of staff. There was a lovely commissioning of Year 13 led by the Chair of Governors to mark the end of their time in the school. The service ended with the Founder's Day prayer and the school song was sung loudly and proudly by all.

It was a wonderful, inspiring service celebrating a school with a long and proud history that continues to live up to its motto: "Tenaciter - Academic excellence for each person in a Christian community". The school's strong sense of its educational purpose is reflected in its commitment to providing a strong academic foundation for its pupils in a secure Christian context, which gives them in their turn, the confidence to contribute well to a good, free and just society. Archbishop Tenison's School, Croydon, is one of several schools that were founded by Thomas Tenison, an educational philanthropist, in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. In 1714, Tenison, by then Archbishop of Canterbury, founded a school for some "ten poor boys and ten poor girls" at North End, Croydon, on a site which is now close to Croydon's shopping centre. Just over 300 years and three sites later, it is thought that the school is the oldest surviving continuously mixed-sex school in the world.



THE GREAT ALL SAINTS BENHILTON PRAYER BAKE OFF



All Saints Benhilton C of E Primary School held the Great All Saints Benhilton Prayer Bake Off as part of Thy Kingdom Come this year.

All Saints Benhilton asked their school families to take part in the Prayer Bake Off at home. They had to decide on something they would like to pray for, then they had to bake a cake or cupcakes and decorate them to show their prayer. They brought their cakes into school to be judged. The school had 95 entries into the prayer bake off and the standard was incredibly high. The prayers on the cakes were amazing and the children had chosen so many different things to pray for. There were prayers for the world, for peace, for the sea creatures, for love, for ending poverty, for animals, insects, creation, friends and so much more.

SCHOOL FOCUS

200TH YEAR BICENTENARY AT ST MARKS, KENNINGTON!



We celebrate this year's commemoration of the bicentenary of St Mark's Church of England Primary School with a dive into the distinctive history of this wonderful school.

St Mark's, initially known as the Kennington Schools, was made up of a Boy's School and a Girl's school opened in 1824 and 1825 in the parish of St Mark's in Lambeth. By the beginning of the 1860s the Kennington schools had also acquired an infant school.

Education in the nineteenth century was often seen as a means of dealing with some of the social problems associated with the industrial and urban developments. The Kennington schools were a product of the education movement, sponsored mainly by the churches initially, individuals and organisations.

The headmaster of the boys' school was Mr Isaac Hitchen (until 1842) and the headmistress of the girls' school was Rebecca Marchant (until 1848). The head master received £90 per year and the head mistress received £50 per year.

Attendance was encouraged through the revised code of 1862 which introduced a system of payment by results, for example, each child over age 6 who attended more than 200 half days in the year would earn the school an attendance grant plus 8 shillings. Money would be deducted if children failed their reading, writing or arithmetic exams.

Much like school in 2024, books were sometimes given as rewards to children and bibles were presented to school leavers.

Two hundred years later, St Mark's remains a Church of England Primary School in the heart of Oval, Kennington and Vauxhall. The diverse intake reflects the local area and the school maintains the feel of a welcoming, close-knit family where Christian values are at the core of the school's ethos.



JUNE PRAYERS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Helen Dixon, Christ's School, Richmond

Emily Evans, Holy Trinity C of E School, Richmond

Rob Veale, St John's C of E School, Surrey

Rosie Burgess, St Peter & St Paul's C of E School, Surrey

Sarah Lewis, Limsfield C of E School and St Mary's C of E School, Surrey

Imogen Woods, Nutfield Church C of E School, Surrey

Adam Powell, St Bede's School, Surrey

Janet Lightfoot, St Matthew's C of E School, Surrey