



**ANNUAL REPORT FOR
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 2023
THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHONERS
AND APCM
SUNDAY 21st April 2024**



Vicar: Rev Vinny Whitworth

Associate Priest: Rev Malcolm Bristow

St Bede's APCM 2024 – Vicar's Report

Jesus said 'I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing' (John 15: 5)

2023 has been a fruitful and exciting year as we have continued to live out our church vision 'Living for Jesus at the Heart of our Community'. Yet we began the year by focusing on Jesus who is the Vine and remembering that we need to be first and foremost rooted in Jesus if we want to live for Him and be a growing church for His glory.

It is no coincidence that the growth we have seen at St Bede's over the past year coincided with the launch of our new monthly prayer meeting – Prayer at 7 – which began in January 2023. A small group of us have been praying every 1st Thursday of the month in the community room to pray for our church. We have been encouraged that even in the first few months of praying – we saw answered prayer and new people become part of our church family each month. I am so pleased that prayer is now the foundation of all that we do here at St Bede and we must never forget Jesus' words 'apart from me you can do nothing'. I do wonder however what would happen if even more of us gathered to pray every month?

As we seek to fulfil our church vision; here at St Bede's we have set 4 mission priority areas in order to help us be a growing church.

The 4 priorities are:

- 1) Set up a new midweek service
- 2) Launch a Community Survey
- 3) Re-order and redevelop the building
(particularly focusing on the Community Room and how we might make this area fit for mission)
- 4) Lead an Annual Community Mission Event

One of the highlights of 2023 was the beginning of our new midweek service – Worship on Wednesday – which began on 1st March. This service is aimed particularly at families with primary school aged children – building on our links with our church school and also in response to the community survey we held in 2022. We had 30 people to our first Worship on Wednesday service and throughout the year that number has risen to around 40 people that worship with us each Wednesday during term-time. More than half our Wednesday congregation are new to St Bede's Church and therefore 2023 has been a year of numerical growth for St Bede. More importantly however, we have also seen through WOW spiritual growth, with 1 young man deciding he wanted to be baptised, as a result of coming to WOW.

I am particularly grateful to the amazing team of people that help lead WOW each week or serve refreshments.

Here at St Bede we continue to work alongside the wider LAMB Mission Partnership and Bolton West Mission Community particularly in the area of mission and evangelism. In response to our priority of leading an annual community mission event; St Bede's in conjunction with the LAMB Mission Partnership hosted an evangelistic Comedy Night with Andy Kind at the Ellesmere Club in March which around 100 people attended.

Looking to the future; our big focus for the coming year will be to begin plans on re-ordering and redeveloping the community room and facilities at the back of church. This will be a big undertaking that will take a number of years and will need significant amounts of money. But as we seek to be a growing church, now is the time to improve and develop our facilities so that we can continue growing and living for Jesus at the heart of our community.

This year St Bede's has continued to be at the heart of our community through our regular ministries such as our monthly Luncheon Club. We've also began new ministries too and in the summer we partnered with Urban Outreach to be a collection point for the BL Lunch Project where we gave out around 15 free packed lunches to local children every day of the summer holidays. Our Social and Fundraising events throughout the year also play a key part in bringing our church and wider community together. This year we've had a very successful calendar of social and fundraising events that not just bring in much needed financial support but more importantly draw in people from our wider community into our church family. I am very grateful to Gill Blackburn and the social and fundraising team for the many wonderful events that they organise throughout the year.

A key aspect of our mission and ministry as a church is our church school, St Bede Academy, and our link with our church school has continued to grow and develop in the past year to be a very fruitful partnership. I am very grateful for the committed team from church who support St Bede Academy through their roles on the Local Governing Board, and Tony Whitehead and I regularly lead collective worship. This year we as a church have been so blessed by the number of staff and pupils who have supported and worshipped with us in church for special occasions throughout the year including our Harvest Festival and our Christingle Carol Service where this year we also welcomed the new Bishop of Bolton to St Bedes.

As always I am very grateful to our ministry team at St Bede's Church for all that they do in leading services and preaching God's word. We are so blessed at St Bedes to have Rev'd Malcolm Bristow, our NSM, Pat Bristow, our Reader Emeritus, Tony Whitehead, our Licensed Reader and Carol Hardman and Gill Blackburn our ALMs. We look with excitement to our growing ministry team in 2024; as we announced in November that Sweetline Burnell will be joining us as our new stipendiary curate after she is ordained in June 2024.

I also want to say a huge thank you to our long-serving Wardens, Gill and Jean, for all the work that they do behind the scenes in maintaining the mission and ministry of St Bedes. We are also very blessed to have David and Elaine Almond; who serve as our treasurers and Elaine in particular for the amazing behind the scenes work she does as our Administrator.

As we reflect back on what has been such a fruitful year for us at St Bede; may we remain rooted in Jesus who is the true vine, as we seek to grow and bear even more fruit for Him in 2024 and beyond.

Vinny

Rev'd Vincent Whitworth
(Vicar, St Bede Bolton-Le-Moors, March 2024)

Bolton-le-Moor St Bede PCC, Morris Green, Bolton

I have checked through the accounts of Bolton-le-Moors St Bede Church of Morris Green, Bolton and from the working papers and supporting documents provided for the financial year 2023, I have concluded that they provide a true and fair view of the affairs of that organisation.

I checked all the documents and workings and asked the relevant questions of the officers involved. I received both timely and satisfactory answers to all questions asked regarding the accounts.

I checked the income and expenditure transactions, checking with all the relevant backing documentation provided. I reconciled these back to the bank account statements, cheque listings, and reconciliation.

The PCC operates its accounts on a receipts and payments basis. Detailed records are kept for both income and expenditure. Monthly bank reconciliations are completed once the bank statements are received. Invoices are kept which can be tied back to the bank statements provided. The cheque listing can tie the cheques to the paid-out transactions from the bank.

All documents and accounts are correctly filed and organised which helped me complete the audit in a straightforward and timely manner. Everything seems to be in good order.

Helen Weir MAAT – 04.03.2024

BOLTON ST BEDE 2023		2023		2023	
		Budget		Spend	
		£		£	
BALANCES B/FWD 1.1.23					
Petty Cash A/C		0		19	
St Bede PCC Current A/C 02869759 A		0		12,305	
St Bede PCC Current A/C 02869759 B		0		0	
St Bede PCC Current A/C 02869759 C		0		0	
St Bede PCC Current A/C 02869759 D		0		0	
Business 30 Day Notice A/C 06003802		0		1,814	
Business 30 Day Notice A/C 06091388	R	0		440	
Memorial A/C 020414802850	R	0	0	565	15,143
RECEIPTS					
Voluntary Income					
Gift Aid / Regular Giving - Tax Efficient		19,300		19,884	
Gift Aid / Regular Giving - Non Tax Efficient		0		1,103	
Cash Collection		7,200		6,665	
Parish Share-Inland Revenue		5,900	32,400	5,881	33,532
Other Voluntary Income					
Building Fund Donations		0		0	
Other Donations		1,000	1,000	1,666	1,666
Activities for Generating Funds					
Hall Lettings		300		460	
Fund Raising		2,500		3,943	
Luncheon Club		0		209	
Christmas Fair		1,400		1,463	
Coffee Money		150	4,350	423	6,498
Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities					
PCC Fees		1,000		1,548	
MDBF Assigned Fees		0	1,000	2,742	4,290
Investment Income					
Interest		1	1	15	15
Sundry Income					
Other Income		500	500	221	221
Total Income			39,251		46,223
PAYMENTS					
Charitable Activities					
Diocesan Quota		17,600		12,693	
Parish Share Inland Revenue		5,900	23,500	5,881	18,574
MDBF Assigned Fees		0		2,742	

Incumbent Expenses (including Vicarage)		2,050		2,040	
Curate Expenses		750		121	
Insurance		3,160		3,684	
Water		135		140	
Gas		5,000		9,062	
Electricity		800		1,478	
Oil		0		0	
Expenses for Fund Raising		0		719	
Photocopier		80		331	
Printing and Stationery and Postage		0		0	
Purchase of Equipment		0		0	
Deanery Administration		0		0	
Church Maintenance		2,000		1,100	
Buildings Maintenance		0		0	
Upkeep of Vicarage		0		0	
Upkeep of Services		700		1,071	
Churchyard Maintenance		0		480	
Wages Cleaner		1,000		980	
Parish Administration		2,720		2,676	
Wages Organist		575	18,970	775	27,398
Sundries					
Community Outreach		500		500	
Other		2,000	2,500	1,048	1,548
Total Expenditure			44,970		47,520
BALANCES C/FWD 31.12.23					
Petty Cash A/C		0		19	
St Bede PCC Current A/C 02869759 A		0		11,023	
St Bede PCC Current A/C 02869759 B		0		0	
St Bede PCC Current A/C 02869759 C		0		0	
St Bede PCC Current A/C 02869759 D		0		0	
Business 30 Day Notice A/C 06003802		0		1,830	
Business 30 Day Notice A/C 06091388	R	0		441	
Memorial A/C 020414802850	R	0	0	565	13,878
					13,846
			-5,719		-1,297

Treasurer's Report January to December 2023

We managed to finish the 2023 financial year with a deficit amounting to only £1,297. Even though this was a further deficit as appears to be the norm in recent years we can feel proud to have managed to control most things during the year. Unfortunately this must be funded from our Reserves. Again we struggled with further rises to gas and electricity costs, nearly double that of 2022, but have managed to secure some new contracts at much more affordable prices, and we did manage to pay 86% of the Parish Share asked for by the Diocese. (which helps cover Clergy costs)
We have now also managed to reduce the Parish Share for 2024 and the 2 years after that.

Whilst we did not have the same developments in Church as in previous years we did manage to increase the usage of our premises by St Bede Primary Academy (the largest Primary School in Bolton and probably our Diocese) but this does cost us money. We also created a new worship service, from March, for our local community on Wednesday evenings in Church, especially for those who cannot attend on a Sunday. This is called Worship on Wednesday (WOW). Again there are obvious costs in setting up and running this new service but it appears certainly worthwhile as well over 30 people attend regularly.

Income from the collection plate has reduced but regular envelope giving and small one off donations has increased and HMRC funding from the Gift Aid Lite Scheme (25% extra from taxpayers) is still a great help. We now have a pay machine at the back of Church so you can now donate by card. If you buy on the internet you can tag into EasyFundraising and get St Bede's Church extra income. It is so nice to see so many coming back for a chat after our Church services and this still makes us a decent amount of money. (£50 up on last year)

We managed again to keep our fundraising events happening on a very regular basis finding profits have increased quite a bit on last year. (Around £1K in total).

The Luncheon Club continues to go from strength to strength and is now taking place every month with around 25 or so eager eaters.

Thanks to St Bede's Primary Academy for providing the excellent food.

The links between our Church and School are certainly better than ever.

Weddings and Funerals hopefully help the local community 'celebrate' local people and also help ourselves gain some much needed funds. (£400 up on last year)

We have a regular monthly cost for our Church Administrator which we share with St Andrews Church. Costs did increase as the Government increased the minimum wage but we did make her work harder.

The Christmas Fayre this year was again held at the School and certainly helped us to find new customers from the local Community. Profits were again shared. But the even better news is that profits did increase.

We also managed to donate £500 to Café Create (a local help religious charity) with small donations to the Royal British Legion and St Barnabas (a clergy nursing home).
Our insurance costs also increased (towards £40 pm) but we are with a specialist Church insurer.

We also needed to pay for a tree in the grounds to be made safe and removed after it became unsafe in the recent high winds (£480).

The average cost per week to us of keeping our Church open is around £900.

Many thanks to all those who helped financially in some way or by donating time and talents to aid our mission making 2023 a very positive and memorable year in many ways.

Kind Regards

Elaine and David Almond

St Bede's PCC Treasurers

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT FOR ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

21st April 2024

The electoral roll has been revised in line with the Church Representation Rules stating that the roll be updated in time for the APCM.

3 new applications and 3 deletions have been approved

The number on the new electoral roll is 74 in total.

The Diocesan Secretary will be notified of this fact after this meeting.

Elaine Almond

Parish Administrator / Electoral Roll Officer

St Bede's Parish Church Bolton Le Moors - Secretary's Report – APCM Sunday 21st April 2024

The PCC has met on 5 occasions; May, September and November 2023 and January and March of 2024. Our meetings always start with a bible reading and a time of open prayer. We have standing items at each meeting which provide updates on Ministry review, MAP, Finance, Church Wardens, St Bedes School, Health & Safety, Social & Fundraising and safeguarding. We also hear reports from Deanery Synod whenever they have met.

At the first meeting in May the roles of laychair, secretary and treasurer were elected. The date for spring odd job day was set and a list of jobs available. Vinny identified under the review of the Mission Action Plan that the focus would be on the redevelopment of the church and facilities. It was also agreed to give school a donation of £100 towards the ISingpop event. The LAMB Mission Partnership had decided to hold a week of prayer starting at Pentecost, prayer diaries will be available.

In July it was agreed that the role of laychair be retitled to vice chair. It was noted that WOW continues to grow. There was discussion about the rota and process for the BL Lunch Project that church is taking part in. It was agreed that coffee after the Sunday morning service would be served outside whenever the weather allowed.

In November we received the welcome news that St Bedes would have a new curate. Sweetline Burnell will be ordained in June 2024. The Christmas services were discussed and it was noted that the preacher at the Christingle service is Bishop Matthew, the Bishop of Bolton. A meeting had been held with members of the redevelopment sub group and an architect to discuss possible ways forward. The ideas were presented to PCC. This will be taken forward in the new year. As part of the finance report it was reported that the gas contract with EDF has now ended and a significantly more favourable with EON has been entered into. The school update shared that the school has now been visited by Ofsted with the report still awaited, although all who took part felt that it was a very positive 2 days.

During the January meeting Vinny reminded members of the PCC of the prayer at 7pm which is held on the first Thursday of each month, he reminded us of the importance of prayer and encouraged all to think about attending at least once a year. There was discussion on the Connect Mission Week being organised by the Mission Community and how St Bedes can support this week. It was also noted that the Mission Community parish share meeting had been arranged for the 6th March. Under finance the final accounts were presented and agreement sought for the level of parish share to be paid for 2023. There was also agreement on the budget for 2024 and ratification of the charity partner for 2024. The church wardens reported on the expenditure associated with the tree in the grounds that fell down during the high winds in December. This has now all been cleared.

At our final meeting in March Vinny thanked all PCC members for their contributions for the year, with a special thanks to Anne who is stepping down from PCC after a number of years of supporting the PCC.

Thank you to all PCC members for their continued hard work and support.

Elaine Almond

PCC Secretary

Fabric Report 2023

In 2023 we did grow in number both on Sundays and of course some new members now come to WOW and we have enjoyed many great services. Also on Sundays a few members do gather together after the service to have fellowship in the community room or in summer in the garden which is great. Our thanks to Colin and David who routinely put out tables and chairs to facilitate this and bring them back in of course.

At this point I will give our sincere thanks from both Church Wardens and the whole Church for Martin's huge task of keeping the grounds so beautiful single handed every year. We do have some problems with children feeling that our lawn is the best lawn in town to play football on but hopefully the grass will return between the imaginary goals either end of the front lawn. This is despite being encouraged to play on the land beyond the beech hedge!!!!

We did have a day early in 2023 to clean up/tidy the gardens and also extra cleaning inside Church doing those jobs that often get left!! The faithful few who were able to come worked very hard on both garden (carrying out needed weeding on paths) and inside the Church. Again we are indebted for their help. That indebtedness is extended to Norman Nuttall who singlehandedly re-stained the front door. Thanks to him and his expertise!

As with many years now Dean Critchley has attended to various maintenance jobs too many to mention really but a huge big thank-you to him for always being there and able to do these jobs for us.

We continue to keep regular checks on the building and necessary inspections of equipment etc., and thank those for being on hand to unlock and lock for these events from members of Church if we were not free!

Constraints on finance this last year have meant that no work has been looked into from the Quinquennial Report issues save that we are looking into some minor long standing plaster fall in the Sanctuary getting quotes etc.

Church Wardens

Gillian Blackburn

Jean Phillips

ANNUAL REPORT OF ST BEDE'S LUNCHEON CLUB

We continue to run a monthly luncheon club on the first Wednesday of each month and we are encouraged that it is supported not solely by members of the church but members of our community and our wish is that this continues to be a community event.

We have had, however, a slight reduction in our regular attendance as we do have a number of elderly attendees. We will continue to promote the club via our social media and via our links with the church school.

The kitchen at our school provides our meals which are always very well received and we are very grateful for this link with our church school.

At Christmas we always provide a full Christmas lunch, including wine, and we are also lucky to have a raconteur as one of our members who provided us with some lovely entertainment after our meal.

I am particularly grateful for the team that helps each month with the setting up, serving and washing up each month, the club would not survive without your input so thank you to each one of you.

**Elaine and David Almond
Luncheon Club Organisers**

Children's Ministry Report for APCM 2024

The aim of St Bede's Children's Ministry is to provide an effective ministry to children in an environment which is safe and where they are encouraged to develop a relationship with Jesus and to receive him into their lives and accept him as saviour, in order that they continue this relationship into adulthood.

Children's Ministry at St Bede's Church is made up of Church Rocks, which meets twice a month on Sundays at 10 am, and Worship on Wednesday (WOW) which meets every Wednesday evening at 6,15 pm during term time.

The group leaders for Church Rocks are Carol Hardman, Rachael Storey and Jill Brooks. The group consists of children aged from 4 years upwards. The children are in group for the majority of the main church service and return to discuss the work they have done in group with the church congregation, which gives the children the opportunity to showcase their creativity. Every session starts with a welcome and a register of attendance is kept, followed by an action song. Activities undertaken by the children include games and creative craft activities. Each session includes teaching and discussion, based on bible scripture, as well as a time of creative prayer. At the end of the session, the children are reunited with parents/carers, in order to adhere to safeguarding policies and regulations. Safeguarding is taken very seriously at St Bede's and all adult leaders undergo DBS checks, and we ensure that there are at least 2 leaders present for each session. Children at St Bede's church are regularly involved in church worship, delivering bible readings and leading intercessions.

In March 2024, Worship on Wednesday at St Bede's celebrated its first anniversary. The last 12 months has seen WOW develop in number and most weeks is at full capacity. This service is an informal, interactive worship service for children and families. During the year, there have been opportunities for families to celebrate together with food and games. Feedback from families has been positive and they have felt encouraged to attend other worship services, particularly at Christmas and also attended the Ash Wednesday service, as well as social events that take place during the year. Some of the children who attend WOW have also felt lead to come to Baptism, and these have been encouraged and celebrated by the church community.

St Bede's Children's Ministry is living for Jesus at the heart of our community.

Carol Hardman
ALM in Worship

ST BEDE'S CHURCH – MORRIS GREEN, BOLTON LE MOORS

PARISH POLICY ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

As members of this church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people.

It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional, neglectful, financial and spiritual abuse or exploitation of children and young people and to report any such abuse discovered or suspected.

We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church.

The church is committed to following the guidelines and procedures published by the Diocese of Manchester in the handbook 'Safeguarding Children 2017' .

Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations and undertake to observe them. Each shall be given a copy of the Parish's agreed procedures and Good Practice Guidelines.

As part of our commitment to children and young people in our Church's life, the PCC has appointed Mrs Judith Kelleway to be the Lead Recruiter and Carol Hardman as our Safeguarding Co-ordinator

The PCC also affirm the place of children and young people in our church's life by agreeing that 'Children and young people are part of (or belong to) our church today. They have much to give as well as receive. We will listen to them. As we nurture them in worship, learning and in community life, we will respect the wishes and feeling of children and young people'.

**Policy on the Safeguarding of Adults in the Church of
St Bede, Morris Green, Bolton-le-moors**

This Policy will be reviewed each year to monitor the progress which has been achieved.

- ˘ We recognise that everyone has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives.
- ˘ As members of this parish we commit ourselves to respectful pastoral care for all adults to whom we minister.
- ˘ We commit ourselves to the safeguarding of people who may be vulnerable, ensuring their well-being in the life of this church.
- ˘ We commit ourselves to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.
- ˘ The parish commits itself to promoting the inclusion and empowerment of people who may be vulnerable.
- ˘ It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent the physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse of vulnerable people and to respect any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- ˘ We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with people who may be vulnerable.
- ˘ The parish is committed to supporting, resourcing, training and regularly reviewing those who undertake work amongst people who may be vulnerable.
- ˘ The parish adopts the guidelines of the Church of England and the Diocese.
- ˘ Each person who works with vulnerable people will agree to abide by those recommendations and the guidelines established by this church.

This church appoints Carol Hardman to represent the concerns and views of vulnerable people at our meetings and to outside bodies.

Incumbent: Rev'd Vinny Whitworth

Churchwarden: Gill Blackburn

Churchwarden: Jean Phillips

March 2024

Social and Fund Raising Group Report 2023

Fund Raising at St Bede's continued in 2023 with many events taking place in Church, in School and we tried out a new venue at a local public house. I thank the Team, don't forget we will always welcome new members and ideas. If you can spare the time meetings are usually once a month and events too if we can manage them, any help would be gratefully received. Please have a word with me, Gill or other Team Members.

Thanks to the Team for their hard work and along with many parishioners, all events are stocked with prizes for competitions/raffles or providing goods for stalls without which the events could not take place.

Among others the Race Night and Chocolate Bingo nights were huge monetary success but also provide good fellowship for church members and not to forget their families, along with community members buying tickets to attend and coming to the events. Both these events were in School and we certainly need the space at School for these events we have learned.

We had in March our "posh" Afternoon Tea for Mother's day using all china cups and saucers lent to us by many members of Church. This too was a lovely fellowship day thanks to all who attended. This was of course on Easter Sunday followed by the Easter Egg Hunt children and adults searching for eggs and getting easter eggs as their prize.

In 2023 we resurrected the good old "Beetle Drive" this again was a success and a few from WOW attended with their children which again is a sign we are all integrating together. Many other events in 2023 have been a good mix of the members of the two services supporting the events.

Our main fund raiser as with every year is our Christmas Fayre and again in 2023 we joined with School for this event. This of course has members of Church, School and the local community in attendance and we thank everyone for contributing to the great total raised.

As I have said above and in the past we need everyone to help us to make the events a success by providing stock for stalls, prizes for Raffles and their support in attending the many events we put on I have commented on just a few above.

A huge thanks to everyone who attend events, bring family and friends to the events from all aspects of life here at St. Bede's. We need the funds to carry on the day to day life here at St Bede's always.

Gill Blackburn

On behalf of the Social and Fundraising Committee

SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

St Bede have continued to be a presence on Social Media, mainly on Facebook. *Kirsty Critchley & Tony Whitehead*, the Social Media Team, ensure that all events and major services are published on our own Facebook page as well as the local Friends of Morris Green group.

In the last 12 months;

- ✓ 8,400 people reached – down 36% on previous 12 months
- ✓ 2,400 people visited our Facebook page – up 112% on previous 12 months
- ✓ Highest reach was in 24/7/23 – 1,434 people – BL Lunch Project with Urban Outreach
- ✓ Highest visits to the Facebook page on 1 day was on 20/10/23 – 73 people

We currently have 436 followers, 72% from Bolton with the main demographic being 35-44 year olds.

The countries where our posts have reach include USA, Australia, Canada and Poland to name a few.

St Bede Parish has been an active part of the Community within Morris Green and the surrounding areas but we need people to like our posts and share them with friends to increase our reach.

Website

Tony continues to work with the Academy, who host our web service, to improve the website of the Parish to make this more user friendly and accessible. Visitors can access a range of information including the weekly newsletters. We acknowledge that more work is required in this area, but the stats for the last 12 months are as follows;

- ✓ 155 views
- ✓ 132 visited the 'Contact Us' page
- ✓ 66 visited the 'Services' page

We hope that the work the team have done has made us, as a Parish, more accessible, more visible and given an opportunity to the wider community to engage with us and more importantly, prick the consciousness and think about God.

Kirsty Critchley & Tony Whitehead

SCHOOL UPDATE 2023/24

- Tony Whitehead was re-elected as Chair of Governors and David Almond was elected as Vice Chair for the next academic year.
- Negotiations to acquire the field called 'St Bede Playing Field' is continuing. Tony Whitehead and senior school leaders involved.
- Curriculum leads are empowered to take part in school curriculum reviews with stakeholders to evaluate current position and consider new areas for further improvement.
- OFSTED inspection took place on 24th & 25th October 2023 and the overall effectiveness was GOOD and GOOD in all other areas.
- Some positive comments were;
 - Pupils are happy at school.
 - Pupils know that they have a voice and that adults listen to them. Pupils are eager to drive positive change in the community and are well prepared to be responsible citizens.
 - Pupils care about others and take on positions of responsibility enthusiastically because they want to make a difference.
 - Pupils know exactly how staff expect them to behave. They move around the building sensibly and with a ready smile.
 - Pupils help to create a quiet and orderly environment.
 - Pupils understand that they are expected to give their best in lessons. They rise to the school's high expectations of their achievement.
- Highly successful school/Church collaborative iSingPop project;
 - 3 full day workshops facilitated by iSingPop leader
 - 2 concerts held in Church
 - Huge turn out by parents at both concerts
 - Songs now being used in Collective Worship
- Bi-annual Easter Experience ran and Easter Services took place in Church on 27th March
- Digital strategy launched;
 - July 23: 1:1 devices for all staff
 - Sep 23: 1:1 devices for all pupils
 - Dec 23: Y6 pupils iPads home
 - Jan 24: Showbie staff CPD and Y1-6 launch in History
 - Feb 24: Y4/5 pupils iPads home, staff confidence survey, Socrative staff CPD and launch
 - Mar 24: Y2/3 pupils iPads home
- Directors agreed this was a massive investment, but one needed for the Trust
- Special Educational Needs - Ofsted report:

'Staff throughout the school are attuned to pupils' different needs. They identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND swiftly and accurately. Staff use their expertise to make careful adaptations to their delivery of the curriculum to enable these pupils to learn well alongside their classmates.'

Tony Whitehead

Chair of Governors

Deanery Synod Report 2023/24

There have been 3 meetings this year of the Deanery Synod

The first meeting for the year was held on the 20 June 2023 and was held at Christ Church, Heaton.

This meeting included the election of secretary, deanery officers and the standing committee.

The topic of this meeting was

Myth Busting – 'Closing Church Buildings and How we talk about it' and Mark Knight, Fragile Churches Officer for the Diocese outlined his role and answered any questions from the floor. He works with churches that are considered fragile. When they approach him (he doesn't approach them) he will visit them and discuss the issues. The parish is always in control.

Our second meeting was held on the 12 October 2023 and this was held at St Peters Church, Halliwell.

Items on the agenda were

Children Changing Places – Joanne Haslam from the project gave us an update on the progress and future of the project. She outlined the vision and the story so far and that funding for 5 more years has been granted.

Parish Share

Carolyn McGloughlin is the new Parish Share Officer and she introduced herself and outlined her role of supporting parishes in the giving and she encouraged people to reach out for support if needed.

Growing Churches

Mike McGurk – Head of Church Growth in the Diocesan Strategy Team spoke about the Diocesan vision to be a worshipping, growing and transforming presence at the heart of every community.

Our third meeting was on the 6 February 2024 and was held on zoom.

The topic discussed was Clergy Vacancies and Deployment of the Diocesan Vision with the Archdeacon Rachel Mann.

The Archdeacon said that her first 7 months in post had been enormously challenging. The level of vacancies is a real concern. The diocese is facing up to the issue of fragile churches and closing buildings and to shaping doable jobs for clergy that will not run them ragged. We have a vision to grow vocations, lay and ordained and not to overload SSM's and retired clergy. Questions for around the Deanery were given the Archdeacon in advance of the meeting, unfortunately time didn't allow the Archdeacon to address all the questions but will provide a written response after the meeting (as of yet not received).

Full minutes of the meetings are sent to all Deanery Synod members.

Jean Phillips

Deanery Synod Member

Health & Safety Report 2023

Last year more rubbish appeared on the lawns and gardens.

The tree at the corner of the garden collapsed into the road before Christmas and I and my wife was out at 9 o'clock on Saturday night in the rain with a chainsaw making the road passable again.

The lawn on the front of the church has been destroyed by young footballers trying out their penalty shots.

Martin Horrocks

Health & Safety Officer