

## **Chadwick response**

Revd. Canon Philip Cunningham, Vicar Gosforth St. Nicholas, Area Dean Central Newcastle, ex-officio Governor Archbishop Runcie First School (Vice Chair) ; governor Gosforth Park First School; 8 schools within my parish; currently working with the Gosforth pyramid to explore forming a Trust.

3 brief points – separate but related:

### 1. **The broad political and financial context.**

**Free Schools.** Does the establishment of Free Schools raise issues of justice and community? Will existing schools find themselves under threat in terms of funding? Or intake as the demographic of the catchment area is changed?

The future of **Local (Education) Authorities** is increasingly threatened and many of our smaller schools also feel under some threat – especially when one possible future model implies their becoming very junior partners of much larger secondary run academies. Head teacher : “we need parity of esteem to function creatively ”.

Is **the culture of “competition”** (the culture of economics?) inappropriate when applied over simplistically to children and their families in education? This is our default culture ; we struggle to formulate any appropriate critique that offers positive alternatives.

Chadwick 3.11: “ a conviction that the Church of England system provides an alternative philosophy of education in a context where economic concerns seem to be driving educational priorities.”

Chadwick 1.13: “the unapologetic presence of Church Schools can be an appropriate counterpoise” to “economic and utilitarian pressures.”

### 2. **Collaboration and Confidence** . Currently I am heavily engaged in thinking through the possibility of forming some kind of Federation Trust from the 15 schools within the whole area to enable us to work collaboratively together with one another, with whatever is left at the end of the shakeup of the LA, and for the whole community to provide a real alternative to “academisation”.

Our little Church school is able to contribute much – practically, philosophically and spiritually : model of St. Benedict and his original twelve little communities at Subiaco.

BUT : Chadwick 5.4: “many ... schools ... do not know what the Board of Education and the National Society are or what they do”. 5.15: “ the church’s work (and) talents are hidden to many. Even regular church attenders do not fully appreciate the work”.

### 3. Resources :

money  
vocations to teaching  
support from the church community for teachers  
prayer  
better support from clergy to all schools.

So PARISH SHARE !

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Many parents are simply puzzled and anxious- what should their response be? They want, rightly, to “do their best” for their child – but what might that “best” be?

We need collaborative, creative and imaginative work together to help the whole church regain not only a real confidence in the Gospel and in the mission of the Church – but real confidence in the role and mission of our church schools.

Chadwick 5.34 “... every time (the Synod debates) education it is “motherhood and apple pie”. Its never about resources, about recognising our failures in education. Its never about recognising our need to do as we speak or about joined up thinking on advocacy for young people, engaging with disaffected young people and all those issues. Its always about “ I saw a nice assembly”.  
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Chadwick p.19

“We see all church schools and the community schools they are linked to (through federation and academy chains) as part of our church school family. We believe that the Diocese is here to serve the needs of all children and young people not just those in church schools and will offer support whenever asked. We need to be inclusive in our support and distinctive.”