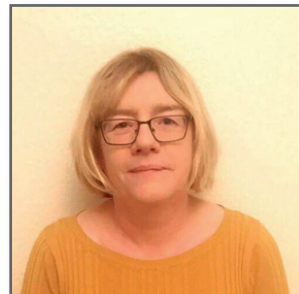


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The Church Schools' Leadership Programme

By Angela Atkinson, CSLP Coordinator at Church School Leadership Programme



Nearly two years ago a group of local Church School headteachers met to discuss the issue of how we could develop the next generation of faith school leaders. It became clear that we needed to do something and from that was born the Church Schools' Leadership Programme. This initiative is the only one of its type in Wales and we believe is unique in the UK. It's unique because it is for both primary and secondary schools and it is supported by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff and the Diocese of Menevia and the Church in Wales Dioceses of Llandaff, Monmouth, Swansea and Brecon and St David's. Our programme was not meant to replicate existing leadership courses but to be something different – to develop the specific skills and vision that make Church Schools distinctive. Starting in 2016 with 47 participants in our first cohort and now with 56 in our second, the programme is one of the largest supported by the three education consortia in South Wales. Teachers from Aberystwyth to Chepstow, in church and community schools, are following an 18 month programme with twilight sessions and a residential at the Vale Resort. A key aspect of what we offer is the opportunity to be mentored by a senior leader in another school and have a bespoke professional learning experience. A number of our first cohort have gained promotion either within their own school or in other church schools. Evaluations of the course by participants have been very positive and encouraging:

"Elements of the course were invaluable to me when I was recently successfully interviewed for my Deputy Headteacher post. The mentoring I received and the guidance provided in the sessions gave me the extra edge I needed to move on to this senior role."

"I have gained confidence to put myself forward for the NPQH and I would highly recommend the course to colleagues".

"The course has given me the confidence to apply for a senior secondment position within my school and I have been fortunate to secure this role. I feel strongly that the course allowed me to reflect not only on my faith but also my true ability to undertake a strong church school leadership role".

When retention and recruitment issues to senior posts in schools is in the news we believe that the CSLP in conjunction with the consortia are trying to address this. Our children deserve the very best and we are committed to ensure schools and the community get the leaders they deserve.