

New Education Commission in England



The good work started by the Forum for Change education cluster will now be continued by the newly-established Evangelical Alliance Education Commission (EAEC).

Forum for Change drew together Christians working in media, arts, business, politics and education, and offered a platform where Christians across these professions took time to think and dialogue, aiming to generate a vision for change. It was recognised that change requires a long-term strategy which would

ultimately affect the nation's children and shape their future.

Children and young people spend a significant proportion of their day in schools, academies and colleges. The curriculum and ethos are set by the government, governors and teaching staff. The challenge is for Christians to contribute to transforming what happens in these institutions so that everyone flourishes through experiencing a gospel-shaped education".

The new Evangelical Alliance Education Commission believes that education influences the life of a nation by not only passing on knowledge and training but also by forming values, attitudes and beliefs.

Membership of the group will continue to be for representatives of organisations that seek to be a transforming Christian influence in the context of education in England and the Commission will be a source of expertise for the Alliance for all things educational.

The group will be chaired by John Shortt of Liverpool Hope University and Mike Simmonds of Go Ministries. John Shortt said: "Responses by humanists and secularists to the recent Theos report on faith schools, as well as the challenge of the National Secular Society's report on Christian organisations working in schools show that the field of education is a battle-ground. The establishment of this commission shows that the Evangelical Alliance continues to be committed to supporting Christians who are concerned about how we serve God in educational contexts."

Paul Bate, a board member of EurECA, will represent them at the Commission's meetings.

Dave Landrum, director of advocacy at the Evangelical Alliance, who will attend the meetings, said: "The Alliance welcomes the establishment of the Education Commission. We are delighted to continue to facilitate the meeting of these education experts and academics. There is a vast range of knowledge, experience and wisdom in the group. I'm sure that the Commission will prove to be a valuable resource for evangelical influence in education in the years ahead".

Dave will help the Alliance draw upon the experience and expertise of the group members in the field of education. The Commission will meet twice a year to review a range of issues relating to Christian influence in education. It is also anticipated that the Commission will play an advisory role for the Alliance's Theology and Public Policy Advisory Commission (TAPPAC).