

## **Important Diocesan Education Team Update #9, Mon 27 April 2020**

Dear colleagues,

As we begin another week of uncertainty for all and, doubtless, heartache for many, I am reminded of Paul's words to the Philippians.

*“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!*

*Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.*

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things... And the God of peace will be with you.”*

It isn't particularly easy to focus on the lovely, excellent and praiseworthy at the moment, but I only have to let my mind drift momentarily to Captain Tom Moore and I find myself renewed and revitalised for a while. And spending time praying for you, thinking of what you are doing, and watching your video messages to your pupils and those that they are sending you in return has the same effect. Thank you again for your love, compassion and dedication.

- **Service Level Agreements (SLAs)**

- As mentioned in a previous email, we have delayed the start of the 2020-2021 SLAs to September 2020 so that you are not disadvantaged by the lack of normal service this term. We are currently busy re-planning the detail of the offers within the [Training & Support SLA](#) and the [School Effectiveness Support SLA](#) to enable you and your teams to access training in formats other than face-to-face, especially for the Autumn term, and to ensure that we are able to continue to support you as you need. I will let you have further details of this once we have finalised them. In the meantime, please do continue to return your SLA payments or contact [Laura Farmer](#) if you need a reminder of your individual details.

- **Headteacher Conference**

- Again, as previously mentioned, we have postponed the Headteacher Conference from 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020 and we are in the process of agreeing a date in the Spring with Stanbrook Abbey. Please be reassured that, as we plan, we will be aware of the government's health advice and the ongoing need for social distancing measures. If it becomes clear that holding such an event is inadvisable, even next Spring, we will postpone again.

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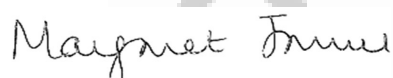
- **Keeping in Touch (KiT) Meetings**
  - Some schools have not yet had their annual KiT meeting with a member of the Education Team and we will be in touch with you shortly to arrange to carry these out on Zoom or by phone. The focus will be very much on supporting you at this difficult time.
- **Cluster Meetings**
  - We are also planning to hold briefings for headteachers and governors after half term and we will advise you of the dates once we have finalised them. They are likely to be held in the week commencing 15 June for headteachers and the week commencing 22 June for governors. We will offer you a choice of three dates and times and then send you a Zoom invite to enable you to access the meeting once you have let us know which you would like to attend. Please do try to join us for one of these as Tim Reid and I will be sharing updates and our latest thinking as well as taking questions.
- **Diocesan Board of Education**
  - The DBE and WDAT continue to make decisions during this time of social distancing and one such area is the appointment of foundation governors. Please ensure that you have [electronically](#) submitted the [application forms and skills audits](#) for any new foundation governors or those foundation governors wishing to be reappointed **by Tuesday 5 May**. Please also [contact me](#) if you want to discuss academy conversion, a change of age range, or change of PAN.
- **SIAMS**
  - Following the Worcester DBE's decision to temporarily suspend SIAMS inspections, the national Church of England Education Office made the same decision on behalf of all dioceses in England. Since then, the DfE has officially suspended the requirement for inspection under section 48 (i.e. SIAMS) and there are no plans to reintroduce it for the foreseeable future. It will, of course, return in due course but we will make sure that you have as much notice as possible before any Church schools in Dudley or Worcestershire are inspected. I also want to reassure you that discussions are underway relating to the role of SIAMS in the recovery of the education system and this could ultimately prove to be an exciting and useful time for all things SIAMS. There will continue to be ongoing diocesan support, advice and training on all aspects of what it means to be a good Church school, some of which relates directly to SIAMS criteria, and this remains important regardless of the active existence of an inspectorate.

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Finally, I want to draw your attention to the first act of **collective worship** that will be available under the umbrella of the Oak National Academy in collaboration with the Church of England. The Archbishop of Canterbury will be leading the nation this Thursday at 10am in the largest act of collective worship that the country has ever seen – further details are available [here](#). Do tune in and then look out for the weekly national collective worship – and some of you may even be asked to take the lead at some point!

Thank you for keeping in touch and for tagging us in your tweets and Facebook posts. We love hearing from you and seeing what you are all up to.

With best wishes,



**Dr Margaret James**  
**Diocesan Director of Education (DDE)**