

Important Diocesan Education Team Update #12, Tue 5 May 2020

Dear colleagues,

I hope that you have had a good weekend and that you are managing all of the varied aspects of living in lockdown. It is interesting to hear and read the speculation that is abounding relating to the 'reopening' of schools and I am sure that you, like us, are hoping to hear more about this from the DfE this week. We are liaising with both Dudley LA and WCF staff about what the next phase might look like for Dudley and Worcestershire schools and we will keep you as informed as we are able to, as well as continuing to support you.

I am reminded of the wisdom of the words in Ecclesiastes 3:

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:

A time to be born and a time to die

A time to plant and a time to uproot

A time to kill and a time to heal

A time to tear down and a time to build

A time to weep and a time to laugh

A time to mourn and a time to dance

A time to scatter stones and a time gather them

A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing

A time to search and a time to give up

A time to keep and a time to throw away

A time to tear and a time to mend

A time to be silent and a time to speak

A time to love and a time to hate

A time for war and a time for peace.

*What do workers gain from their toil? I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race.
He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart.*

- **Faith at Home**

- Last week saw the launch of the Church of England's #FaithAtHome campaign and the [website](#) is now live. Please do take a look as it offers a wealth of resources for schools, churches and families. On Thursday, you may have joined the first national school assembly which was led by pupils, Gavin Williamson MP, and the Archbishop of Canterbury on the theme of Hope and which is still [available to view](#). The CEO is now working with [Oak National Academy](#) to create weekly acts of collective worship for schools and Shahne Vickery is leading our involvement in this work. She may well be asking for volunteers to be involved in the coming weeks so do keep an eye on your inbox...

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• **Looking to the Rainbow**

- You may already have seen some of the publicity about this beautiful song on Twitter and Facebook and I am now asking you to consider involving your school in what we hope will be a huge national glorious cacophony of choirs and young voices.
- Looking to the Rainbow was written by Nick and Becky Drake from [Worship for Everyone](#) (@W4EI) and we are hoping that as many schools as possible will record their pupils singing it together. The song itself, including backing track(s), tutorial and notes are [available online](#).
- Have a look at one school's [recording](#) of the song and be inspired to have a go yourselves!
- The Drakes and the CEO ask that any school that releases anything on social media uses the hashtag #FaithAtHome and #LookingToTheRainbow . Apparently that's important (!!) and will enable the bringing together of all of the songs that are tweeted. I would also ask that you tag the Education Team (@CofEWorcEduTeam), the Diocese (@CofEWorcester) and me (@MargaretRJ93) into any tweets as we would love to watch all of the videos and share them more widely. Do make sure that you have parental permissions to share. Happy singing and editing and I am already looking forward to seeing and hearing the results.

• **DBE and WDAT meetings**

- The DBE and WDAT are meeting remotely over the next few months and I would remind all schools to contact me if consent from either body is required for governor or MAT trustee appointments, for building work, or any other changes such as PAN or age range changes. Diocesan consent on these matters is still required and no action should be taken without the necessary consent being granted. Please send me any requests for consent **before the end of this week** in order for them to be considered this term. The next 'meeting' will be held in July.

• **VA Schools and School Condition Allocation (SCA)**

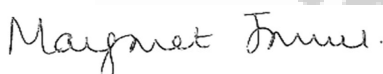
- Only a very small number of VA schools have submitted a bid for work to be carried out under the new SCA scheme (LCVAP replacement) and Rob Stephens and I are in the process of deciding upon next steps.
- If you have work that would form the basis of a SCA bid **please contact me as a matter of urgency**. One of the DfE requirements of the new system is for VA schools to have an asset management plan and to share this with the DBE. Rob will be in touch with VA schools in the coming weeks about this.

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- **Diocesan Training & Support SLA (TSSLA)**
 - As previously explained, the diocesan SLAs have been delayed until September and will then run for the whole of the 2020-2021 academic year so that you do not miss out. Laura Farmer circulated the TSSLA invoices and other information before the lockdown and she is happy to receive any [queries](#) that you have in relation to this. Please do return your SLA agreement forms as soon as you are able to.
 - We are in the process of finalising plans for the Autumn term that will enable you and your teams to access training in a Covid-19-friendly way and I will write more about this next week. But we are expecting to still offer a wide range of training, support, advice and get-togethers to help you as you continue to offer the highest possible quality Church of England education.
- **Diocesan School Effectiveness Support SLA (SESSLA)**
 - For those schools who are currently in receipt of a SESSLA, just to remind you that all hours that are outstanding will be banked on your behalf and can be utilised when it is safe for normal service to resume. In the meantime, if you would like to use any of your outstanding hours to hold virtual school effectiveness support, our consultants would be more than happy to facilitate this.
 - As mentioned previously, any hours outstanding from mid-point headteacher appraisals can be used for school effectiveness support. However, if you and your governors would prefer a virtual mid-point meeting, this can also be facilitated. Please contact Laura Farmer to arrange such meetings.

Thank you again for all that you are doing. Stay safe and well and do make sure that you take time for yourself as well as looking after everyone else.

With best wishes,



Margaret James
Diocesan Director of Education (DDE)