

Important Diocesan Education Team Update #15, Mon 18 May 2020

Dear Headteachers,

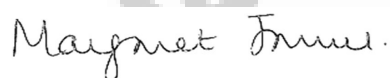
In this time of such uncertainty and with many questions understandably emerging for you, we have been receiving a high volume of emails seeking support and clarification. We are only too pleased to be able to support you in this way, especially at this torrid time, but wondered whether you might find it helpful to have a virtual equivalent of the Surgeries that have been available via the SLA. To that end, we have arranged a **Zoom drop-in session** for this **Wednesday 20 May at 9am**.

There is no need to book a place and you do not need to stay connected for the whole hour if you would prefer not to. Tim and I will be online and if nobody else joins us we will chat quite happily for the hour alone! You may, however, benefit from hearing how other heads are dealing with the current situation and you may wish to seek an opinion on the plans that you have in place. You can run things past us and, although we have no official voice in any school's planning or risk assessment, we will be more than happy to give you our thoughts.

I am also delighted to attach a letter from Bishop Martin who has particularly been asking after you, your well-being, and the stresses that you are dealing with at this time.

I hope to see some of you on Wednesday.

With best wishes,



Margaret James
Diocesan Director of Education (DDE)

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Dear Headteacher,

I am very conscious of the particular pressures that you may be feeling at this time, alongside all of the personal and family fears and challenges that everyone is carrying too.

I have a wife and a daughter who are full time teachers and I see at first hand the commitment in time and effort that goes into providing education, pastoral care and leadership 'from a distance' to all in their charge. Those in Senior Leadership Teams and especially Headteachers carry a particular burden, dealing with the anxieties of pupils, parents, and staff members, whilst also handling the ever-changing guidelines and instructions coming from government and DfE. I'm very aware that many headteachers have not had any holiday at all since Lockdown began and are now having to organise a complex school opening in just over a fortnight's time.

Margaret James from the DBE keeps me and Bishop John fully informed about what is going on. Please pass on our very best wishes to your staff at this uniquely challenging time. You have our sympathy, admiration and of course our prayers. Most of all we think of you in the lonely place of leadership within your school as you navigate these uncharted waters.

You may be familiar with the prayer,

*May God grant you the serenity to accept the things you cannot change;
courage to change the things you can;
and wisdom to know the difference.*

May God bless you in all you do

+Martin

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