

1st September 2021

Dear Parents & Carers

A letter to parents and carers whose children have started attending a Church of England school

I am writing to you as the Chair of the Peterborough Diocesan Board of Education, which oversees all Church of England Schools in this area. Thank you for choosing a Church of England school for your child. We hope that your child's first term will go well and that the time ahead will be happy and fulfilling.

Christians believe that, wherever we come from and whatever our beliefs, everyone is included in the unconditional love of God. If you want to get a glimpse of what God's love is like, take a look at the life of Jesus; he gave unconditional love, forgiveness, hope, justice, purpose and a future to those who encountered him, and he tells us to do the same for those we meet. In the Bible, the only precise definition of God is "*God is love.*" Later in the Bible, we read about the definition of love: "*Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. Love does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.*" That's not a bad definition! So it is no surprise that Jesus said that the two most important things in life are to love God and love one another.

Church of England schools are inclusive places that warmly welcome Christians or those of other faiths or those of no faith. Everyone is equal. Historically, many Church of England schools were established for the benefit of local children as places where all were able to learn and flourish in a secure and supportive environment. As a child, I attended a Church of England school, as did my children years later. All children are welcomed and valued for who they are. We hope you will find that the unconditional love of God that underpins Christianity will be a reality in your school.

Yours faithfully



The Venerable Richard Ormston

Archdeacon of Northampton and Chair of the Peterborough Diocesan Board of Education