

From the Education Office - Special Bulletin

Dear Colleague,

I wanted to briefly remind you all that this 'national thank a teacher day'. I hope that this is not news to you and that you all know the deep respect and admiration that we, the diocesan Education Team, have for you and your amazing achievements particularly at this time. This is also Mental Health Awareness Week, which should focus on the power and potential of kindness. Research has shown that kindness is an antidote to isolation; it helps to reduce stress, deepens our relationships and creates a sense of psychological safety – of belonging. In our diocese, as well as nationally, schools are demonstrating extraordinary acts of kindness and professional generosity. We remain extremely proud of the support, love and care that you are showing your pupils and their families.

During the last week especially, there has been much speculation in the press about when and how schools will begin to reopen. This has not been helpful as the many rumours circulating have acted to raise the levels of anxiety amongst school staff and many parents. It seems that some reporters have forgotten that schools have remained open. Teachers and leaders have generally worked harder than any point in their careers as they have additionally sought to support home learning and provide food for families that need it. Staff issues involving mental health and well-being will be more widely recognised as a consequence of the impact of the 'Corona Coaster' once we are back I am sure.

Leaders face tough decisions in the coming weeks and months. The responsibility and accountability that school leaders are currently facing is extreme and unfortunate. This is an opportunity for schools though to show how they live out their values and Christian mission. Remaining authentic to our shared common purpose, as the sands shift beneath us all, provides the only foundation for the future success of our schools as caring, compassionate and worshipping communities.

We will send out a short bulletin tomorrow but I wanted to make sure we marked the occasion and said a BIG THANK YOU today!

God bless

John Searson

We have set up a webpage which we will continue to update during this period. You can access this page using the following link:

<https://exeter.anglican.org/schools/coronavirus-resources/>

We also have a Facebook Page. Please like and join our page and group 'Exeter Diocese's Education Team'