

From the Education Office - Special Bulletin

Dear Colleague,

We hope that you managed to find some time to look after yourself over the half-term break, although, I guess, many of you were putting finishing touches to the practical arrangements needed to start the process of re-opening your schools to the extra targeted children in the priority year groups. As a governor I have needed to engage fully with the guidance and risk assessment process that has been constructed to allow you to meet the government's pledges to parents. As a Director of Education I have received a number of emails from parents seeking my advocacy in influencing local decisions in favour of the particular family's circumstances. So I know the unenviable position that you find yourselves in. As a diocese we will always support local decision making providing local contexts have been fully considered and due process followed. To reassure you my job is to support, challenge and champion CofE education in this diocese and supporting leadership is especially important at this time. The old adage that 'you can't please all the people all the time' rings particularly true with conflicting scientific guidance from SAGE and the 'unofficial SAGE' making matters so much more complicated. Even the scientists cannot agree.

Thank you for keeping the best interests of children at the heart of your decision making, thank you for working so hard to continue to provide key worker and vulnerable pupil school provision. It looks like the numbers of key worker children taking up places is rising so I can understand the need for continued caution as space is at a premium in every school. Wisdom comes from experience but none of us have experienced anything like this before, however, keeping the children's physical, emotional and spiritual needs to the fore, at this time, is the only wisdom I can offer you.

God bless

John Searson – Diocesan Director of Education

Join weekly **collective worship sessions**, led by Church of England's schools and in partnership with those of other faith traditions. Suitable for those of all faiths and none. Click [here](#). You can find out future themes on the Church of England [website](#).

Bishop Jackie hears from children across Devon about their experiences during the lockdown. Click [here](#).

Service Level Agreement: You can now access the 2020-21 Service Level Agreement. We offer a range of support around SIAMS, RE, Christian distinctiveness, leadership, governance, recruitment, management partnerships, federations, entering multi academy trusts and more. To find out more about the 3 levels of services that we offer, click [here](#).

Children and Family Health Devon have recently created a number of resources relating to autism. These are aimed at both parents/carers as well as professionals and can be found [here](#).

Lights for the Path – a guide through grief, pain and loss a book for teenagers, exploring bereavement and grief has recently been released. [Church Times](#) recently wrote an article on the release of this book and the author has recorded a [podcast](#).

The Church of England have developed new [resources](#) to help schools working with bereaved children and young people.

Faith Based Criteria – Own Admission Authorities: As you are aware churches are currently closed and therefore this will create a difficulty in measuring church attendance for admission applications. The Diocese has been working nationally with colleagues and the OSA to find a solution which may be for each admission authority to seek a variation to their arrangements. It is proposed that this is co-ordinated through each Diocese. Please can you contact us if you want to discuss further or to seek a variation which will be worded to exclude church attendance at this time. Contact: christin.mabin@exeter.anglican.org (07966652587)

From 1st June until 17th July **Edurio** is running the UK's largest study of Covid-19 impact in schools. All schools and Multi Academy Trusts can participate at no cost. You will be provided with a report of your results and contribute to a national research report. [Find out more....](#)

The EEF's rapid evidence review examines the potential impact of schools closures on the attainment gap, based on a systematic search of existing literature. [Click here](#).

The report notes that parental engagement in children's learning and the quality of the home learning environment are associated with improved academic outcomes at all ages. The effectiveness of strategies will differ by age group. For example, in primary schooling, shared book reading and linked activities such as building vocabulary and practising spellings are valuable, while in secondary schools parents can support children to read independently and create study routines. EEF resources for schools on supporting parents during school closures are available [here](#).

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'