



RC DIOCESE OF EAST ANGLIA

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The Right Reverend Bishop Alan S Hopes B.D. A.K.C.
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June 4th 2020

Dear Headteacher,

This has been an extraordinary time for our schools, setting enormous challenges for us all. I know that you, our leaders and teaching staff have done all that you have been asked to do, and so much more.

I am also aware that this next phase of coming out of the pandemic restrictions will look very different for all of you - some buildings will present more difficulties than others, the availability of staff, the right safety equipment, deep cleaning and teaching in 'bubbles', to name but a few! However, I am also aware that your creativity and ingenuity have been exemplary and I am immensely proud of your resolve to still provide pastoral, educational and spiritual support for our children and their families across the Diocese. I hope soon that the local priests of our parishes can once again visit the schools and support you in all your endeavours.

I am also grateful to your Governing Bodies and Directors who have given you every support, as well as working closely with you, to ensure that safety, health and well-being have been prioritised in all the decisions you have made.

By next week, all of our Primary schools will have 're-opened' and our Secondary schools will be preparing for the return of some students, although I appreciate that none of you have ever really closed! The additional stress and workload of providing education for the children of key workers while still setting work within a virtual environment, has been immensely appreciated by the Diocese. I know you have had a special care for those children and families who have been particularly vulnerable or grieving the loss of loved ones during these past weeks.

When I wrote to you at the start of this crisis, none of us could have envisaged the enormity of what we had to face. You have worked selflessly, often at a potentially personal risk, and I pay tribute to every one of you. Although we are not yet at the end of this crisis, you have demonstrated how we will continue to work together to provide



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the best we can for our children, young people and families, within the inevitable constraints.

Behind the scenes our Diocesan Education staff are doing all they can to support you at a national and local level.

I am saddened by the fact that I am unable to visit you in your schools at the moment to encourage you but very much look forward to the time when I can do so. Meanwhile please be assured of my prayers, my support and good wishes for these coming weeks.

I would be most grateful if you would make sure that all the staff see a copy of this letter.

Yours sincerely in Christ

The Right Revd Alan S Hopes
Bishop of East Anglia