



From Jackie Waters-Dewhurst, Diocesan Director of Education –

Another week and we all continue to await the daily announcements from the government. At the diocese we are keeping in touch with the 3 Local Authorities and with the RSC and are feeding your thoughts, difficulties and successes back to them and, through the RSC back to the DfE. Pertaining to reopening we have fed back the need for schools, LAs and MATs to know ahead of any public announcement and for a reasonable period of notice to ensure that we can all prepare properly. We have no idea if this will be heeded.

I know that there will be a continued reflection on what has gone well over these last few weeks and what now needs to change or develop. Priorities shift as the time goes on and as staffing situations alter.

We are seeing more schools engaging with their pupils in real time via Zoom or Teams or school website platforms. This is enabling staff and pupils to feel connected and for relationships to continue but is not without its challenges for staff and parents!

Many of you are now considering staff CPD and how best to utilise this time and technology to ensure that staff have all that they need to start back in the classroom and avoiding an awful backlog of training needs at the same time as we all struggle with the emotional, mental and physical challenges of a return and with pupils who are also struggling. If there is anything which we can provide to help with this please do get in touch.

A good number of schools have taken the opportunity to arrange a 'virtual' meeting this term with Paul Thompson under the diocesan SLA agreement. If you would like to meet with Paul to discuss key developments, successes and challenges and see what the diocese can do to further support your school, then please contact Paul at paul.thompson@lincoln.anglican.org

One of the most comforting, beautiful Psalms in the Bible is Psalm 23 – it's not about death, it's about life – what God does for us in life.

Psalm 23:4-6 New International Version (NIV)

**⁴Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,^[a]**

I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

⁶Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

Footnotes:

a. **Psalm 23:4** *Or the valley of the shadow of death*

For most of us still, this time may be difficult but we are not in the valley of the shadow of death. Although there are many difficult relationships, for most of us, we are not in the presence of our enemies. However, the salient points are:

God is with us

God is a comfort

He has prepared things so that our needs are met – in abundance

And this will not change – this offer is a constant – for ever.

We can do this for our pupils and their families too:

Stay with them through this

Be a comfort to them

Prepare to meet their needs (in abundance)

And carry on doing it – so that what we have done for them shapes them and supports them and stays with them forever.

And when we do this we do it with the strength that God has given us and with his examples set before us.

Our prayer for you at this time is that you feel God with you; a comfort and a strength and that you are able to communicate this with your school communities in all that you do.

God bless -

Jackie

Resources

Called, Connected, Committed

The latest edition of the above is now available [here](#), from the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership.



This includes a conversation with Tom Rees of Ambition Institute on the topic of 'Embracing Interdependence' this week.

The first [Oak National Academy](#) assembly will be led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, and the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson. This will go live at 10am on Thursday morning (30th April), so do tune in.

Bereavement Resources

Click [here](#) to access our website and resources from Child Bereavement UK, Children's Bereavement Centre, Church Army and Cruse.



Justine Caswell - Psychotherapeutic Counsellor: Wellbeing During the Pandemic

Justine has developed a series of videos for us for adults working in schools - for each there is a worksheet.

These can be accessed on our website [here](#).

#BOOKS4VALUES



Also on our site, collated by Karl Duke (@KarlDuke8 on Twitter) - a resource for schools linking picture books with Christian values: click [here](#).

Teach RE: To Enthuse, To Educate, To Inspire



This website provides some free training; some involves a cost. Click [here](#).

Teach RE is an initiative of Culham St Gabriel's – an endowed charitable trust dedicated to educational work in support of religious education.