

# Diocese of Westminster Education Service

## Witness to the Word:

## School Bulletin 29.04.20

Dear Colleague in Catholic Education,

As a family of schools we to continue work with each other and for each other at this time of extraordinary need. The Education Service is committed to ensuring each school can receive the support it requires to cope with this crisis. Every Wednesday for the foreseeable future we will be providing a School Bulletin full of resources and links to resources that may be of interest to you and your school community. Please feel free to share widely.

### Objectives of the Education Service during Coronavirus (Covid-19) epidemic:

- To support Headteachers, Heads of RE, RE Coordinators, Governors and the wider school community to cope at this time of unprecedented challenge;
- To provide the updates from the UK Government, DfE, CES and the Diocese of Westminster on all aspects of the Coronavirus Covid-19 relating to schools and colleges;
- To provide resources and advice relating to the Teaching and Learning of RE;
- To provide resources and advice relating to Mental Health issues;
- To provide resources and advice relating to Spiritual support and renewal.

**Thank you for all you are doing for your school community and for Catholic education.**

### Reflection in a time of Suffering and the Gospel accounts of the Risen Jesus.


In Pope Francis' inaugural homily as Pope on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013 he said the following which has so much resonance for us at this time;

“Saint Paul speaks of Abraham, who, ‘hoping against hope, believed’ (Rom 4:18). Hoping against hope! Today too, amid so much darkness, we need to see the light of hope and to be men and women who bring hope to others. To protect creation, to protect every man and every woman, to look upon them with tenderness and love, is to open up a horizon of hope; it is to let a shaft of light break through the heavy clouds; it is to bring the warmth of hope! For believers, for us Christians, like Abraham, like Saint Joseph, the hope that we bring is set against the horizon of God, which has opened up before us in Christ. It is a hope built on the rock which is God.

PHONE

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Brian Purfield, writing for the Jesuit online periodical Thinking Faith, examines the Gospel accounts of the appearances of the risen Jesus. What do they tell us about the disciples' experience of the Resurrection? What do they tell us about the early Christian communities for whom they were written? What do they tell us about the risen Jesus himself?

The Resurrection of Christ is central to our faith as Christians. Paul proclaims: "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith is in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:14). From Easter Sunday to Low Sunday, the readings at Mass present the accounts of the appearances of the risen Lord. This article looks at these accounts, in the hope that we may taste something of the experience of the resurrection that the early Christian followers of Christ had.

He concludes, the gospel accounts carefully emphasise the final effect of the risen Lord's appearances and words. His appearances lead the disciples to a richer and deeper faith in who he is. They express this deeper faith in Jesus by giving him, still recognised as the crucified one, a new name. Individually and together, they rejoice: "We have seen the Lord" (John 20:18, 25; 21:7), while Thomas even more explicitly confesses: "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). Like Paul writing to Philippi, the evangelists seek to highlight the fact that the disciples, as they see and hear the risen Christ, give Jesus the "name that is above every name" (Philippians 2:9): Jesus is one with God; he is filled with God's life: "Jesus is Lord." For the Church, too, this is a time for conversion. Francis resists any false polarity between Church as people of God and Church as institution. The Church 'is' institution, he insists, in the sense that it is the body of the people of God gathered together, united and acting; it is a concrete expression of togetherness, not some nebulous, faux-communal idea. But what creates the institution is the Holy Spirit, and 'the Church that comes out of the crisis' is one that needs to live better in the tension of harmony and disorder that is characteristic of the Spirit. In crisis we need new ways of doing old things, flexibility and creativity. That way we collaborate with what is being born.

Read here for the full article [https://www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/20080322\\_1.htm](https://www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/20080322_1.htm)

## **Teaching & Learning in RE:**

Included with this bulletin is the following:

- The Education Service is using the Beatitudes for its focus this term and content reflects this;
- Blessed are the Gentle;
- Laudato Si Links;
- NATRE Secondary Support;
- Teaching and Learning Wk 6

## The outreach of the Church to the faithful and call to prayer.

- Bishop +John Sherrington has highlighted the important need to support those who are suffering domestic abuse at this time of lockdown. To find out more please see here:  
<https://rcdow.org.uk/news/bishop-john-support-those-who-suffer-domestic-abuse-during-the-pandemic/>
- The Diocese is live streaming Masses and here is the link to those available.  
<https://rcdow.org.uk/news/how-to-participate-in-mass-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/>  
<https://soundcloud.com/catholicchurch>
- This Sunday is Good Shepherd Sunday. To find out more please see here:  
<https://rcdow.org.uk/news/good-shepherd-sunday/>
- The Jesuit Pray as You Go site has changed to Pray as you Stay <https://pray-as-you-go.org>

## Support for Mental Health – in particular Bereavement:

Included with this bulletin is the following:

- Resources to support mental health;
- Support your mental health while working from home

### Secondary School Students

**Child Bereavement UK** - [Click Here](#) (Support and information for supporting a bereaved student)

**Young Minds** - [Click Here](#) (Information and advice for young people dealing with grief and loss)

### Supporting School Staff for children affected by grief and loss

**Catholic Children's Society** - [Click Here](#) (Information on the Rainbows Bereavement Programme)

**Rainbows Bereavement** [Click Here](#) (National Rainbows Bereavement Charity)

**Child Bereavement UK** - [Click Here](#) (Primary) [Click Here](#) (Secondary) (Information for families and school staff in supporting children and young people experiencing grief and loss.)

**Childhood Bereavement Network** - [Click Here](#) (Information for school staff in supporting children and young people through bereavement.)

**Winston's Wish** - [Click Here](#) (Information for school staff in supporting children and young people through grief and loss.)

**Mentally Healthy Schools** - [Click Here](#) (Information for school staff in supporting children and young people through bereavement.)

**Cruse Bereavement Care** - [Click Here](#) (Support for schools on a wide range of bereavement issues)

**Glasgow City Council/NHS** - [Click Here](#) (A Whole School Approach to Supporting Loss and Bereavement)

**SecEd** - [Click Here](#) (Article on bereavement in schools entitled When death happens: Bereavement in schools)

## **Supporting Parents/Carers for a child affected by grief and loss**

**Rainbows** - [Click Here](#) (Information for parents on Rainbows National Programme)

**Winston's Wish** - [Click Here](#) (Support for parents on helping children dealing with grief and loss)

**Sue Ryder** - [Click Here](#) (Information for parents on helping their child through grief and loss.)

**Together for short lives** - [Click Here](#) (Information and support for families dealing with the death of a child.)

**Young Minds** - [Click Here](#) (Information for parents support children and young people with grief and loss)

## **Message from Rainbows Bereavement Support GB**

When schools reopen, there will be a real and increased need for Rainbows. They will offer quality training in bereavement, grief and loss to staff enabling school staff to support their pupils in a small groups situation. As the Rainbows Resource Centre is closed they made some resources, including Silver Linings and When Somebody Dies, available to download for free <https://rainbowsgb.org/corona-virus-how-rainbows-can-help/>

And provided a link to a terrific book for children explaining Coronavirus, also available to download for free <https://rainbowsgb.org/2020/04/coronavirus-a-free-book-for-children/>

## **Spiritual Support:**

Included with this bulletin is the following:

- Daily Prayers for School Week 6;
- Fruitful heart Eucharistic worship;
- Gentle – Saint of the Environment.
- Liturgical Year – April and May.
- A Year of the Word at Home document

## **Capital**

### **VASCA 2020/21 (The Replacement of LCVAP)**

This week, the priority has been to identify priority projects that cannot be delivered if we lose the Summer Holiday option. Works involving the removal of asbestos etc. need a vacant site. If this is not an option, and it is otherwise safe to do so, projects of this type may be deferred until 2021. The revised list of potential projects will be reviewed by the Education Commission on 7 May. Once agreed, the initial wave of 2020/21 projects will be announced.

If an offer of VASCA is made to a school, the Lead Consultant, Governors and School Leaders will be asked to confirm that the project can be delivered in term-time. If that is not possible, the scheme will be postponed and the funding assigned to the next school in the ranked list. Following the disruption of Covid-19, not all school will appreciate further disruption in the Autumn of 2020 and the Spring of 2021. Working together, we will be able to ensure that our VASCA allocation is targeted at deliverable projects.



## Priority School Building Programme

Project managers continue to monitor the progress of schools in this scheme. Some contractors are able to make headway whilst ensuring social distancing.

## Demographic Survey (Project 2020)

The project team met on Tuesday to review progress. Colleagues from 1<sup>st</sup> Planner are in the process of identifying potential S106 funding in the designated Local Authority areas. With the support of the CES, data relating to Catholicity in Diocesan Schools has been supplied and is now being prepared for integration with other 1<sup>st</sup> Planner data. Initial indications are that there is a reducing trend in the number of Catholic Children seeking placement. Eventually, head Teachers and Chairs of Governors will be asked to engage with this project as Stakeholders. In order to test this engagement, two colleagues have been invited to join the Steering Group.

## Statlog

Schools have started to receive their login credentials for Statlog. Please login as soon as possible and check that the correct personnel are included in the list of contacts for your school and make corrections as possible. Please carefully consider which staff and governors need access. We are anticipating the following:

- Governors (1 or 2): Chair and Chair of Premises
- School: Head, 1 Deputy or Assistant Head, 1 SBM and 1 SPM

Executive Leadership: If you are an Executive Head, it might be advantageous for you to see all schools in your federation on one Dashboard. We will be working with Statlog to offer this option.

Correction of a misconception: In last week's bulletin, I referenced certain examples of potential expenditure. These relate to the anticipated expenditure by a school on a series of planned and reactive maintenance projects. The Trustees have not confirmed a ceiling for the maximum value of a single piece of work that can be undertaken without the engagement of a consultant but it is likely to be in the region of £20k to £30K for Primary Schools and £30K - £50K for secondary schools.

I am pleased to note that some school are already engaging with Statlog and procuring the full service for their school. This will help to ensure that the needs of their community are properly reflected in Statlog by the time the Education Commission begins the process of project identification in the late Autumn of 2020.

The annual LCVAP bidding process has been retired. In January 2021, a list of potential priorities, as confirmed through Statlog, will be presented to the Education Commission and Trustees for approval.

Statlog have been provided with a list of Diocesan Consultants and encouraged to provide training for them at the earliest opportunity. Once trained, you Consultant will be able to facilitate the upload of data relating to condition, suitability and sufficiency and formulate the schematics required for local Statutory Compliance management.

Statlog can be accessed via: <https://www.statlog.co.uk/>

## UK Government & DfE Updates and links;

## Maintaining Educational Provision for Vulnerable and Key Worker Children:

### Recruitment During Coronavirus

We have been asked to circulate a link to the article below from The Key for School Leaders. The article contains some useful tips for running virtual recruitment processes and colleagues may find it helpful to refer to it as they plan their recruitment processes in the current circumstances, if they have not done so already.

<https://schoolleaders.thekeysupport.com/covid-19/manage-and-support-your-staff/remote-recruitment-and-induction/recruitment-how-manage-it-remotely/?marker=taxmostpopularmodule>


- Use a password for meetings if using Zoom – also use the waiting room function so that you only admit candidates or people you are expecting to the meeting.
- As an alternative to traditional lesson observations, use a YouTube pre-recorded lesson and ask the candidate to watch the lesson and provide feedback. The panel will need to watch the pre-recorded lesson first and agree what points should be picked up by the candidate.

Northampton Diocese has also provided us with the following feedback after having a really positive experience of conducting virtual interviews:

- Microsoft Office Teams worked really well. Each candidate had their own virtual room and the panel had a separate virtual room.
- The interviewers met the candidates according to the timetable for panel interviews.
- We allowed 50mins/hour for each panel interview to allow for technical difficulties etc. It was useful having a panel of 3 as at times one of the panel lost connection but we continued and there were still 2 who heard all of the answers.
- After the interview the panel left the interview and went into the panel room to discuss.
- There was a lunch break built into the process and after lunch there was a presentation. This was uploaded onto teams and the panel could still see the candidate and the presentation. Questions followed.

Dioceses have also asked the following additional questions which we answer below:

- **Signature of application forms** – it is appropriate for application forms to be signed and returned by post if there are staff available to collect post. Alternatively, application forms can be signed at the applicant's home and scanned and returned by email with the original provided either by post or when lockdown restrictions are lifted, in person. If an individual does not have a scanner they could print the application form at home, sign it and then take a photograph of the document and email it back. If the candidate does not have access to a printer they could apply an electronic signature or simply type their name in the signature box before they email the form back. They can then be asked to provide a signed copy in due course.

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- **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 Forms** – at the moment, candidates are required to provide these in a sealed envelope when they attend interview. If there are staff in school to receive these forms then they could be sent in by post if instructions are given to staff on site as to how to deal with the forms appropriately. Alternatively, the forms could be emailed across at the point at which an offer is about to be made. This is preferable to having all shortlisted applicants email them in as schools should not collect more data of this nature than they need. If a job offer is to be made, we would suggest telephoning the applicant, stating that the school is at the point of making a job offer (subject to the usual checks), and then ask that the form be emailed prior to the conversation going any further. An original copy of the form can then be collected once lockdown restrictions have been lifted. All job offers should continue to be made subject to the usual checks being carried out.
  - **Proof of ID** - for DBS checks it has been confirmed that instead of seeing physical documents schools can see them via scanned images and/or a video link, the relevant guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>. The applicant will still need to produce the original versions of these documents when they first attend in person. Qualification certificates could be seen in the same way. Right to work checks can be carried out following the government guidance which you can find by following this link:  
  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-right-to-work-checks>. We would also refer you to the government's updated safeguarding guidance which can be found by following this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>
  - **Signature of employment contracts** – contracts can be either, signed and scanned, signed whilst the parties are on a video call and then scanned or photographed and emailed and hard copies can be provided once lockdown restrictions are lifted, or signed versions could be sent by post if there are staff available to receive post. It is not necessary for both parties to be signing the same copy of the contract and a composite version can be made up once physical copies are available.

## School Admission Appeal Code Guidance

The DfE has now provided an update to say that in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic a number of organisations have contacted them asking for advice regarding school admission appeals. In particular, how to overcome the challenges posed by social distancing to in person appeal hearings.

In response to these queries the Department is currently drafting urgent temporary regulation measures which will disapply certain elements of the School Admission Appeal Code. The aim of the regulations is to give admissions authorities as much flexibility as possible to manage appeals in a way that best suits their local circumstance. It is anticipated that the regulatory changes will come into force on the 24 April 2020.

Specifically, the new regulations, which will be in force until 31 January 2021, will:

- Disapply the requirement that appeal panels must be held in person and instead give flexibility for the panel hearing to take place either in person, by telephone, video conference or through paper-based appeals where all parties can make representations in writing;
- Relax the rules with regards to what happens if one of the three panel members withdraws (temporarily or permanently) to make it permissible for the panel to continue with and conclude the panel as a panel of two; and
- Amend the deadlines relating to appeals for the time that the new regulations are in force.

It has, however, been highlighted by the Department that the regulations will not remove any of the clerking duties for admissions appeals. In addition, parents will retain the right to lodge a maladministration complaint if they are unhappy with the way their appeal has been administered.

The regulations are currently pending Parliamentary approval. The CES will provide a further update once the regulations and guidance are available.

In advance of Primary National Offer Day we hope that this information about the forthcoming regulations will assist you in providing guidance to your schools about planning for upcoming appeals.


The full announcement with additional information on the proposals is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/admission-appeals-for-school-places/coronavirus-covid-19-school-admission-appeals>

## **DfE Guidance**

1. **Help Primary school children continue their education:** [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-primary-school-children-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19?utm\\_source=b0838257-848b-4d77-b72f-37767d087fd1&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-primary-school-children-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=b0838257-848b-4d77-b72f-37767d087fd1&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)
2. **Supporting your children's education through coronavirus:** [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-your-childrens-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19?utm\\_source=cab989cd-0d5a-4ac7-9145-6445159c785f&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/supporting-your-childrens-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=cab989cd-0d5a-4ac7-9145-6445159c785f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)
3. **Helping children with SEND continue their education :** [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-with-send-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19?utm\\_source=2e5b55a3-a70c-4ef9-9d11-f63b6d452437&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-with-send-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=2e5b55a3-a70c-4ef9-9d11-f63b6d452437&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)
4. **Sensory project resources:** <http://www.thesensoryprojects.co.uk/covid19-resources>
5. **Amazon** are offering free coding resources for all age groups in co- ordination with Fire Tech Camp available at: <https://www.amazonfutureengineer.co.uk/>



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6. **Stem Learning** have updated their COVID resources including a Q and A video from Tim Peake on life as an Astronaut resources all age ranges on website for STEM subjects: <https://www.stem.org.uk/>

#### **Launch of the Oak National Academy online classroom and resource hub**

The sector-led Oak National Academy has today launched its online classroom and resource hub. The Academy offers 180 video lessons each week for schools to use, across a broad range of subjects. The lessons cover children in Reception through to Year 10 and are free to use by both teachers and young people.

**The Oak National Academy** can be accessed here:

<https://www.thenational.academy/>

#### **Launch of BBC Bitesize**

The BBC has today launched an education package across TV and online, featuring celebrities and teachers, helping to keep children learning at home and supporting parents.

BBC Bitesize can be accessed here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

#### **Get help with technology and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Following the announcement by the Secretary of State for Education on Sunday 19 April, laptops and tablets will be made available to help the most disadvantaged young people access online learning and social care services. Young people and families eligible for devices must not already have access to one, and must be in one of the following groups:

Children with a social worker

Care leavers

Disadvantaged children in Year 10, ahead of sitting their GCSEs next year


Responsible bodies will need to work with schools to identify eligible young people, and then place an order through our website when it launches later this week. Where care leavers, children with a social worker at secondary school and disadvantaged children do not have an internet connection, they will also receive a 4G router.

Schools will be able to keep these devices once they've reopened, allowing children and young people to continue to learn and receive support at home in the future.

Any 16 to 19-year olds in education without a suitable device and/or connectivity to study remotely and whose family can't afford these costs will also be eligible for support via the 16-19 Bursary Fund. Decisions on support will be made by education providers.

#### **Funding and financial support for education, early years and children's social care**

We have published guidance that sets out the financial support that is available for different types of education, early years and children's social care providers in England.



This guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care>

**Special educational needs and disability (SEND) risk assessment guidance**

We have published guidance on risk assessment for settings supporting children and young people with an education, health and care plan during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance>

**Guidance for schools on safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19)**

We have published guidance to help schools and teachers understand how to follow safeguarding procedures when teaching remotely during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

This guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Guidance for parents and carers on supporting their children's education during coronavirus (COVID-19)

We have published information, guidance and support for parents and carers of children who are learning at home during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

**Guidance on helping children aged 2 to 4 learn at home can be found here:**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-aged-2-to-4-to-learn-at-home-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

**Guidance on helping primary school aged children learn at home can be found here:**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-primary-school-children-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

**Guidance on helping children with special educational needs and disabilities learn at home can be found here:**


<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-children-with-send-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

**Updated guidance for parents and carers on the closure of educational settings**

The guidance for parents and carers on the closure of educational settings has been updated with additional information on the support available for parents, online educational resources and support for vulnerable children.

The guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>



Guidance on supporting vulnerable children and young people during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak  
The guidance for education settings and local authorities on supporting vulnerable children and young people has been updated. This update includes clarification to the existing guidance on attendance.

This guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

The information below has not changed since yesterday.

Department for Education coronavirus helpline

The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours:

8am to 6pm – Monday to Friday

10am to 4pm – Saturday and Sunday

If you work in a school, please have your unique reference number (URN or UK PRN) available when calling the hotline.