

Diocese of Westminster Education Service

Witness to the Word:

School Bulletin 06.05.20

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.

The month of May: Two Prayers shared by the Holy Father


The month of May is a time when the People of God express with particular intensity their love and devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is traditional in this month to pray the Rosary at home within the family. The restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to appreciate all the more this “family” aspect, also from a spiritual point of view.

For this reason, I want to encourage everyone to rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May. This can be done either as a group or individually; you can decide according to your own situations, making the most of both opportunities. The key to doing this is always simplicity, and it is easy also on the internet to find good models of prayers to follow.

PHONE

FAX

WEB



I am also providing two prayers to Our Lady that you can recite at the end of the Rosary, and that I myself will pray in the month of May, in spiritual union with all of you. I include them with this letter so that they are available to everyone.


Dear brothers and sisters, contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary our Mother will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial. I keep all of you in my prayers, especially those suffering most greatly, and I ask you, please, to pray for me. I thank you, and with great affection I send you my blessing.

Pope Francis
Rome, Saint John Lateran, 25 April 2020
Feast of Saint Mark the Evangelist

FIRST PRAYER

O Mary,
You shine continuously on our journey
as a sign of salvation and hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who, at the foot of the cross,
were united with Jesus' suffering,
and persevered in your faith.
"Protectress of the Roman people",
you know our needs,
and we know that you will provide,
so that, as at Cana in Galilee,
joy and celebration may return
after this time of trial.
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform ourselves to the will of the Father
and to do what Jesus tells us.
For he took upon himself our suffering,
and burdened himself with our sorrows
to bring us, through the cross,
to the joy of the Resurrection.
Amen.

*We fly to your protection,
O Holy Mother of God;
Do not despise our petitions*



*in our necessities,
but deliver us always
from every danger,
O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.*

SECOND PRAYER

“We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God”.

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.


Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health. Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.



Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves,
O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

Please find attached the link for this week's Rosary upload to our You Tube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okLYzq2yE5g>

In praying for doctors and priests during Mass on Sunday at the Casa Santa Marta, Pope Francis likened them to the Good Shepherd laying down their lives serving the flock. - By Sr Bernadette Mary Reis, fsp

Pope Francis celebrated Mass on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, also known as Good Shepherd Sunday. He prayed in a special way for doctors and priests, citing the numbers of those who have died in Italy: over 100 priests and approximately 154 doctors. "May the example of these shepherds, priests and doctors, help us take care of the holy, faithful People of God", the Pope prayed.

Pope Francis then reflected on the image of the Good Shepherd presented in the reading from the First Letter of Peter (2:20-25) and the Gospel of John (10:1-10).


Jesus is the Shepherd

St Peter describes Jesus as a shepherd, the one who came to save His straying sheep. By bearing the sins of the sheep, Jesus freed us from sin. Due to Jesus's death, we have returned to our Shepherd, the "guardian of our souls" (1 Pt 2:25). St John describes Jesus not only as the Shepherd but also as the "door through which the flock enters", Pope Francis continued.

The sheep know the Shepherd

Unfortunately, just as Jesus said in the Gospel, many "fake shepherds" have entered to rob and exploit the Lord's flock. "They are not interested in the flock", the Pope explained. Their interests have been climbing the ladder, politics or money. But the flock always recognizes who the good shepherds are and who are the robbers, Pope Francis continued.

A good shepherd is distinguished by its flock. A flock flourishes because the shepherd listens, guides and cares for the sheep, Pope Francis noted. The sheep entrust themselves only to those shepherds who are similar to Jesus, the Good Shepherd. In this respect, the flock never errs, he said. Only those shepherds who are "like Jesus elicit confidence in their flock. Jesus's style must be the pastor's style. There is no other."



Jesus's example

That style was spelled out by St Peter. Jesus “suffered” for the sheep so we could “follow in His footsteps”. He never returned insult for injury. That is “meekness”, the Pope said. Meekness is “one of the signs of a good shepherd”. If a pastor is not meek, he is hiding something, for “meekness makes oneself seen as he or she is, without defenses”.

A good shepherd tenderly draws near each sheep and knows each one’s name. “He takes care of each one as if it were the only one”, Pope Francis continued. In fact, if at the end of the day, the shepherd realizes that one sheep has not returned, he will go out in search of it notwithstanding how tired he is. “This is a good shepherd,” the Pope said. “This is Jesus”.

An Easter idea

Pope Francis called the image of the shepherd, the flock and the sheep an “Easter idea”. He recalled that an Easter hymn calls the newly baptized “newborn lambs”. This is the “Church Jesus wants”, Pope Francis said. “Jesus takes care of this Church”.

Therefore, “this Sunday is a beautiful Sunday”, the Pope concluded his homily. “It is a Sunday of peace, tenderness, meekness because our Shepherd takes care of us. ‘The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want’ ”.

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:
- 13 pieces of teaching materials
- Meditations;
- Teaching and Learning Wk 7

The Beatitude Resources

<https://education.rcdow.org.uk/pandemic-support-the-beatitudes-resources-new/>

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

Recently the **Catholic Children Society** have collaborated with the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) to develop videos which provide short meditation sessions which children and young people can participate in, whether in school or based at home. These sessions are inspired by meditation in the tradition of John Main OSB and the CCS are grateful for the support of Father Laurence Freeman OSB in developing these.

Full details are available here: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6Cb5LrAIU7_MPTRDMUBcvQ?view_as=subscriber

- 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>
- The Jesuit Pray as You Go site has changed to Pray as you Stay <https://pray-as-you-go.org>

Support for Mental Health

Included with this bulletin is the following:

- Resources to support mental health;
- Support your mental health while working from home;
- Five Simple Ways to Aid children's well-being.

Materials for children in dealing with stress and anxiety

Cbeebies - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/joinin/seven-techniques-for-helping-kids-keep-calm> (Seven techniques for helping children keep calm)

Save the Children - <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/what-we-do/coronavirus/resources/learning-at-home/relaxation-exercises-to-do-at-home-with-your-kids> (A range of relaxation exercises for children to do at home.) and the Stress Busters in a pdf format <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/content/dam/usa/reports/emergency-response/stress-busters-from-our-heart-program.pdf>

Mentally Healthy Schools –

Emotion Wheel - <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/2001/emotion-wheel.pdf> (The emotion wheel can be used with children of all ages who are struggling to express their current feelings.)

Emotional Check-in - <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/2003/emotional-check-in.pdf> (A written resource supports children and young people to not only express their feelings but identify why they are feeling a particular way.)

Anxiety Thermometer - <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/2022/anxiety-thermometer.pdf> (Using a feelings thermometer is a great tool to help children recognise what feelings they might be experiencing in any given moment.)

Sentence Starters

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/2005/sentence-starters.pdf> (Sentence starters can be useful prompts for children who are struggling to order their thinking or express the way they feel.)



Mood Cafe – Relax Like a Cat

<http://www.moodcafe.co.uk/media/26930/Relaxleaflet.pdf> (A guided relaxation, using the analogy of a cat, to ease any anxiety and create a sense of calm for children.)

NHS – Self Care Kit for children

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/2013/self-care-kit-covid-19.pdf> (This kit has lots of ideas for self-care for children, including mindful colouring, laughing out loud, breathing exercises, ways to express thoughts, a self soothe box and more creative activities.)

ELSA Support

May Wellbeing Calendar - <https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/May-Calendar.pdf> (A well-being calendar for the month of May – Lots of ideas and activities to promote positive wellbeing within children.)

14 day home challenge - <https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Coronavirus-home-challenge-2-1.pdf> (A 14-day calendar of activities, including mindfulness, crafts and positive thinking, that can help boost wellbeing and keep children occupied in a proactive way.)

Materials for adults in supporting stress and anxiety within children

NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/depression-anxiety-mental-health/> (Advice on talking to a child worried about coronavirus, as well as noticing signs of depression or anxiety in children and how to help or get mental health support)

Mind-UP - <https://mindup.org.uk/families/> (MindUP is a school-based programme grounded in neuroscience, mindful awareness, positive psychology and social emotional learning.)

Anne Freud Centre - <https://www.annafreud.org/media/11465/helping-cyp-manage-anxiety-apr2020-v3.pdf> (Helping children and young people to manage anxiety - A practical guide to supporting pupils and students during periods of disruption.)

Young Minds - <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-anxiety/> (An article and video with tips for parents on supporting their children with anxiety.)

Spiritual Support:

Included with this bulletin is the following:

- Daily Prayers for School Week 7 through TenTen materials ;
- Meditations;
- A big thank you to the pupils of Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School, Hammersmith & Fulham, for the meditations for children in the spirituality section, supported by Fr Mark Vickers.



Capital 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 last week to review progress. Colleagues from 1st 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 1st 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.

Stephen Tierney – Leadership Development Programmes

Stephen is planning some leadership development programmes for next year, with the National College of Education.

They can all be funded by the Apprenticeship Levy. Trusts hold their own funds; for LA maintained schools they tend to be held at the local authority level.

Future Leaders Programme (Level 3) - A twelve month programme for line managers working in schools in teaching and non-teaching roles who are at the start of their leadership journey.

Education Management Programme (Level 5) - An eighteen month programme for current or aspiring middle leaders

Senior Leadership Masters (Level 7) - A two year programme for senior leaders on the leadership pay scale

More programme information (costings, how the different programmes are assessed plus the qualifications obtained) plus an "expression of interest form" can be found here: <https://leadinglearner.me/leadership-development-programmes-fully-funded/>



UK Government & DfE Updates and links; Maintaining Educational Provision for Vulnerable and Key Worker Children:

Recruitment

The Department has now issued guidance in relation to recruitment as part of its general Covid-19 advice which covers the points we made in our last update, including in relation to notice periods. The advice can be accessed by following this link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures?utm_source=e2370cff-637a-4f13-8694-04ca86c2aed8&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Arrangements in relation to Newly Qualified Teachers

The government has issued guidance in relation to NQTs and the impact of the Coronavirus to support the implementation of The Education (School Teachers' Qualifications and Induction Arrangements) (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 which come into force on 21 May 2020. NQTs who are currently completing their statutory induction period will be able to complete it this academic year as expected provided that they meet the Teachers' Standards. The guidance can be found by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers/covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers-guidance>

EHCP Revised Timescales

Guidance has been issued to support The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 which come into force today. These regulations allow for temporary changes to some aspects of the law on education, health and care needs assessments and plans to enable local authorities, health commissioning bodies and education settings to contribute to those processes more flexibly in response to the issues that have arisen during the Coronavirus pandemic. The guidance can be found by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-law-on-education-health-and-care-needs-assessments-and-plans-due-to-coronavirus/education-health-and-care-needs-assessments-and-plans-guidance-on-temporary-legislative-changes-relating-to-coronavirus-covid-19>

Admission Appeals

Please find attached our advice in relation to school admission appeals during Coronavirus which takes into account the regulations referred to in our last update.



Governors' Terms of Office

The Department has not issued any further advice in this regard at this stage.

Temporary Pupils Guidance

The Department has made an amendment to the School Attendance Guidance for Schools to make it clear that pupils attending schools on a temporary basis remain on the roll at their original school. The guidance can be accessed by following this link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance?utm_source=deb0ca87-2a2e-45a3-bf8e-f9900890bcef&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

DfE Coronavirus Research

This research will make clear the challenges schools, teachers, families and young people are facing and be used to quickly inform the right government advice to ensure learning can continue.

The Department is keen to speak urgently with **head teachers, class teachers, early years professionals, and parents of nursery/school-age children**. Several upcoming research sessions are planned over the next few weeks, with the first slots of research beginning on **Tuesday 5th May 2020**. The session will last for approximately 45 minutes and will be led by a Department for Education user researcher.

Please would you share this information with head teachers and request that they alert school staff and parents. Those who are interested may register via this link. [Register here](#)

Vaccination Trial Request

The St George's Vaccine Institute is looking for healthy volunteers to participate in a COVID-19 vaccine trial. This study is open to staff and members of the public, and aims to find a safe vaccine that can be used to create immune responses against the virus, and thus prevent the disease.

Staff and members of the public would be welcome to apply - if you are aged 18-55 and in good health, you could be eligible to participate. The study involves 4 visits to the institute - based within **St George's, University of London** - over a period of 6 months, and volunteers will be reimbursed up to £190 for their time, travel and contribution to the trial. <https://covid19vaccinetrial.co.uk/volunteer>



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

Please see below DfE guidance that has been issued recently which you may have missed:

- Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak – updated 28 April 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures>

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- Providing free school meals during the coronavirus outbreak – updated 30 April 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance#history>
 - Use of free early education entitlements funding during the coronavirus outbreak – Updated 28 April 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-free-early-education-entitlements-funding-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>
 - School attendance: guidance for schools – updated 30 April 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>
 - Changes to the law on education, health and care needs assessments and plans due to coronavirus – updated 30 April 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-law-on-education-health-and-care-needs-assessments-and-plans-due-to-coronavirus>
 - Induction for newly qualified teachers during the coronavirus outbreak – Updated 1 May 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers>
 - Disapplication notice: school attendance legislation changes – updated 30 April 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disapplication-notice-school-attendance-legislation-changes>
 - Disapplication notice: school inspections legislation changes – updated 30 April 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disapplication-notice-school-inspections-legislation-changes>
 - Modification notice: school registration legislation changes – updated 30 April 2020
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modification-notice-school-registration-legislation-changes>
 - Modification notice: EHC plans legislation changes
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modification-notice-ehc-plans-legislation-changes>