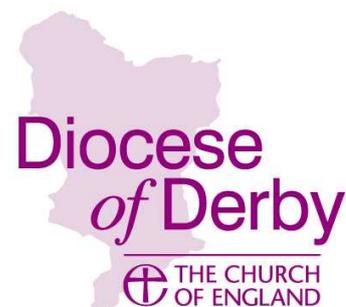


**The Rt Revd Libby Lane
Bishop of Derby**



Communication to headteachers of Church Schools

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I know your inboxes will be full, and your time very pressured – so this is short.

From me, and on behalf of our whole Diocese – thank you.

Thank you for the work of our schools all the time, but especially in these unprecedented times. We thank you for having kept our schools open in such extreme circumstances.

Thank you for all that you and your teams are doing to support our children, young people and families at this difficult time. I appreciate your dedication and hard work and the example you set to us all, ensuring everything you do is underpinned by our Christian values and vision.

As the government have announced their plans to close schools for most pupils from Friday, I wanted to ensure you know my prayers are with you as you re-imagine how to continue to support, educate and invest in the wellbeing and development of the children in your care while most of them are remaining at home and life looks very different.

I pray daily for you and your households. I urge you to look after yourselves diligently, and those for whom you have responsibility. This is not a time for false heroics. Please follow advice given, and pace yourself. We will be in this for months, one way or another, and developing new models of working that are sustainable is what is needed.

I want to acknowledge the extraordinary work of our DBE and DDAT in providing advice, support and care. If there is anything further I, or the rest of the Diocese can offer- please let me know.

In these unprecedented times, I wish you peace in the midst of turmoil.

As your children prepare for new ways of living with their families and households under great stress, perhaps you might like to teach them to say 'Peace be with you' in BSL. There is a video showing how to do that on our Diocesan website. As their schools close perhaps sharing The Peace and carrying with them into the 'new normal' we all face will be a blessing.

This comes with my continued thanks and prayers.

+Libby