

Important Diocesan Education Team Update #22, Fri 19 June 2020

Dear colleagues,

It was good to see so many of you on screen this week as we carried out our first Headteacher Briefings via Zoom. If you weren't able to make one of the sessions and would like the presentation do let us know. I appreciate that you are currently dealing with an inordinate amount of information, guidance and updates from a range of sources and I am keen that we don't unhelpfully add to your unread emails. There is some information, however, that you are unlikely to have received from elsewhere, so I have compiled it here.

- **Teach Rural**

- Those of you who were with us at this week's briefings will have heard Tim Reid outline the work that we are involved in with the Chartered College and Teach First to potentially develop expertise and improve recruitment and retention in rural schools. If your school can be described in any way as 'rural', or if you are CEO of a MAT that has any rural schools, it would be helpful if you could fill in the short and relevant survey below.
 - [Teach Rural School Leader Survey](#).
 - [Teach Rural MAT Leader Survey](#).
- If you are able to complete this survey **before Wednesday 24 June 2020**, that would be much appreciated and would help us in Dudley and Worcestershire to have a voice in the development of this initiative.

- **iSingPop** have made excellent use of the period of lockdown to produce some new resources which you may be interested in looking at.

- **Leavers Video - We're All One**

- Wondering how to celebrate your brilliant leavers? iSingPOP bring to you a leavers video template - create lasting memories with your wonderful classes and bring them together to finish the year as one! Find out more on their [website](#).

- **Classroom Worship**

- A series of seven [weekly Classroom Worship resources](#) for the Summer Term. iSingPOP bring you, the teacher, a brand new classroom worship resource. It's a jam-packed, no prep, 12-15 minute worship time to bring joy and wonderment to your class. You can use it just as it comes, or customise it to your own needs with our easy to use Classroom Worship template. Ideal for headteachers, senior leadership and / or the church to pull together resources for daily acts of collective worship. These can be used in school or online for children working from home. Each week during the Summer term, you will receive an act of daily worship focusing on the themes of courage and unity. Download your free trial, or order the full pack for £95 either buying it online or contacting office@isingpop.com for an invoice.
- [iSingPOP](#) are a national charity bringing school, church and home together. They are an official partner of the Church of England #faithathome initiative, alongside the Oak National Academy Primary Assemblies.

- **Equality**

- We would also love to draw your attention to last week's special [iSingPOP Show Episode on "EQUALITY"](#).

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- **RSHE Training** has been rescheduled to take place in September and Laura has already been in touch to move bookings from March to the new dates.
 - We are currently talking with the providers, Herts for Learning, about the format, but they have assured us that all elements of the original sessions will continue to be included as we learn together to offer training online.
 - Following the DfE's clarification that statutory implementation continues to be from September 2020 but with context-appropriate delays as necessary in order to fulfil the consultation requirements, we are confident that this training will help you to meet the needs of your school community and offer a curriculum that has harmony with the Christian foundation of your school. If you have not already booked a place on this training, please contact [Laura](#) as soon as possible.
- **Headteacher Performance Management** continues to be required despite the recent and ongoing disruption to school life, but taking account of recent events. Tim is in the process of writing new guidelines for those who buy this package of support from us and we will share it with you shortly. If you have not bought this service from us previously but would like to now, contact either Laura or [Tim](#).
- **Schools' use of church buildings**
 - Despite the willingness of many of our clergy colleagues to make their church buildings available to schools for the purposes of increasing teaching capacity, government guidance to both the Church of England and to schools remains clear on the fact that this is *not* currently permissible. As soon as this changes, we will let you know. Please contact me if you would like to discuss your particular circumstances further.
- **Academies and Multi Academy Trusts**
 - I am fairly sure that the issue of academy conversion has not been at the forefront of your minds over recent months. Nonetheless, the DfE continue to assert that the government's vision is for a fully academised school system, albeit within no specific timeframe at present. We will therefore be encouraging governors, when we meet with them next week, to ensure that regular discussions on the subject are held and minuted at full governing body meetings. My advice remains that any decision to convert should be made on the basis of sound educational reasons and I am happy to discuss this with you and / or with your governors at any time.
 - I would strongly advise that you do not invest large amounts of time exploring options until you have spoken with me, as the legal position relating to MAT governance for church schools and the DBE's own policy set out some clear parameters. Please contact me if you would like to discuss this further.
 - [Claire Davies](#), DoWMAT's CEO, is happy to speak with any who are interested in applying to join the DoWMAT.
- **Who is God?**
 - A good question that has a captivating set of responses by children from Rushwick CE VC Primary School. Watch them [here](#) to raise your spirits.

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- **And finally...**

- The subject of equality for all, regardless of creed or colour, has rightly but sadly been in the news again this week. This is simply not something over which there should be any disagreement, or for which protests should need to be made. It is shameful that we are once again relying on death and loss to bring us together with a unified voice calling for equal treatment of all human beings, made in the image of God. We are reminded in the Bible that God is love, and that...

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.

It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

It bears all things, believes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends.

- I certainly fail more times than I want to admit to live a life that is characterised by such love, but surely it must be our aspiration, as individuals and collectively, both in education and in society more widely. To remember to love in the way that we read about in 1 Corinthians is maybe a good thought with which to head towards the weekend.

Our thanks, as always, for all that you do and for enabling us to walk this journey with you.

With best wishes,

Margaret James.

Margaret James
Diocesan Director of Education (DDE)