

# Diocese of Arundel & Brighton Education Service

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10<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Dear Colleagues,

I hope the first five weeks of term have gone well, it seems almost impossible that we are less than three weeks away from half term already! I hope you will excuse the fact that this letter is a week later than usual but the past few weeks have been exceptionally busy at the Education Service, as I know they are in schools, hence the slight delay.

Much has happened here at the Education Service since I last wrote to you at the start of September and over the past four weeks we have met with, amongst many others, Bishop Richard; Local Authority Lead Members and/or Scrutiny Committees; Deborah Myers (new Director of Education) and Senior Officers from West Sussex with regard to current provision and support from the LA for Catholic schools; Senior Officers at Brighton and Hove LA about the inequitable deduction of CERA funds from Catholic schools; Education Officers from neighbouring Dioceses; and a significant number of Primary and Secondary Headteachers and Governors whilst visiting and working with schools throughout the diocese.

In addition, since the start of term we have already welcomed nearly three hundred staff and governors to diocesan CPD events and forums, including NQTs, RE Co-ordinators, School Chaplains, Section 48 Inspectors, Assistant and Deputy Heads, School Business Managers, new Chairs of Governors, Clerks' Forums, Admissions Training. Thank you for supporting these events and for the very positive feedback we have received from participants. We were especially delighted to welcome almost forty Headteachers to a very fulfilling day of Retreat and Recollection for Headteachers at Worth Abbey, led by Bishop Richard. This is the second time we have offered this, having started the practice in September 2015 and this Retreat for Headteachers with Bishop Richard will be an annual September event for the new school year.

**Year of Mercy.** As we approach the end of the Year of Mercy, it is a good time to reflect on the graces that the past ten months have brought. Schools have done wonderful things to mark the Holy Year and it has been a privilege to witness this, both in small ways and large. A number of you will have visited the Holy Door at Mayfield School but you may not be aware that, in order to commemorate the Holy Door in the Year of Mercy, Mayfield School is introducing a Jubilee Scholarship. This will be awarded annually to a girl from a Catholic Primary School in the Diocese and will be merit-based, with the Scholarship awarded on demonstrable academic potential. The Mayfield Scholarship exams will take place in the week beginning Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016. Each scholarship may be supplemented by a Bursary of up to 100% of a day or boarding place. The Jubilee Scholarship will be awarded for the first time for the academic year 2017-2018.

**Academies.** As you will already know, Xavier Catholic Education Trust opened its doors on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 and comprises seven primary and two secondary diocesan schools drawn from Weybridge and Woking deaneries. The second Catholic Education Trust of Academies within the Diocese will open with, initially, a small number of schools drawn from Worthing and Cathedral Deaneries on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. The third MAT of diocesan schools will be The Teresa Catholic Education Trust (comprising schools from Lewes, Crawley and Mayfield Deaneries), with a target opening date of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017. In preparation, due diligence exercises are currently being undertaken in both Catholic Education Trusts. Meetings are also well underway in the two remaining MATs, namely Brighton and Hove with Eastbourne and St Leonard's deaneries; and Epsom, Redhill and Guildford deaneries. A wealth of information and supporting documentation can be found at [www.abeducationservice.org.uk/Resources](http://www.abeducationservice.org.uk/Resources)

As ever, we all owe a debt of thanks to the DASB for all their work alongside the Education Service to support Bishop Richard's vision for five cross-phase Multi Academy Trusts.

**LCVAP.** Just a quick reminder that applications for LCVAP funding for next year need to be received at the Diocesan Education Service by the end of October. The form can be downloaded at: [www.abeducationservice.org.uk/ViewArticle/?section=Resources&id=356&subsect=Head%20Teacher%20Resources](http://www.abeducationservice.org.uk/ViewArticle/?section=Resources&id=356&subsect=Head%20Teacher%20Resources) This might be a good time to ensure that the school premises development plan is reviewed and up-to-date; if you would like any help with this process, do ask us! As has been the custom for the past two years, applications will be reviewed by a panel of Primary and Secondary Headteachers in conjunction with the Diocesan Education Service.

***Schools that Work for Everyone.*** The green paper was officially released on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September in the House of Commons. One of the proposals contained therein is the removal of the 50% cap on faith-based admissions in free schools. Until now the Bishops' Conference has opposed the opening of Catholic free schools because of the cap. The ending of this cap, which emerged out of the coalition agreement in 2010 and had its origins in Liberal Democrat party policy, is tremendous news for Catholic education and potentially affords us new opportunities, hitherto denied us. In view of the proposed changes to legislation we are now able to explore more options and this is something we are examining closely from a strategic perspective. I will be able to report more on this in the next few months.

Lastly, many of you have heard me describe the work of the Education Service as a unique privilege and a huge responsibility. Our roles are varied and often behind the scenes, but we are committed to ensuring schools understand what we do and how we work. If any Headteacher would like to shadow us for a day we would be delighted to hear from you!

Best Wishes,



Marie