

Diocese of Arundel & Brighton Education Service

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Director, Education Service

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Dear Colleague

Welcome back to the start of a new academic year. With the summer holidays now behind us the next big milestone is Christmas! I sincerely hope that all have managed to have a relaxing break and return to school feeling refreshed and ready to face the opportunities and challenges we will undoubtedly face over the course of a new year. I recently came across the following two quotes which I found to be especially apposite and which I offer to you at the start of a new school year:

'I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.' Philippians 4:13

'Instruct a child in the way he should go, and when he grows old he will not leave it.' Start children off on the way they should go and even when they are old they will not turn from it.' Proverbs 22:6.

I would especially like to welcome and congratulate those who have joined the leadership team in our diocesan schools, and in particular the recently appointed permanent and interim heads:

- Catherine Burnham, Headteacher, Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School, Hersham
- Jill Keany, Interim Executive Headteacher, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Guildford
- Michelle Lord, Headteacher, St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Lewes
- Pete Byrne - Headteacher, Chatsmore Catholic High School, Goring
- Rachel Kershaw, Interim Headteacher, Cottesmore St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Hove
- Gemma Irvine, Acting Heateacher, St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Worthing

I hope you will be very happy and fulfilled in your new roles. I know you will be made very welcome by your school and deanery colleagues and I hope you will feel supported and challenged in all you do.

Continuing on the subject of leadership, please may I remind colleagues that the Bishops' Conference has a very clear stance on the posts of Headteacher, Head of School, Deputy Headteacher, Head of RE and Chaplain. These posts must be reserved for practising Catholics and clearly advertised as such. In view of this, a senior member of the Diocesan Education Service (DES) is obliged to represent Bishop Richard in the recruitment process for any of the above positions, even if a post is part-time. With this in mind, it is essential when recruiting for any of these positions that the school liaises with Gill Sajnog (gill.sajnog@dabnet.org or 01293 511130) in advance of any advertisements being placed or before any dates are agreed. Gill coordinates our recruitment diary and is the first port of call for these matters. The updated Memorandum can be found at:

www.catholiceducation.org.uk/employment-documents/bishops-memorandum/item/1000049-memorandum-on-appointment-of-teachers-to-catholic-schools

Whilst schools across the diocese may have had something of a slightly staggered start to the new year, depending on the Local Authority, by the time the *Alpha Beta* arrives all schools will be back into the swing of things! On Monday 4th September the DES spent a fulfilling day at St Cuthman's on Retreat with Bishop Richard in preparation for the year ahead. Our identified theme for the day was 'Formation for Mission'. Since January 2015, we have begun each term with a Retreat and these days have become absolutely integral to our spiritual development. They set the tone for our term and help to ensure our work is focused on and grounded in our mission as Catholic educators.

A number of primary and secondary schools have once again achieved outstanding results in SATs, GCSEs and A-levels. On behalf of the Education Service may I extend our congratulations, gratitude and appreciation for all that has been achieved. This has not been an easy time and some schools feel especially vulnerable in the current environment. As ever, I am very grateful to those schools and individuals who support others in need, often at great personal cost to themselves. In these pressurised times where everything is measured in league tables, we must never lose sight of the fact that the mission of Catholic schools is far wider, deeper and more profound than can ever be reflected in league tables. We have so much to be proud of in our schools, and your unwavering commitment to Catholic education is of immeasurable value. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to Catholic education. May Christ be continually at the centre of all you do.

With best wishes for a very happy and fulfilling new school year!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marie". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Marie Ryan

