

Diocese of Arundel & Brighton Education Service

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Marie Ryan BA (Hons), MA, MCIL
Director, Education Service

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Dear Colleagues,

I hope the first few weeks of 2019 have started well for you. It already feels as if the Christmas break was a lifetime ago! As we all know, schools are having to make incredibly difficult decisions in the present financial climate. Such decisions take an enormous toll on Headteachers and Governing Bodies and I do not underestimate the cost, both personal and professional, that this comes at. I wish I had the money to solve the current crisis but unfortunately this is simply not the case. Whilst there is a shortage of money in schools and academies across the diocese, there is a richness and depth of commitment and dedication. I can only pay tribute to diocesan schools and academies which, notwithstanding the many challenges, do not lose sight of our Gospel values and our calling to serve. Your humility, dedication and service are both humbling and awe-inspiring and a great example to all of us here at the DES.

On the subject of finance, a panel of four Headteachers met earlier this week to support Mark and I prioritise the latest round of LCVAP bids. This has been the practice for the past four years in our endeavour to be as open and transparent about the process as possible, and both Mark and I are extremely grateful to the three Primary Headteachers and one Secondary Headteacher who assisted us in agreeing our priorities for the year 2019-2020. These provisional priorities will soon be shared with Trustees and the Diocesan Finance Committee for their thoughts. Once their approval has been gained, we begin negotiating with the Diocese of Chichester and the respective Local Authority over allocations for East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove. In Surrey, the picture is more straight-forward as the Local Authority uses a formula funding basis and we therefore know exactly the precise figure for disbursement across Surrey schools. As usual, bids far exceed the monies available across the diocese and, as every year, the Panel has had to make some very difficult decisions. I hope you appreciate that, in view of the stages still to come, we are not able to confirm the status of any LCVAP bids at present. We will endeavour to update schools as soon as we are able, and are grateful for your patience and understanding in the meantime.

We are delighted to welcome Frances Kinal as our new Secondary RE Adviser to the Diocesan Education Service. Thank you to all those secondary colleagues who have already welcomed Frances into school and made her so welcome. I know that the work already underway between Frances and secondary schools and academies will be a fruitful, enjoyable and mutually beneficial partnership! Catherine Hemsley is continuing to work with a small group of schools in her role as Standards Officer at present and we are grateful to her for her support and expertise in this area.

As some of you will remember, members of the Education Service say the Angelus together at midday every Friday. As ever, our intention is firstly for our diocesan schools - and especially those in need - and secondly for ourselves, that we will continue to grow together as a team, in order to serve schools to the best of our ability. If you have a couple of minutes to spare at midday, even if only occasionally, why not join us? Thank you for all you do in support of Catholic education.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marie Ryan', written in a cursive style.

Marie Ryan

