

# Catholic Diocese of Arundel & Brighton Education Service

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Ref MTR/GS

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Dear Colleagues,

I hope you have had a wonderful half-term and are feeling refreshed and ready for the final (but very busy!) instalment of the school year. It was lovely to see so many Headteachers at Bishop Richard's installation in Arundel Cathedral last Thursday and subsequently at the reception held at Arundel Castle. Bishop Richard's installation was a wonderful and moving occasion, and we were blessed with sunshine throughout the day! Thank you to the pupils from St Philip's, Arundel and St Philip Howard, Barnham who took part in the Offertory procession and were a credit to their schools. Headteachers were represented by Michael George, from St Hugh of Lincoln, Knaphill; Michael had the honour of being part of the group welcoming Bishop Richard on behalf of the Diocese, immediately after Bishop Richard's installation by Archbishop Peter and before the Gloria. I know Bishop Richard is eager to visit as many deaneries as possible over the next few weeks and is looking forward to meeting Headteachers.

Bishop Richard : Bishop Richard will be spending the day with the Education Service team next Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> June and we are very much looking forward to welcoming him and discussing diocesan priorities. As you know, an invitation to meet Bishop Richard on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July, from 4-6pm has been extended to all Diocesan Headteachers and this is a wonderful opportunity to spend some time with Bishop Richard. Due to anticipated numbers, St Wilfrid's Crawley had very generously agreed to host this event and we are grateful to Michael Ferry and his staff for their hospitality. I am aware that Independent Schools will have broken up by 13<sup>th</sup> July but due to Bishop Richard's diary commitments, this was the first date available. I hope that Independent School Headteachers will know that they are most welcome and will feel able to attend if they are still around!

Staffing: I am delighted to say that Mark Brunet is now in post as part-time Buildings Officer and is already making significant inroads with regard to LCVAP, buildings, etc. Mark will already be known to some of you, and will quickly become known to many more as he visits schools and liaises primarily with Headteachers and Business Managers. As you will probably remember, I said at the Academies Assembly day that Mark will be leading a termly School Business Managers' Forum from next term onwards, and we will be drawing on his considerable expertise in a range of ways. He will also be leading training for schools next term on LCVAP funding, including what constitutes a strong

bid, etc, etc. More details will be provided in the CPD 2015-2016 Handbook which will be in schools before the end of this term, so watch this space!

In addition, I am extremely pleased to say that Sarah Feist has accepted the post of Primary Adviser: RE and Catholic Ethos following a rigorous round of interviews immediately before the half-term break. Sarah is joining us from St Mary Star of the Sea in St Leonard's, and brings a wealth of recent and relevant experience. This means that from September 2015 we will have a full complement of staff and we are all looking forward to Sarah joining our team for the new academic year. Thank you to everyone for your patience with us since January – come the new academic year we will at last be fully staffed and able to turn our attention fully to the exciting opportunities and challenges ahead!

Academies: Thank you to all those schools that have already responded to our recent questions around possible cluster composition. Please may I respectfully remind schools that we are accepting responses up to Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June- please send direct to Gill on [gill.sajnog@dabnet.org](mailto:gill.sajnog@dabnet.org) We will be holding a follow-up Academies event from 2-4pm on 9<sup>th</sup> July, and I will be in contact with schools soon to share more detail.

Succession Planning: The Primary Steering group has kindly agreed to lead a working party exploring succession planning with a view to making recommendations for consideration. What has been heartening this year has been the increasing number of people coming forward for senior leadership positions. As an Education Service, we are currently finalising our CPD offer for September 2015. Amongst other things, we will be looking closely at the role of Headteacher in a Catholic School and why this is such a wonderful opportunity, as well as what support future leaders will require in the months and years ahead to help them take on the challenge. I am aware however that a growing number of schools are experiencing difficulties in recruiting classroom teachers and as an Education Service we are already exploring a range of possible strategies to counteract this. I will be able to share more about this in the coming weeks and months.

Exam season: Nobody needs reminding that we are in the middle of exam season! I have been hugely impressed by the exemplary behaviour and attitude demonstrated by KS2 children across the Diocese during SATs week, and of course GCSEs and A-levels are now in full swing. Thank you to all staff - primary and secondary - who work so hard to support our children and young people.

Lastly: As ever, many thanks for everything you do for the children and young people in our schools. The extraordinary commitment shown by so many of our Headteachers, staff, governors and parents is genuinely humbling and I know I speak for all members of the Education Service when I say we feel it is a privilege to work with and for diocesan schools.

Best Wishes,

Marie