**From   :          Jeff Williams**

**To        :           Headteachers, Ex-officio Governors, Foundation Governors, Chairs of Governors**

**Date    :           6th May 2020**

Dear colleagues

As we approach Sunday, when the Prime Minister will officially share what has been widely speculated or leaked regarding the lifting or lessening of some of the Lockdown restrictions, I am reminded of how the approach of school holidays has historically been received in extreme ways by both children and adults working in schools. For many, the approach of an Easter, Summer or Christmas break is welcomed with open arms, with excited conversations about travel or activities and the ‘freedom’ from typical routine. For others, such removal of regular meals, a sense of safety, routine and stimulation can literally be dreaded – for a whole range of understandable reasons and considerations.

What many will welcome with any relaxation of the Lockdown, for others it brings fear and concern – both regarding health and wellbeing, and indeed, a perceived lack of safety. As school leaders and those working at the front line, this will bring additional pressure and engagement. It’s widely anticipated that schools will have three weeks to prepare in moving to whatever phased and context-appropriate provision is offered. Preparing therefore to move tables, re-arrange dining hall settings and signs for corridor movement will be important and necessary. However, preparing to re-integrate deeply-affected children and young people, teachers and support staff, parents and all connected, will be a much more important consideration.

Our concern and care for all of our community, their emotional and psychological needs in moving to a different way of being, for however long, will be a priority. Good learning and teaching will be contingent on getting the atmosphere, ethos, support and acknowledgement that we are all deeply affected by CV19, and will continue to be for a long while.

So let’s be gentle on ourselves; let’s have appropriate expectations of ourselves and others; and above all, let’s keep our established values and way of being school and family at the heart of our preparations and all that we do when things are clear about the next phase of ‘school’.

Thank you for all you continue to do, and be.

Best wishes

**Jeff**

**Story Time with Bishop Debbie** – I’m delighted that the Bishop of Southampton, the Rt Revd Debbie Sellin agreed to join our ‘storytime’ initiative. You can see +Debbie  reading “Can’t you sleep little bear” : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Heo0K9nlH7o>

**#Faith at Home** – over recent months the National CofE Education office has been developing materials to support parents in teaching and nurturing the Christian faith at home. This is part of the National ‘Growing Faith’ agenda, where the important link between home, school and parish is recognised as a critical path for the church in supporting discussions about, and the development of faith.  The launch of #Faith at Home took place last week – with two ‘Zoom’ launches, each with over 250 participants! The fact that the launch has coincided with the Lockdown, means that many of the resources and materials are now directly relevant and useful.

May I encourage you to look at some of the resources, but particularly some of the excellent videos that are available at :   [www.churchofengland.org/faithathome](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1jVXtD-0002sy-6I&i=57e1b682&c=LXHzxqEVmKi4QcbDFbRu-oR6EIZv4aZ7g95bgDfCk-r4OZ2XYGQLA7taSMA3CJrUiZ4gzRhh2QvRKBcZHH0iqHde2dogVvQlTDAeGSx_ExoEEC4u2ISpRXpZoyxilFSIsNV6C7tNMw92uEArubwlcDLFFQsrMSAuU0CzSgDUi4ygAl2yfYSn0kkaPKOHqDZgqVq8PngZolwQv-3z8yMmijXv-fU8WxYwAxccQ4y_5aoOyRSGbDVZInvgsVJUyD0NCGk5lXMyEEWDA8CJ_yKZsxs3wi1qaQn1EntstZIOtYHGno4Tbdj1zgh44oFo1694UaSY6j4aDdTGLSb5f3PBPg)  For the past six weeks, my team has been sharing ideas and worksheets, activities and suggestions for parents to complete alongside their children at home – again part of the #Faith at Home commitment to supporting families. Linked with #Faith at Home was the Archbishop’s assembly last week, and the announcement that the Church of England is providing weekly worship for the national virtual ‘Oak Academy’ – and indeed, weekly resources to support the theme and Christian value that is discussed at each worship. Resources are tailored to Primary and Secondary – as are all assemblies now.

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