



Our Ref:

Your Ref:

To: Heads, Chairs, Incumbents and others.

 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

 Diocese of  
Rochester

Board of Education

**Bishop's Officer & Director of Education**

Mr. Alex Tear MA(Ed) (Hons)

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18<sup>th</sup> April 2012

Dear Colleague

### **Letter from the Director – Summer 2012**

On behalf of the Education Team here at the Diocese, welcome back to the Summer term and I hope that you and your staff were able to recharge your batteries over the Easter break and find some peace during Holy Week.

### **Leadership Conference**

It was good to see so many of you and your leadership teams at our inaugural Leadership Conference in February. The feedback from the evaluations after the event was extremely positive with many schools remarking that it was a great opportunity to come together as a family of schools and listen to the excellent keynote speakers talk about what makes the leadership of a Church school so distinctive and unique. Given the success of the event, we are already planning next year's conference and have reserved the Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2013 for those of you who like to get the dates in your diary.

### **'The Church School of the Future' Review**

At the very end of last term, I sent by e-mail to all our Church schools details of 'The Church School of the Future' review chaired by Dr Priscilla Chadwick. This is a significant report commissioned by the Bishop of Oxford, the Chair of the Church of England's National Board of Education on behalf of the National Society and the Archbishops' Council Education Division.

The review re-affirms the Church of England's commitment to its Church schools and proposes 26 key recommendations required by a range of stakeholders including Diocesan Boards of Education, in order that the Church adapts to the new educational landscape. The report is recommended reading for all those involved in the leadership and governance of our Church schools and you may want to disseminate it to all your Governors.

A hard copy of the review will be sent to all schools once it has been printed but in the meantime, a copy of the review can be found in the 'News' section of the RDBE website: [www.rochester-board-of-education.co.uk](http://www.rochester-board-of-education.co.uk)

### **New Service Level Agreement (SLA) 2012-13**

Following our consultation with you in January, in the light of your feedback, we have revised our Service Level Agreement (SLA) for 2012-13 and you should have received an information booklet and a follow-up e-mail with details of the different services and support we offer and the subscription rates for this year. We appreciate that managing school budgets remains challenging and we are committed to providing high quality services and excellent value for money. We hope that your school will subscribe to the SLA this year and we look forward to working with you in a genuine partnership.

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*"Proclaiming the Word and Work of God"*

## **Partnerships and Collaboration**

Across the Diocese we are beginning to see a number of Church school clusters and partnerships evolve in response to local need and circumstances. We now have a Church school partnership established within all four Local Authority areas of Bromley, Bexley, Kent and Medway and we are keen to help and support the creation of further networks by facilitating discussions between our Church schools.

With the continued reduction of Local Authorities and their capacity to provide support and monitoring for school improvement, local collaboration will become even more important and a vital mechanism in helping schools to provide system wide support in the future. The creation of Teaching School Alliances is the first step in making this a reality and membership of numerous partnerships and networks for different purposes will become the norm. In this changing landscape, we believe that there is value in coming together in networks within the wider Diocesan family of schools to work together on the vision, values and ethos which make our Church schools distinctive.

## **Diocesan Schools' Forum**

The Diocesan Schools Forum continues to meet regularly each term and have now received the results of the Schools' Audit conducted by CfBT. The Executive Summary will be sent to all schools in the next few weeks with details of some new projects which will start in the summer term including:

- Opportunities for Action Research projects for middle leaders and subject specialists
- Enhanced Governor training on key themes relevant to Church School governance
- Workshop on developing collaboration through partnership working

In addition, in response to feedback, we are currently organising twilight briefing events for the second half of the summer term on the new Ofsted Framework led by a senior HMI Inspector. More details will follow shortly.

## **Heads & Chairs Briefings**

Our termly Heads & Chairs briefings take place the week beginning 21<sup>st</sup> May at the following venues:

- Trinity C of E Secondary School, Belvedere. Bexley – Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1.30pm – 4pm
- St. Matthews High Brooms, Tunbridge Wells, Kent – Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> May 1.30pm – 4pm
- Diocesan Offices, St Nicholas Church, Rochester, Medway – Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May 1.30pm – 4pm

We look forward to seeing you at these events and updating you on national, local and diocesan developments in the term ahead.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



**Alex Tear**  
**Diocesan Director of Education**

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