

**Director: Mr Trevor Cristin**

To all Head Teachers, staff and governors

At the beginning of this new academic year, I wanted to write and assure you of both my prayer for all that lies ahead this year, and thanks for all that you have done throughout the last several months.

It is becoming less remarkable to see the current time described as 'extraordinary' or 'unprecedented'. Nevertheless, we must not become complacent about the impact that the demands of the pandemic have made upon ourselves, our colleagues, or the children and their families entrusted to our care.

I would like to pay tribute to your commitment that enabled those children of key-workers to remain in school, whilst at the same time providing ongoing education to those at home. That same commitment and professionalism has ensured that our schools are now ready to welcome all children and staff back, within the necessary parameters of risk management.

Whilst we live with the inevitable uncertainties of a constantly evolving situation, it is important to hold on to what is certain, and good, and true. As Church of England schools we serve our communities because of our faith in the God who so loved the world that he gave his Son, Jesus Christ, to save us. He shares in our humanity in its fullness – with all the pain and suffering as well as the hopes and joys – and through the selfless offering of himself shows us the perfection of love which makes all things new.

We who follow in the way of the Cross are called to reveal that perfection of love in the selfless offering of ourselves in serving God and our neighbour. The love of Christ compels us!

My prayer at the beginning of this new school year is that our schools across the household of faith which is the Diocese of Chichester, may, with their wider parish church communities, be beacons of selfless, transformative love and service where we, and all those whom we serve – our children, their families, colleagues, – may "have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." (*Ephesians 3:18-19*)

The Venerable Luke Irvine-Capel  
September 2020

**Learning with meaning and purpose: to know God and shape the world**

Education Department, Diocesan Church House, 211 New Church Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 4ED  
Telephone: 01273 425687 • Fax: 01273 421041 • Email: [schools@chichester.anglican.org](mailto:schools@chichester.anglican.org)

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