

11<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

It seems odd to wish you a belated happy new year in these strange circumstances, but nevertheless I wish you a 2021 where the best is yet to come.

I want to thank you for your patience and support during the early days of this new term. As you know, your school's or academy's head teacher and staff are working incredibly hard to make sure every pupil is taught effectively while being kept as safe as possible.

One of the key pressures schools are facing is the high numbers of pupils who are eligible technically to come into school. Our leaders are grappling with the challenges created by this situation, while keeping every pupil at the heart of their thinking. I want to thank them for this.

I also want to thank all of our staff for their hard work in designing remote learning as well as face to face provision. Please be aware that this dual focus creates a huge workload for them; all of our staff need our support as they strive to fulfil all that is being asked of them.

Because of the challenges mentioned above, please support your school community by considering carefully whether you really need your child to be in school, or whether it would be possible for them to learn at home. For the sake of everyone's safety, we need to minimise the numbers of children who are coming into school. That said, if you are fulfilling a vital role in supporting our country through this pandemic, then we thank you and appreciate all you are doing.

One of the main qualities that is nurtured in our schools is hope. By this we don't mean a vague wish, but rather a firm belief that this troubled world remains in God's hands and that we can get through the storm together. Hope is fuelled by encouragement; let's continue to offer this to each other.

Thank you so much for all that you are doing to look after your son or daughter, to support your local school and to bring all of us into better times. Hold on ferociously to hope.

Yours sincerely,



Nigel Frith  
Diocesan Director of Education

