

The Bishop of Carlisle  
The Right Reverend James Newcome  
Bishop's House, Ambleside Road  
Keswick CA12 4DD

24 April 2020

Dear Headteachers and all our church school staff

As we adjust and adapt to the massive changes – professionally and personally – that coronavirus has brought to our lives, we wanted sincerely to thank you all for the commitment and compassion you are showing in your work at this difficult time.

Closing our schools was a painful decision and we know it has brought significant, daily challenges for you. Thank you for your flexibility in engaging with colleagues across the sector, through your clusters and with the Local Authority, and for your determination to collaborate and seek solutions together.

Your determination to connect and remain connected with one another and your communities is inspiring. From organising and delivering food parcels and packed lunches to establishing communities of online learning from a busy home, you have all worked hard to contribute to schools' ongoing work in your unique circumstances. Thank you.

As we continue in this response phase and move to thinking about recovery, please ensure you look after yourselves and encourage your colleagues to do the same. Self-care is even more important now than it ever was.

We are all facing individual and collective challenges as we seek to respond well to this crisis. We pray that you will know the comfort and presence of God throughout the coming weeks and months.

Thank you all for continuing to reach out to each other and for serving our schools and communities with such dedication and care.

This comes with much gratitude and every blessing and the assurance of our continuing prayers.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the end of the letter's main body of text.