



July 2016

### A letter from Bishop Christopher to those moving to senior school

I'm going to start my letter by asking you what might seem like a strange question, and it's this: what have you learned while you've been at school?

You might think that's a strange question for me to be asking, and that the answer is obvious. After all, you've learned so much – reading, writing, sport, art, music, history, geography – the list goes on and on. However, it's not the whole story, because while you've been at school you've learned a lot more besides. You've learned about friendship; about how to get along with people who are different from you. You've also begun to think about how you fit in to the world around you.

So, what is it you've learned at school so far? The obvious answer is **facts** – *lots* of facts. Sometimes it can seem as though that's all school is about – learning facts and knowing the right answer. School is about that, of course: but it's about much more besides. It's also about learning how to be part of community: how to get on with people we might not otherwise meet or talk to; and it's also about discovering and exploring the world around you, and finding your place in it. It's about finding out how you can be a good citizen and a member of the society in which we all live and play a part, whether we're 11 or 21 years old.

It can take a bit of adjusting to a new school – at the moment, you are the oldest in your school and you have been important role models to the younger pupils. Now you will be the youngest pupils and probably in a much bigger school, too – there might be more in Year 7 alone than there are in your whole primary school.

That's exciting, but it can also be a little bit scary – but it needn't feel like that. When you move to your new school, there will be lots of people to help you and make you feel at home so that you can make the most of all the things that are about to come your way.

You're going to meet lots of new people and have lots of new experiences. The important thing, as Jesus taught us, is always to treat other people the way you would want them to treat you. There's one word to sum all that up: respect. Respect for others; for yourself; and for the fantastic opportunity to learn more about this fabulous world that God has given us to care for and enjoy.

I wish you every blessing as you take this exciting step.

+ Christopher Lincoln :