

A school chaplain has spoken of her delight after a song written to share hope during Coronavirus closures went viral, with more than a hundred schools now preparing to record their own versions.

The song, *Looking To The Rainbow*, was originally composed by Becky Drake for the school where she is chaplain, Blue Coat Church of England School in Birmingham, but now more than 100 schools across the Church School network and beyond will also sing the song in time for *Thank a Teacher Day* on 20th May.

Meanwhile, a video of the Blue Coat School singing the song has already been viewed more than 30,000 times on social media.

The song is now being promoted as part of the Church of England's #FaithAtHome initiative, which launched last week, with the Church of England's Chief Education Officer encouraging schools to get involved, and also has the backing of the official *Thank a Teacher Day* campaign, run by the Teaching Awards Trust.

And it is already proving popular, with over 100 schools already signed up, including in Wales and as far afield as the USA.

Any school is welcome to take part and can download comprehensive instructions for school leaders from the ***Worship for Everyone* website**. All that is needed is a smartphone and a pair of headphones.

Completed videos can be shared on social with the hashtags #FaithAtHome and #LookingToTheRainbow so they can be shared as part of the final project, a compilation video in time for Thank a Teacher Day on 20th May.

Thank a Teacher Day is an annual celebration of teachers across the country, which will have added poignance this year with many school communities physically separated during closures to help combat the spread of Coronavirus COVID-19.

Composer, Becky Drake, said: "I wrote this song to bring some joy to the children I work with and give them hope that we won't be in lockdown forever.

"When I first saw the children singing the words I was moved to tears!

"I'm delighted to see other schools using the song of hope with their own communities as part of the Faith at Home campaign. I hope it will be a blessing to many families and teachers, and generate a sense of unity across the country.

“We’re all in this together and it will pass. As the song says- a new day will come!”

Nigel Genders, the Church of England’s Chief Education Officer said: “This is a wonderful way for schools who cannot be together in person to join together with their own schools, and as part of something much bigger too.

“Singing together is a way of showing that we are thinking about one another and can still pray together for our families, our teachers and our wider communities. Seeing their pupils joining in and sing this song together will be a real encouragement to the teachers who we all want to thank, especially as they help us meet the challenges of the present time

“Home is the new normal and our #FaithAtHome programme offers more ways for families and households to build prayer and Christian reflection into everyday life, not just during the current restrictions but as good habits and practices we can keep up.”

Mary Palmer, Director of the Teaching Awards Trust, and the *Thank a Teacher campaign* said: “We love the song and it’s a fantastic way of students coming together as a community to thank their teachers for all they’re doing in this challenging time. We are looking forward to seeing communities across the country celebrate our amazing school staff on Thank a Teacher Day using the #ThankaTeacher and #Howwillyousaythankyou hashtags.”

More information

- The Church of England’s #FaithAtHome programme launched on the 30th March 2020, and aims to make prayer and discussions about faith a household habit. The programme will explore themes including courage, patience, generosity, resilience, love and hope, with weekly videos released for home, school and church settings. The #FaithAtHome programme is also providing Collective Worship for the Government-backed Oak National Academy, set up to offer lessons and teaching resources to teachers during school closures. More:

www.churchofengland.org/faithathome

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