

10 July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I feel it is important to write to you at this time in respect of the following matters.

Our response together to the pandemic

This has been an unprecedented time of concern and anxiety for all. For some, there have been health concerns and tragedy to deal with and for others, very real employment concerns around continuing to support their families. I hope that you have been able to remain positive and can now begin to plan for happier days ahead.

Thank you for all that you have done to support your child/children over this period. There has been a wonderful response from parents/carers in supporting home learning and/or ensuring that children attend school safely. In many cases the situation has brought members of staff and parents/carers even closer.

I would also like to publicly thank your school team of staff for all they have done over this period. School leaders across the trust have had to plan several times over for a variety of situations, and have borne a heavy load of responsibility on behalf of their children, members of staff and parents/carers. All of our teachers have been trying to balance face-to-face work alongside home learning provision, and our support staff have in many ways literally kept us open for business. Seeing them in operation at close quarters in response to the pandemic has been inspirational.

Next Steps

You will be aware that all pupils, in all year groups, will be returning to school from the beginning of next term. It is essential that we do this for the sake of our children. They need to be back in the classroom for their own academic development, but more importantly for their own mental wellbeing. However, it is also essential that our schools achieve this in the safest way possible. For this reason, all schools will be undertaking a rigorous risk assessment process. This will be overseen and tested by the trust. We want to mitigate risk to the lowest level, but also to gain the confidence of children, parents/carers and members of staff.

As part of this process, it is important that all members of staff are fully trained with our risk assessments in mind. Your child's school will inform you of specific arrangements for the start of next term. However, across all trust schools there will need to be a minimum of three staff training days, as part of our risk assessments. Monday 24 August to Wednesday 26 August 2020 will consequently be staff training days as a minimum.

Our school communities are looking forward to welcoming back all of their children, old and new. We have missed their presence in schools and their return will boost our staff teams.

In the meantime, I wish you the very best as we all start on the road to recovery and I hope that you can find a way to enjoy some family time over the next few weeks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Southall'.

Mr Chris Southall
Trust Leader