



Creating Tomorrow Multi Academy Trust

•Respect

•Inclusion

•Achievement

Chief Executive Officer Kevin Latham

Chief Operating Officer Esther Bushell

Chief Finance Officer Anthea Murphy

18th January 2021

Dear families,

I hope you are all keeping safe under this latest National Lockdown. There is a lot of anxiety around in regards to health, safety and wellbeing, and as a Trust we have continued to make all our decisions based on these key areas.

I'm aware that you have had a lot of contact from your child's school in regards to managing the current situation, and I wanted to write to update you on the current situation and how we have made the decisions.

As you may be aware the government has asked everyone to stop, or at least minimise, contact with anyone outside of household bubbles. To this end schools were told to move to remote learning, and offer a provision for 'vulnerable children' and children whose parents are key workers as their work is critical to the COVID-19 response (a new list was released), however the government also stated in this guidance that "... parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can".

The term 'vulnerable' has been used to include all children with an EHCP, however this is not accurate and Northants Local Authority (LA) consider this group to be those children who would be safer in school as they are unsafe at home.

At a meeting with all Northants Special school heads on Friday, the LA reiterated their support for leaders to carry out risk assessments for their own schools, and therefore for the vast majority of children to remain at home if it is safer to do so.

Each school has shared with you our approach to 'blended learning' and this has now been endorsed by Northants LA and now being used by all Northants Special Schools. Underpinning this approach to learning is the aim that when it is safe to do so we will start to bring more and more students back to school. This approach is enabling us to retain a core offer to all students, whilst putting in place all the plans for lateral flow testing (hopefully soon all staff will be offered the Coronavirus vaccination), keeping health safety and wellbeing at the forefront of our minds. I would like to highlight however that with the roll-out of testing we may find an initial increase in positive cases and so there may be a disruption to face to face learning for those in school.

Free School Meals

For those of you in receipt of free school meals hopefully you have now accessed your vouchers. We were able to move very quickly in rolling out vouchers as we have chosen to manage this ourselves. We foresaw an issue with food parcels, notwithstanding the fact that the majority of families are not local to the schools, and though the previous National voucher scheme worked for some families, there were a number who found it very difficult to access. As with our previous messages on free school meals, we are aware who has accessed the vouchers - if you are having any difficulty then please do not hesitate to get in touch with your school.

Please look after yourselves and your loved ones

Yours faithfully

Kevin Latham

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