



4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent

You will not need me to tell you that Prime Minister has just announced another strict national lockdown, which sadly includes the closure of schools. It is not a situation any of us wanted to face again but we must make the best of it and play our part in reducing the transmission of COVID. We are, at least, better prepared for delivering remote lessons this time around and will do our utmost to support your child's learning in the coming weeks.

This letter covers our trust's approach in primary and secondary schools. The advice is slightly different in each case:

### Secondary schools

Given our secondary schools were already preparing to deliver remote learning from tomorrow (5th January) onwards, you should continue to follow the arrangements your son or daughter's headteacher has already shared with you. Please do all you can to ensure your son or daughter engages with the online learning and contact the school if you need any further support. You should already have been in touch with the school if you are a critical worker, if your child has a special educational need or if there is some other reason he or she needs to continue to attend school.

The Prime Minister indicated that the summer examinations may now be cancelled, or at least the vast majority could be. At this point in time, we do not have any more information but we will get in touch as soon as we know more.

### Primary schools

Our primary schools opened fully today for all pupils. First of all, thank-you to parents who supported us with what had been a successful restart. However, our colleagues have not had the opportunity to plan for the new lockdown and will need some time tomorrow. Children of critical workers and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities may continue to attend school and we will supervise them safely. Please note this may be a different experience from the one we offered during the March lockdown because more learning will now be offered online. It is likely we will provide access to a computer in school but arrangements will vary from school to school.



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Your child's headteacher will be in touch some time tomorrow to share details of how learning will be delivered.

### **Pupils eligible to attend school**

Detailed guidance is available here:

[Critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/critical-workers-and-vulnerable-children-who-can-access-schools-or-educational-settings)

### **Free school meals**

We will need to see further advice from the government about providing free school meals. I hope we are able to offer vouchers again. Please contact your child's school if you are experiencing considerable hardship and will offer support or signpost where further help may be available.

There is still much for us to consider and we have not yet had a chance to see the government's detailed guidance. We will therefore continue to get in touch regularly over the coming days and weeks. However, I hope this letter gives you enough information to make arrangements for tomorrow.

I do hope we are able to welcome our children and young people back into our schools in the very near future. I know how disruptive this can be for families and how much pupils miss from being away from school. I can, however, repeat my assurance we will offer you and our pupils as much support as we can in these difficult times.

I hope you and your family remain safe and well in these challenging times.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John McNally". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John McNally  
CEO