

7<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well. Firstly, I would like to wish you all a very happy New Year and I hope that you have all had a peaceful Christmas holiday spending time relaxing with your families.

As you know, on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 we were placed in another National Lockdown, and with it, has brought further restrictions for our region. The new strain of COVID-19 brings increasing concerns and worries for everyone, and there are further restrictions to minimise the spread of COVID-19 under Government guidelines. However, please be reassured that we will be doing everything we can to minimise risks within our school as we have been doing since the children returned to school in September.

One of the key documents released this week, can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>

### **Attendance**

Within the Government's announcement regarding educational establishments:

*All specialist settings and alternative provision schools and colleges should plan for full-time or usual timetabled on-site provision for all pupils and students in the first week of term, although special schools and colleges will have some flexibility on face-to-face attendance of pupils and students in the first week of term to enable them to appropriately mobilise the testing programme.*

**We are therefore continuing to offer your child a place to continue their education within our school setting and strongly encourage them to attend.**

### **Health and Safety**

Our Health and Safety risk assessments, and all hygiene procedures will remain in place and we will continue to be as vigilant as we have been, in keeping everyone as safe as we are able to, while still maintain the high standards of teaching and learning that the children deserve. Rules around face coverings, social distancing health and hygiene remain the same when around school and also when entering school with permission.

To reassure our students and their families that their safety and wellbeing is being maintained and of paramount importance, we have also purchased digital infrared thermometers to allow our students to have their temperature taken upon arrival each day and any student displaying symptoms will be required to study from home.

### **Teaching and Learning**

We have reviewed our curriculum to consider our students' mental health and wellbeing, as well as the continuous assessment of where our students are in their learning in order to make any necessary adjustments to their curriculum over the coming weeks. To that end, we will be providing up to 3 hours of face to face online tuition alongside independent work and

opportunity for 1:1 time with subject teachers as and when your child needs help.

To this end however, please can we ask if you are intending to continue to keep your child with you at home during this time, and have decided to not allow your child into school, that you sign the declaration enclosed in the letter we sent to your home.

If you are intending for your child to remain at home, it is imperative that they continue to access their education remotely via our new *Virtual School*, whereby staff will be delivering online taught sessions to students twice a day throughout the week. There will be opportunities provided to students to work independently on related tasks/activities and also have regular 1:1 contact with both their teachers and myself as Head of School, so there is continued access to support for them, form both an academic and welfare capacity.

You may also wish to access our remote learning provision via gaming consoles, such as Xbox or Playstation that are connected to the internet. These can be used to connect to Microsoft Teams also, using the internet browser. Below is a link to a how-to guide for using an Xbox or PlayStation to access remote learning. Others can be found on YouTube also.

<https://youtu.be/mfrSCeedsmE?t=154>

Through our *Virtual School*, we will ensure that students have four hours' work a day, with assignments set aside to the taught sessions, which provide meaningful and ambitious work each day in a number of different subjects. We will have already contacted parents/carers if you do not have the means to access the online resources and for those who do not, we will be providing paper-based learning/work packs which will be posted or emailed out to you, dependent upon your preferred method of communication.

### **Transport**

Home to school transport provided or organised by our schools are working together with local authorities and with relevant transport providers to put in place arrangements which fit the local circumstances, including the measures being put in place to reduce contact.

### **Lunches**

We will continue to provide lunches for all our students in attendance within our schools and we are ensuring that meals are able to be prepared and served safely. If your child is remaining at home and not venturing into school, we are able to offer a weekly food parcel to you, which can be collected every Monday within an allocated pick up time (agreeable with yourselves between 8.30 am and 5 pm), ensuring that we are adhering to the required social distancing guidelines at all times.

I am happy to discuss any matters with you and recognise you will have a lot of questions. I hope that as the days progress these will all be answered. I will keep you up to date as time progresses. Therefore, please bear with me and if you do wish to contact the school - I will return your call as soon as I am able. Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Stay safe, stay healthy, and stay positive.

Yours sincerely,  
James Madine, Progress Schools CEO