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Dear Parent or Carer

We are writing to you following the Prime Minister's announcement at 8 pm last night that most students should not come to school until after February half term. This announcement came as surprise to us, as I am sure it did to you. As late as 4pm on Monday, we were being asked to prepare to welcome back our primary pupils today and to have rapid testing set up in secondary schools by next Monday. As a consequence, we are very much playing catch up. Please bear with us; we are working as quickly as we can.

Children of critical workers and "vulnerable" children

Only children of critical workers or those considered "vulnerable" should come to school. A list of the occupations considered "critical" can be found here. Please note it is not the same list as that published during the first lockdown:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision>

Please look at the list and if your occupation appears on it and your child cannot safely stay at home while you are at work, we will welcome them in school and take care of them. In school, students will be in pods of no more than 15. They will follow the same timetable as students at home and will access the same online lessons. They will be supervised by a member of staff and can access their usual provision at break and lunch time. The same arrangements apply to students considered "vulnerable", but where they are entitled to additional support, we will continue to provide that support.

Remote lessons (secondary)

Students who are at home will have a full timetable of remote lessons. Following our own significant investment in laptops for students and staff training, we are now in a position to offer almost all remote lessons as "live" lessons. This means, when students log on, the teacher will be present. They will deliver new content, set tasks and interact and support students during the lesson. The only time this would not happen would be if the teacher is ill or there is an unforeseen technical problem. This is different to remote learning in the first lockdown and means students will need to be up and ready at normal school time to start a full day of learning. Registers will be taken, and absence will be followed up. We will send further updates about remote learning in due course but if you have any concerns about your child's access to remote lessons or they do not have the right equipment, please let us know and we will try to help.

Free School Meals

The government does not appear to intend to set up a free school meal voucher system as happened latterly in the first lockdown. Our schools will, therefore, provide a £15 supermarket voucher each week for every student who is at home, but entitled to free school meals.



The Education Alliance is a charitable limited company registered in England and Wales No. 7542211 whose registered office is at the above address.



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Exams for Year 11 and Year 13 students

Following last night's announcement, it is our understanding the exams for Year 11 and Year 13 students will not go ahead as planned this summer. We do not yet know how grades will be awarded or if this will still involve some form of external assessment; we have been promised more information as soon as possible. We understand the concern and anxiety this may cause, and we will write separately to Year 11 and Year 13 students and parents. In the meantime, it is important all students continue to work hard across all their subjects. It is really important to say that whatever happens, we have been assured that similar proportions of students should receive each grade as last year, so in terms of final grades, students should not lose out.

As we said throughout the first lockdown, we will continue to do everything we can to help the fight against the Coronavirus and to make sure students are well-taught and supported. We are much better equipped and trained for remote learning, and although inevitably not everything will go perfectly, we will do our very best. We will also stay in regular contact with you again to keep you updated as things develop. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, we are here and ready to help.

Yours faithfully

Jonny Uttley
CEO

Scott Ratheram
Executive Principal



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