



4 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

RE: School Reopening

Firstly, a happy new year to you all. I hope that the Christmas break was enjoyable and, whilst undoubtedly very different from usual, that you managed to enjoy some time with loved ones.

Today has been spent discussing the reopening of the schools in the Wessex Learning Trust. We are in a fortunate position that due to the exceptional support, leadership, and goodwill of our staff all schools in the Trust will open as planned from Tuesday 5 January 2021, in accordance with the most recent Government guidance. This decision has been made in consultation with and agreed by Executive Heads, Head teachers and Trustees. Information regarding the return of your child to their specific school will have been issued to you previously; please refer to your school if you do not have a record of this information.

The Trust are acutely aware that the current situation is fluid and requires continual review. Risk Assessments and COVID-19 control measures will repeatedly be reviewed on a daily basis. We will of course keep you informed about further developments and will provide further correspondence as and when necessary.

As you are undoubtedly aware, Somerset is now in Tier 4 and with that in mind I take this opportunity to remind you of the importance of us all working together to reduce the spread of the virus. Learners must stay at home if they have any of the three key COVID-19 symptoms:

- a high temperature
- a persistent cough
- loss of smell or taste

We have also been made aware of some of the symptoms associated with the new variant which whilst not limited too, can include a headache and sore throat.

In Addition:

- Learners must stay at home if any member of their household has any of these symptoms and await the outcome of the test result of that household member
- Learners should also stay at home and isolate for 10 days if they have been a close contact of a positive case
- Learners will be sent home if they display any of these symptoms inside school

We appreciate that these judgements are not always easy to make. If you are unsure, the Trust are supportive of you keeping your child at home. Please inform your child's school, who will then advise you of the most appropriate course of action to take.

We can further mitigate against the risks of the virus by continuing to:

- Wash hands frequently
- Wear a face covering
- Maintain social distancing
- Wear a face covering on school transport

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with these measures to ensure our learners, families and the wider community is kept safe.



As you may well be aware from the national press, many schools are seeking further professional advice regarding current guidance. As such, it is important to recognise that this situation is liable to change. The Trust receives Government guidance and updates at the same time as our parents, carers and the wider community, with no prior warning. This often instigates short notice planning and changes to arrangements. It may be the case that childcare needs to be arranged at short notice, and contingency planning is advisable for this scenario.

The Trust understand the need to keep children and staff safe and mitigate against the risks of the virus. We are also deeply aware of our obligation to communities and the Government to keep schools open as far as we can, which at present, is an exceptionally fine balance.

As previously articulated, additional correspondence will be issued as necessary in due course. Our staff look forward to welcoming our learners back, as directed by your specific school, to ensure that their education remains an essential priority during this challenging time.

Yours sincerely,

GAVIN BALL
Chief Executive