



Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021, 8.50pm

Dear Parents and Carers

### School Closure

Against the backdrop of rising infection rates, record-breaking hospital admissions and sadly increasing numbers of Covid-related deaths, all 16 schools in the Wessex Learning Trust will regrettably be closed from Tuesday 5th January until probably February half term as per the Prime Minister's instruction this evening. I am sorry for the late notice, we are hearing the national closure instruction at the same time parents and carers are.

Pre-school settings will remain open at this stage.

BTEC exams scheduled for this week will continue.

All schools will remain open for the children of key workers (DfE official list) and those deemed as vulnerable. In the meantime, we will keep the situation under continuous review and provide as much online learning and contact as possible with the 5,000 children and young people in the Trust. Schools may need some time tomorrow to arrange this given the short notice. We will also keep you informed about further developments as we hear them.

I do believe that every teacher and member of support staff in the Trust ideally wants to get back to work and get on with their job; I think that every colleague wants to play their part in society by focusing on the younger generation's need for education and wellbeing. However, there is also a need to balance the obligation for enabling health and safety in both school and the community. It is with a heavy heart that we now have to operate through remote learning for the time being. Further details, especially about the examination years of 11 and 13 will be provided when government tell us what they are, but rest-assured we will ensure our young people do not lose out.

Again, I sincerely apologise for the short notice, disappointment and any inconvenience caused.

With best wishes

Gavin Ball

Chief Executive, Wessex Learning Trust