



BATH & WELLS
Multi Academy Trust

'That they may have life, life in all its fullness' John 10:10

26 November 2020

Dear colleagues, parents and carers,

This is a letter to every parent/carer and staff member in our Trust family of 33 schools. If I could, I would write to each one of you individually. What I can say with certainty is that everyone of us has been affected by two lockdowns, a long period of uncertainty and while there is clearly a lot of good reason to be optimistic at the moment, this pandemic is far from over. Since taking over as CEO, I have been overwhelmed by the ability of everyone to adapt to change and support each other.

I see, on a daily basis, the efforts made across the Trust schools to maintain a quality education, by teachers and parents alike. It has not been easy these past nine months, but we have not let Covid defeat us, nor will we as we move into 2021.

Firstly, let me speak about the support we offer as a Trust. Each school is supported by the Central team at the Trust. This support ensures heads can access appropriate risk assessments, health and safety advice and guidance. By taking this approach, Headteachers and their colleagues can guarantee the best possible teaching and learning environment. Some communities are worse affected than others but every staff member in the Trust is committed to providing a safe quality of provision.

Sometimes, positive test results for COVID-19 affect either staffing levels or the bubbles that children are learning in. These are difficult to plan for as the situation can change not only day to day but hour to hour, but we will work tirelessly to make things work as well as possible.

I am asking for your continued help and support in letting your school know as soon as possible about any testing and test results. In isolated cases, we have seen test results posted on social media before the school was informed. I make no apology for saying this. Anxiety levels in some areas are high and this way of informing can prevent the school and its leadership organising appropriate cover or remote education.

Secondly, we regularly meet 'virtually' with our school leaders, ensuring we work together to answer queries or offer advice around the particular challenges a school may be facing. We share the information from the Department for Education which arrives on a daily basis, as well as working closely with each Local Authority, especially their Public Health Teams. Each week we operate two 'COVID' specific

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virtual senior leader support sessions and issue a weekly written bulletin summarising any changes to guidance. The work is ongoing and vital, and we will continue with this while Covid is any kind of threat. You can rely on us for that.

Thirdly, I am really pleased to share that all our schools are able to offer a level of 'remote education'. This will be appropriate to each school community depending on age, phase and needs of each pupil cohort. In some cases this may be for an individual child who has to isolate, and for others, whole year groups. In many cases the sessions may be pre-recorded to ensure quality. Live sessions become a greater challenge with increased chance of technical challenges having a negative effect on quality.

Finally, I want to thank you for your continued support. Our staff are driven to provide the best quality of education, in the most 'normal' way for our children. This may not always be as 'normal' as we may want or expect, however creativity and collaboration are at the fore. Senior leaders are working with you to share information and keep you up to date via their own well-established routes of communication unique to each school. As you can imagine each day can bring new challenges.

So, with the second lockdown currently ending in early December let us continue to work together in a positive spirit towards the Christmas break. We are a large, extended family of schools working together for every child. Every decision is made with what we believe are their best interests AND those of your own extended family, as well as our staff and their families.

I know it is really tough for everyone, but everyone has responded magnificently, and I know this will continue. Please stay safe and well.

Kind regards



Nikki Edwards
CEO