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Corvus Learning Trust COVID-19 Update 8th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As we reach the end of a very difficult week for schools, parents/carers and our community, we would like to express our gratitude to our school leaders, all staff and parents/carers in adapting, at such short notice, to changing circumstances regarding the educational provision for our children.

The speed of increase in positive cases both locally and nationally, meant that we needed to assess our ability to provide a safe environment in our schools for children and staff. Over the weekend, we held a number of meetings involving Governors, school leaders and the Trust to determine whether schools could effectively and safely open following the Christmas break. Despite the plans we put in place across the Trust following our meetings, the Government made the decision on Monday evening to close all schools other than for vulnerable children and children of keyworkers.

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to our Headteachers and colleagues for leading their schools through these very difficult days and for adjusting so quickly to the changing situation. Since the first lockdown, our schools have worked incredibly hard to develop their online educational provision and we believe our children are seeing the benefits of this work currently. We would also like to share with you that the number of children who are currently attending school is far higher than during the first lockdown. This provides all teaching and support staff with the huge challenge of having to offer a blended learning experience of classroom based, online and home learning for pupils.

Our schools calculate the maximum numbers they can accommodate each day, taking into account teaching staff availability, the number of vulnerable children invited into school, the available space within school and appropriate group sizes. Please be aware that to ensure a safe environment, your school may have to limit the number of pupils in each group and strictly follow government guidelines on keyworker eligibility. **As a Trust, we therefore appeal to our keyworker parents/carers to only send in your children if there is no alternative.** This will help us to provide education for all our pupils and minimise the risk of exposure to the virus for both children and staff.

We are extremely grateful for the support we have received from many parents and carers to the way our schools have adapted to the changing circumstances and have been encouraged by the many individual messages of appreciation that our schools have received. We recognise that home learning requires parental commitment that can be, on occasions, challenging and time consuming, especially if you are working from home yourself. We thank you for your continued understanding and support during this very difficult time.

We work together within the Trust to develop a consistent approach and to share information and best practice to support each other in decisions, but recognise that each school has its own specific set of circumstances. As a Trust, we support our school leaders to make decisions that best support their children, staff and community. We believe that our schools are best placed to provide regular and specific communication about ongoing changes and we thank them for the effective way they have communicated to date. The Trust will continue to communicate as and when required and we wanted to take this opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the hard work that has gone on behind the scenes in all our schools. We are particularly proud of how your children have responded so positively to each change.

Our very best wishes to you all. Please follow the guidance and stay safe.

Warmest regards

Bob Elsey
CEO

