

1<sup>st</sup> February 2021

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## National Lockdown Update

Dear Pupils and Parents

As you will be aware, the Government has announced that the current national restrictions have been extended until at least **8<sup>th</sup> March**, with schools expected to begin to reopen after this date. We expect a full announcement two weeks ahead of any reopening.

The Trust is following Government guidelines and our schools remain closed to the majority of pupils. We will continue to operate provision for the most vulnerable children and children of critical keyworkers at our schools. Vouchers for pupils eligible for free school meals will continue, with the exception of February half term, where this will be covered by the Local Authority winter grant scheme. Those pupils eligible should receive a voucher directly from the Local Authority.

We appreciate that the current situation remains uncertain, but we certainly hope to have pupils back in school as soon as possible. Our schools will continue to follow a normal school day structure remotely, with full lessons and work to be completed. We are grateful for your support, and the excellent feedback we have received about the quality of this provision.

## Mental Health Support

With the majority of pupils working from home, we would like to take this opportunity to remind parents of the support available for both physical and mental health and wellbeing. The Trust wellbeing hub includes a range of resources that we trust you will find useful:

<https://www.midlandacademiestrust.co.uk/news-and-events/wellbeing-hub>.

This week is children's mental health awareness week, and the schools will be offering a range of activities during the week to raise awareness and ensure young people know where to get support. During this prolonged lockdown it is more important than ever that we look after our mental health by taking screen breaks, making time to talk to one another and taking regular exercise. If you feel at any time that you need additional support or guidance, please contact your child's Head of Year - contact details, if you need them, can be found on our wellbeing hub.

## Year 11

The Government closed a consultation on the changes to exams for this year on Friday and we hope to be able to update you on the decisions taken shortly. It is vital that Year 11 continue to work and complete assignments set by teachers to the best of their ability. It was clear from the consultation that the work pupils are currently doing will play a part in determining their final grade. When pupils return to school, we will be assessing their learning during this period, and the examination boards may also provide tests or other assessments to be completed. Your child's Year 11 studies are by no means finished, therefore it is vital that they continue to do all they can to achieve their potential. Pupils not doing so risk being awarded much lower grades than they deserve or may have expected.

## Planned INSET Day

Our planned staff development day (INSET Day) due to take place on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February has been moved and will now take place on **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March**, so that necessary work for a potential reopening of the schools on March 8<sup>th</sup> can take place. Remote learning will be set for all pupils to complete on this day. Limited on site provision is available only for those critical keyworker children who absolutely need it, and parents are asked to contact their child's school



if this is needed. Remote lessons and on-site provision for vulnerable pupils and children of key workers on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February will now go ahead as normal.

We continue to monitor the rapidly changing situation and will update you as things change. We will keep staff, parents and pupils informed via social media and our website of any changes to the situation. Please continue to monitor our website for updated communications.

We recognise the pressures and strain you will be under. We thank you for your ongoing support as we work together to ensure the good health of all of our pupils, staff and our local communities.

Best wishes



Marion Plant OBE  
Chief Executive Officer

