

The Sea View Trust
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Chair of the Trust: Mr D Wallbank
Chief Executive Officer: Ms A Y Holdsworth
Company Secretary: Mrs N Wilkinson

To: Parents, Carers and Advocates
The Sea View Trust Academies and College

4th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE – SCHOOL AND COLLEGE CLOSURE

As you may have seen in the news, there is an extremely high number of coronavirus cases nationally and a new, much more virulent strain has emerged. As a result, the Government has instructed all schools and colleges to close. This announcement at 8pm this evening was as much of a surprise to staff within the Trust as it was to yourselves as members of the public. Up until this point, the Department for Education (DfE) has been insistent that Primary Schools and Special Schools with primary provision should remain open for all pupils. However, there has now been a clear direction that this is no longer appropriate and our academies and college must close until February half-term at the earliest.

As with the previous school closures, we recognise that Trust academies and the college have an important role to play in supporting the most vulnerable children and young people, together with providing quality childcare for critical workers. However, the sudden announcement at such short notice has left us with no time to plan quality remote learning or to assess the numbers of vulnerable and critical worker children who will require a place with us.

School and College Closure

With the above detail in mind, the Trust has made the extremely difficult decision, supported by Trustees and the school leadership teams, **to close our schools and college to all learners for one day tomorrow; Tuesday 5th January 2021**. This additional Inset day will allow staff to plan meaningful learning for vulnerable and critical worker children and remote education for all others unable to access school or college over the coming weeks.

Families will be contacted as soon as possible to understand the needs of both critical worker families and those of vulnerable learners. It is anticipated that provision for these groups will be in place from Wednesday 6th January 2021.

A reminder of the definitions of 'vulnerable children' and 'critical workers'

We would ask families to visit the Government website for the latest definition of 'vulnerable children' and 'critical workers':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Please review this information and contact your child's academy or college directly if a change in circumstance means that you, or a child, now fall into one of these categories. It would be appreciate if you could also note the following in relation to school and college planning:

- **Vulnerable Learners** - Please understand that, whilst we appreciate that all learners attending Trust Special Schools are vulnerable, it will not be safe for all to attend at the same time. We will be seeking to develop a rota system similar to that previously deployed during the first lock-down.
- **Critical Worker Families** - Parents who are critical workers may be required to share their shift patterns with school staff so that the limited places that are available can be targeted to those most in need of the support. As the critical worker list has been extended, there is additional pressure on available places. Regretfully therefore, where only one carer is a critical worker, schools and college are unlikely to be able to offer a place.

Remote Learning

Our academies and college will continue to provide families with details about their specific strategies for remote learning. However, please do contact them directly if you require any further clarification about their plans.

Free School Meals

If your child is eligible for free school meals, they will continue to receive these while at home. Your school or college will provide you with further details about how this will work if required.

I hope that this letter provides clarification about our plans however, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's academy or college directly. In the meantime, thank you once again for your continued support and understanding as we plan for the long term, ensuring that the impact on learning of this new lock-down is minimised and does not affect the longer term potential of our learners.

Kind regards,



Angela Holdsworth
CEO The Sea View Trust