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Dear Parents and Carers

ATT academies #safesteadygradual – September 2020

You will have heard the government announcement last Thursday that schools and academies will be open for all pupils from September 2020. Our academies have been welcoming pupils in different year groups back since early June. We approached this with great caution, reviewing all the scientific and public health advice to ensure that we could be as safe as possible. This has gone extremely well: our safety measures and risk assessments are excellent, and those pupils who have returned have adapted amazingly well to the new requirements. Safety measures and risk assessments are important - but they wouldn't have been successful if our pupils hadn't adhered to them. Thank you to all those parents and carers who sent their children back into our academies as requested – it has been lovely to see them.

We are delighted that we can now look forward to seeing all our wonderful pupils back in our academies next term! We will be very busy in the next couple of weeks planning, completing revised detailed risk assessments, and working out exactly what each academy will look like and feel like when your child returns.

The Government has stated: *'Given the improved position, the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk from coronavirus (COVID-19).'*

We're working hard to consider how we group our pupils together, ensure that we reduce contact between different groups of pupils, and keep the stringent cleaning and disinfecting processes we already have in place to ensure that our academies are as safe as can be for your child.

Your child's academy Principal will send out further detail before the end of term, but in the meantime there are some key points that you need to be aware of:

1. All pupils are expected to return to our academies. However, we will need to minimise contact between individuals who are unwell, therefore, you must ensure that if anyone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms, your child does **NOT** attend school. Any child or staff member who develops symptoms in the school day will be sent home immediately and should seek to get tested so that the national test and trace system can do its vital job. You must follow the government guidance '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)'

If anyone in your household, or your child, tests positive for COVID-19 you **MUST** inform your academy's Principal.

2. Your child will be expected to follow strict behaviour rules relating to physical contact with other pupils and keeping their hands clean. Pupils will be expected to/taken to wash their hands very regularly, and to use hand sanitiser.
3. Pupils will not be wearing face coverings in our academies. The government advice is quite clear that this is not necessary. If face coverings are used on public transport to get to your child's academy, they must be removed on arrival.
4. If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan, our academy colleagues will have been in touch with you regularly over the last few months, and will contact you to explain what provision will look like from September.
5. It will be more important than ever that your child has access to **their own** equipment in their academy to ensure that this does not need to be shared.
6. The government has advised walking or cycling to school wherever possible to reduce the use of public transport.
7. Attendance at our academies - The government has relaxed the rules on attendance during lockdown. However, this will change in September. The government guidance says:

'Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- *parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;*
- *schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence*
- *the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.'*

If your child remains under the care of a specialist health care professional you should discuss their care with your academy Principal (or the link member of staff) before returning in September. Where children are not able to attend their academy (because parents are following clinical and/or public health advice) they will not be penalised.

8. Academy kitchens will re-open in September, and lunches will be available again. Pupils eligible for free school meals will return to having their lunch at their academy and will no longer receive lunch vouchers.
9. Pupils will be expected to wear full academy uniform again from September.
10. The curriculum that we offer our pupils will remain broad and balanced, and will continue to include music, arts and sport - as usual.

We understand that some of you and your children will be anxious about returning in September, after some months out of the academy environment. Please be reassured that we are taking exceptional measures to make our academies as safe as they can be. We will be providing additional emotional

and wellbeing support for any pupils that need it and will also be providing additional opportunities to support learning where this is required. Although it feels like this situation has lasted forever, in fact pupils have lost, at worst, only 62 academy days of learning. And very many of them have worked hard using online resources or work books provided by our hardworking and dedicated teachers. We are all determined that they will absolutely not be '*a lost generation*' and we're adapting our curriculum to make sure that they get the learning and knowledge that they need to achieve success in the future.

Your children deserve a great, and safe, education – we will not let them down.
See you in September!

My warmest wishes to you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Debbie Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Debbie Clinton
Chief Executive Officer