

11 June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

First of all, I do hope that this finds all households and families well. This is just a brief update on progress across the Trust and our family of eight schools as we continue to implement the current guidance from the Government.

### **Secondary School Re-Opening: The King's School and Carleton High School**

As per the recent communication from Heads of School at The King's School and Carleton High School, we have moved ahead with our plans for a partial return of Year 10 pupils from 15 June 2020. As with all school re-openings across the Trust, our detailed risk assessments have been validated by external health and safety consultants and final approval agreed by the Trust Board. Parents and carers will receive further details from Heads of School tomorrow, Friday 12 June 2020, which will include precise detail of provision and all arrangements.

### **Online and Remote Learning: Primary and Secondary Schools**

The announcements by the Government earlier in the week have meant that the plan for all primary children to have a month back in school before the summer has now been dropped. For all pupils in primary and secondary schools, including those in the year groups allowed to return, this means the main vehicle for learning will continue to be online, remote provision.

There is plenty of discussion in the press and amongst educators about 'blended learning' which means a mixture of teaching remotely and in school. Whilst none of us know what September will look like in our schools, it seems there is potential that this method of learning and delivery will continue in some form in September. Across all Trust schools, we have been working hard to get better at our online provision and considerable time in schools has gone in to training for all teachers. Our offer has been stepped up in the secondary schools with live content and lessons, plus filming content and recordings taking place. All primary school parents and carers will receive further communication next week from Heads of School detailing the pre-recorded and live sessions that will be in place across all primary schools from 22 June 2020. Although many pupils do not find the remote learning easy, many are making real progress and getting better at this new form of education. Thank you so much for your support and patience.

### **Year 6 Transition to Secondary School**

The current Government guidance makes it difficult to offer Year 6 pupils who are due to join our secondary schools in September the same experience they would normally receive. Last year our secondary schools offered an extended experience over a number of days. At the time of writing and, in light of the Government guidance, this is not possible for this September's cohort. That said, the current situation has not stopped us thinking creatively to support transition for Year 6 pupils. We know just how important moving from primary school to secondary school is. We want to reassure all parents and carers that we aim to ensure that all pupils feel supported and looked after during the transition. Staff with a key role to play in transition, including Assistant Headteachers, Key Stage 3 Leaders, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators and Student Liaison Officers have continued to meet with all Year 6 teachers remotely. This has been done so that key information is shared appropriately and pupil transition is as seamless as possible.

The King's School and Carleton High School also have a dedicated area of their websites for Year 6 pupils. This includes a virtual tour, introductions to key members of staff and useful documentation. In the coming weeks additional information will be added to the websites to help pupils become more comfortable and excited about their move to secondary school. The current lockdown situation will not be deterring schools from holding a transition evening. This transition evening will be held online on 1 July 2020 and parents and carers will receive further information in due course.

Briefly returning to the re-opening of schools, and as highlighted in my communication of 22 May 2020, the choice is yours as to whether you choose to send your child back to school. Of course, we will respect your decision either way, but I do hope that you will give it serious consideration. The public debate is difficult for parents and carers – there is that much noise that it can be hard to know who or what to believe. We have seen a growing number of children return and I know that all the Trust and school leaders continue to reassure parents and carers of the provision we have in place. As communicated previously, all our schools have been risk assessed and these externally endorsed and validated by health and safety consultants. We know that children are much less severely affected by the disease and that the closure of schools has few benefits to their health but very large costs, both to their wellbeing and to their education in the longer term. With this in mind, we await further information from the Department of Education of what the summer catch up package for pupils will include.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julian Appleyard', enclosed within a thin, hand-drawn oval border.

Julian Appleyard OBE  
Chief Executive Officer