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13 May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

A Letter from the Chief Executive Officer of St Benet's Multi Academy Trust

I wanted to write to you to communicate how your academy is working as part of our close family of academies during these challenging times. Throughout the Covid-19 crisis, staff at your academy, and across the Trust, have been working tirelessly to keep children, families and their colleagues safe. They have provided childcare for the children of key workers and high-quality virtual learning for all children. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their adaptability, resilience and willingness to embrace each new challenge.

As I am sure you are aware, the government has recently shared its vision for the future 'phased re-opening' of schools. As a parent or carer with a child at a St Benet's academy, I wanted to take the opportunity to reassure you of our approach.

The Trust will support each individual academy to assess how best they can meet their local needs. As I am sure you would expect, our over-riding priority will be the wellbeing and safety of children, families and staff. We will take a calm and cautious approach at each stage to ensure we build the confidence of staff and parents in the provision as it changes.

In this early stage, we are reviewing the government guidance and awaiting further details. We are also liaising with our Headteachers and Education Unions to hear how we can safely meet the needs of local communities whilst still prioritising safety.

The government guidance phases the reopening for initial year groups (Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6) beginning *from the 1st of June at the earliest* and is dependent on the virus transmission rates at that point. We will be supporting our Headteachers to risk assess what this provision could look like in their academies and to prioritise safety at all times. Headteachers and their leadership teams will decide what number of children they can safely cater for in consultation with the Trust.

When schools begin to reopen it may look different from one school to another even within the same Trust. This is because of the number of classrooms, the size of those rooms and the staff available to work. Headteachers will decide the best approach for their academy, in consultation with the Trust, and share that with parents at the appropriate time.



At present there are many unanswered questions, but we can reassure you that your academy will communicate in a prompt fashion when enough information is in place to plan any return. The current provision for home learning for the majority remains unchanged. Likewise, the childcare provision continues in schools for approved key workers and vulnerable children.

As a Trust we believe that the re-opening of schools needs to be managed carefully and in controlled, staggered phases. I am sure you will support this approach and appreciate that the decisions made by the individual schools will always be with the best interests of children, families and staff at the centre of all they do.

Kind regards,

Richard Cranmer
Chief Executive Officer