

Tuesday 5th January 2021

NATIONAL LOCKDOWN – CLOSURE OF UNITED ENDEAVOUR TRUST ACADEMIES

Last night the Prime Minister notified the nation that all schools would be closed from 00:01am on 5th January until the end of the February half term break. This may be subject to further change as the situation is reviewed. We will at all times keep you updated on the position.

Students who are classed as vulnerable or who have parents classed as Critical Workers are entitled to take up a place in the provision being provided at our academies. The academy has asked you to contact them if you wish to take up such a place.

A communication sent to us from DfE confirmed the following:

Public vocational exams and assessments scheduled to take place in January **will go ahead as planned.** Staff will be in contact with affected students and their families directly to confirm arrangements.

The Department for Education has also confirmed that in these circumstances, **they do not think it is possible for exams to go ahead fairly this summer.** The Secretary of State for Education will be asking Ofqual to consult rapidly on an approach for alternative arrangements that will allow students to progress fairly. It is vital that Year 11 students engage with remote learning and on-going assessment as part of their lessons to ensure that staff have a good body of evidence to support teacher assessed grades. **We cannot rule out that the alternative arrangements will not involve some examinations** and so students need to continue to do their best in their studies.

We know that receiving face-to-face education is best for children's mental health and for their educational achievement and we welcome the news that the DfE will be reviewing the restrictions on schools and will ensure that children and young people return to face-to-face education as soon as the pressures are easing on the NHS.

This decision does not suggest that schools and colleges are no longer safe places for young people. Instead, limiting attendance is about reducing the number of contacts that all of us have with people in other households.

For vulnerable children and the children of critical workers, who can still attend school or college, as they did in March to May, and their teachers, our systems of protective measures mean that any risks are well managed and controlled.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing

We have been advised that the coronavirus (COVID-19) testing programme should be continued to enable weekly testing for staff and daily close contact testing for those staff and pupils attending secondary schools and colleges.

This programme also allows schools and colleges to test pupils on return. Please continue to return the consent and

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registration forms we have sent to you, so that we are clear who will be tested on return. We will commence our testing offer for students and staff involved in on-site provision shortly and will contact all of those involved with more details.

Free school meal provision

During the period of national lockdown, we will continue to provide free food parcels for pupils who are eligible for benefits related free school meals. We will communicate how we will do this with all families who are eligible – current arrangements for collection of food parcels this week and next week remain unchanged.

Remote education

We must remind all parents and students that engaging with remote education is mandatory for all students. We will track and monitor attendance to on-line learning and work provided for each session. Parents should contact their child's House Leaders if they have any queries or difficulties in relation to completing or accessing work set. In line with Government guidance, only Year 11 need to complete work set between now and 8th January, whilst non-compulsory work is available for all other year groups. From 11th January, all students must access remote learning. Please see our Remote Learning Policy on our websites.

We are aware that arrangements may change as the situation evolves and we appreciate your support in frequently checking information we provide to you.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Please keep safe and take care.

Yours faithfully,



Mr J Henshaw
Executive Principal



Mrs J Hingley
Associate Principal

