



## Northern Ambition Academies Trust

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Date: 05/01/2021

Dear Parents/Carers

### National Lockdown

I would firstly like to wish you all a very Happy New Year and hope that you have enjoyed a restful Christmas with your loved ones.

After a very difficult 2020, it seems we move into a new year which continues to challenge all of us, both personally and professionally. As always, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for doing all you can to keep yourself and your loved ones safe and for your ongoing support for our Trust. We find ourselves in a much stronger position this time around having done this last year and having evaluated our success, making relevant changes where required. All schools are in a position to offer quality remote education and indeed have been doing so for those pupils isolating since we reopened in September. Please be assured that staff in school monitor the quality of this and also the pupil engagement levels, acting swiftly should either not be adequate. I can assure you that we will do all we can to ensure your children receive a quality education during this period of national lockdown. Likewise, I thank our fantastic staff for enabling us to continue to offer such a provision for our children and young people, whether that be in school or online.

In light of the Prime Minister's statement to the nation last night, I would like to update you on some key points related to schools and for those of you who may not have seen the guidance published last night, please follow the link below to read the document in detail.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/949536/NationalLockdownGuidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/949536/NationalLockdownGuidance.pdf)

### Key points related to schools

- Schools (primary and secondary) will close from today for on-site attendance except for vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers. **All other pupils will be remotely educated until the February half term.** Your child's school will have sent you further information about how to access and what to expect from remote learning.
- Early years settings, including nurseries and childminders, will remain open. All early years providers (including registered childminders but not including reception years in primary schools) can remain open during this period of national lockdown. **We are seeking clarification about nurseries on school sites and will of course keep you up to date. Until this time, our nursery provision continues.**
- Existing rules for childcare support bubbles will still apply.

### Public tests and examinations

- Public vocational exams and assessments scheduled to take place in January will go ahead as planned. All students affected by this have been made aware.
- **Summer Exams will not go ahead as planned.** All we know at present is that the Secretary of State will work with Ofqual to put in place alternative arrangements and more details will be published in due course. We will keep you up to date as to how they intend to deal with public tests and examinations (e.g. SATs and GCSEs.)

### Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing in secondary schools

The planned coronavirus (COVID-19) testing programme for staff and secondary/college aged children will continue during the course of the lockdown, but only for staff and for those critical worker/vulnerable pupils attending school. Airedale Academy will be sending out more information regarding this soon. **In the meantime no pupil will be tested without consent.** The full programme of testing will begin when all pupils return to full time school.

### Free School Meals (FSM)

Thank you once again for bearing with us whilst we quickly organise FSM for those children eligible and who are not attending school. All pupils currently in school, as either critical worker children or vulnerable, will receive daily school

meals as normal. Details will be sent to you from your child's school as to the plans in place for provision of FSM to all other eligible children.

**Keeping in touch**

As we all know, the national situation can change almost hourly! We will continue to issue updates to you all as soon as we receive them through our normal channels of school websites, texts and social media.

Although this year has already come with huge challenges for us all, there is hope because of the vaccine. In true Northern Ambition spirit, we remain positive and upbeat.

Thank you for your continued support during these challenging times and in the meantime, please do stay safe.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Fairhurst', written over a light grey rectangular background.

**Elizabeth Fairhurst**

*Chief Executive*

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