



## Northern Ambition Academies Trust

Crewe Road, Airedale, Castleford WF10 3JU – Tel: 01977 664555 – Fax: 01977 664556

Date: 03/07/2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope this letter finds you all safe and well.

As you will be aware, a lot has happened since I last wrote to you and much has been said in the media about the wider reopening of schools for September. As promised, as soon as this information was formally sent to schools, I would share it with you. I am pleased to say that this information was received yesterday, Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July and I am now able to share the key points with you.

### **The reopening of schools in September**

The current restrictions on group sizes in schools will be lifted to allow schools, colleges and nurseries to fully reopen to all children and young people, as Covid-19 infection rates continue to fall.

### **Key Information Points around reopening as outlined in the Department for Education guidance published on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July.**

- Schools are being asked to keep children in class or year group sized ‘bubbles’ and encourage older children to keep their distance from each other and staff where possible. This is alongside protective measures such as regular cleaning and handwashing.
- All staff, pupils and their families will continue to have access to testing if they develop Covid-19 symptoms and schools will be provided with easy to use home testing kits for children and staff who would otherwise be unable to get a test.
- Schools will need to work with families to secure full attendance from the start of the new academic year, with the reintroduction of mandatory attendance.
- To ensure pupils can catch up on lost learning, schools will be required to resume teaching a broad and balanced curriculum in all subjects.
- Exams will take place in 2021 and Ofqual is consulting on arrangements for those exams, including measures to mitigate any impact on pupils from time out of school.

We are delighted that our schools will be able to open fully to pupils in September as we fully appreciate the impact that being away from school for any length of time can have on young people, not just academically but mentally as well. Throughout this pandemic, our ambition has always been to welcome back as many pupils as we can in as safe a way as possible and have done so with huge success. Implementing the new guidance will be a challenge for us, but we will do our very best to ensure a smooth transition back to school for all children.

The safety of our pupils and staff has always been central to all of our plans, and will remain so. We will now be working hard behind the scenes to ensure our opening plans and risk assessments are fit for purpose and adhere to the guidance. **Each school will inform you of their opening plans as soon as they are complete and in good time for you to prepare your children for their return to school. If you have any questions once these plans have been shared with you, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant school.**

### **GCSE/BTEC Results day and Autumn Examinations – Airedale Academy**

Miss Proctor will be distributing key information about the plans for results day as well as reassurances around how the Centre Assessed Grades for students were reached. Again, much has been said in the media about the opportunity for students to sit their examinations in November if they feel the process of assessment has either not been followed correctly, if they were unable to receive a calculated result, or if they would like to improve their grades. Miss Proctor will update you on this and Ofqual will also provide information for learners and their parents, so they are aware of how the school can support them if they wish to appeal their final qualification result.

A polite reminder that schools are not allowed, under any circumstances, to share predicted grades with students or parents prior to results day. Please can I ask that you respect this and do not contact school to request this information.

#### **Summer Holidays - Reminder**

A reminder that Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July is the last day of the summer term for pupils (but please note that the 17<sup>th</sup> July is calendared as an INSET day for Airedale Academy and will be used for essential staff updates and training).

The Secretary of State for Education has now confirmed that they are not asking schools to open over the summer holidays, and there is no expectation that schools should open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers over this period. I would therefore again urge parents and carers to make childcare arrangements where necessary, **as our schools will be closed from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July until they reopen on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

#### **Free School Meals for eligible families over the summer holidays.**

Following a change of heart by the government, families with children who are eligible for income-based Free School Meals and have been receiving the Edenred vouchers over the last few months will receive additional vouchers to cover the summer holiday. Business Managers in our schools will be authorising the vouchers shortly before the end of term, so eligible families should receive notification that their voucher is available in the normal way either shortly before or just after the schools close for the summer (depending on the processing times by Edenred). For this final round of vouchers, families will receive a voucher allocation of £105 per child in one go to cover the entire summer break.


#### **School calendar 2020/21 - Reminder**

For those of you who wish to book holidays for next summer and during the academic year 2020/21, please refer to the published calendars on your child's school website. It is vitally important that term time holidays are avoided after such a lengthy period away from school for our pupils.

Thank you as always for your continued support for our schools throughout this trying time. It is a pleasure to see more children back in school and impressive how so many pupils are engaging so well in their home learning. I can only ask that you continue to support and encourage your child or children to keep this effort up as we fast approach their return to full time education.

Please continue to take care.

Yours faithfully



**Elizabeth Fairhurst**

*Chief Executive*

Northern Ambition Academies Trust