

'Innovative Education – Transforming Lives'

25th February 2021

Important Communication from the CEO:

Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians

I hope that you all enjoyed your half term break.

Following the announcement by the Prime Minister on Monday 22nd February, I am writing to update you on further developments on the wider opening of primary schools. All pupils are expected to return to school or colleges on Monday 8th March and I am delighted to confirm that we will be opening our academies/schools to all pupils in the Trust from this date.

Public Health Information: 18th February 2021

- Doncaster has **198.5** cases per 100,000. The average in England is **122.7**
- **Statistics by age group**

0-4 yrs	= 72 per 100,000
5-9 yrs	= 56.4 per 100,000
10-14 yrs	= 93.6 per 100,000
15-19 yrs	= 198.6 per 100,000
- 90% of the cases above are of the new Covid-19 variant

Wider-opening arrangements in our Exceed Academies

All wider opening Risk Assessments across the Trust are currently being reviewed and updated following further guidance received from DfE this week. I want to reassure you that the safety of both staff and pupils is paramount in all our planning and all risk assessments will continue to be reviewed and revised on a weekly basis in accordance with Public Health guidance.

Weekly testing of Employees:

Employees throughout our Trust including catering and cleaning staff have been undertaking weekly lateral flow testing since January and they will continue with these tests to provide us with further reassurance. As you are aware these tests are not 100% guaranteed, but it does provide a further protective measure to support our staff, during these difficult times, to continue education for our pupils.

Bubble Arrangements:

As before, our opening will consist of class sized bubbles and once again we will continue with:

- Staggered start and finish times
- Staggered playtimes and lunchtimes
- Pupils using their own equipment within class
- Pupils remaining in class bubbles throughout the day

Parents/carers are asked to follow government guidance if your child or anyone in your household develops any of the following symptoms:

- **High temperature** (this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back, you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **A new, continuous cough** – (this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours)
- **A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste**

Everyone within the household must stay at home and the person who is displaying symptoms must undertake a test for Covid-19, the household must continue to self-isolate until the result of the test has been received. If the test is negative your child is able to return to school, if it is positive then you must all continue to self-isolate in line with government guidance.

Please contact the academy/school as soon as possible by telephone 01709 863273 or via email to alerts@hilltop.doncaster.sch.uk to inform them so that they can ensure any necessary arrangements are put in place if required.

We hope that we will not have to close any Bubbles however, if we do, you will be contacted by the academy/school as soon as possible notifying you that your child must self-isolate for a period of time and letting you know when your child's class will return.

After School Clubs and Childcare Provision

After school clubs within our academies/schools will start after the Easter Break but childcare arrangements for Breakfast and After School will continue.

If parents are using external childcare providers or out of school extra-curricular activities for their children

- You are advised to limit the use of multiple out of school settings providers and only use one out of school setting in addition to school as far as possible.
- You are encouraged to check providers have put in place their own protective measures.

Further guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Face Coverings

As before, we are asking parents/carers to please wear a face covering whilst on school premises, staff throughout the Trust will also wear face coverings.

Parents/carers are also reminded of the following:

- only one person (if possible) should escort their child to and from the academy/school to reduce numbers on academy/school premises
- parents/carers are asked not to congregate around the academy /school gates/entrances or on the outside footpaths after drop off or pick up times
- parents should contact the academy by email or phone to communicate any information and not attend the academy office
- Parents/carers should arrive at the academy at the allocated time slot

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank you for your support during this time. I cannot tell you how excited we all are to welcome our pupils back. Please continue to support our academies, communities and others by staying safe and adhering to the national restrictions that are in place.

See you soon!

Yours sincerely,

B.A. Nixon

Mrs B.A Nixon
CEO

Mr John Blount
Chair of Directors Board

