

Date: 25/01/2021

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope this letter finds you well.

As we move into the 4th week of the Spring term and of the national lockdown, I wanted to share some updates with you. I was really pleased to hear on Friday that positive cases of Covid are on the decrease across the district, albeit at a fairly slow rate. Cases also remain low amongst primary aged children and are declining amongst those who are secondary aged. Although positive news, I continue to urge everyone to continue to follow the rules in order to keep ourselves and those we love, safe and well. The sooner we can reopen our schools and welcome all of our young people back, the better.

February half term

As yet, we have not been made aware that schools should remain open to Critical Worker and vulnerable children over the half term break, so please assume that all of our schools will be closed to these groups from Monday 15th to Friday 19th February. If this changes in any way, you will be informed.

Remote Learning

As a trust, we remain in a strong position as regards our provision of remote learning. I can clearly see the progress made by each school in their provision and I know this has not been easy for staff or pupils. I hear about and can see first-hand the efforts made by all staff to ensure this is the best it can be and am delighted to see the various weekly 'shout outs' and post cards home to those pupils engaging brilliantly in their remote education. All schools have received their allocations of devices and have ensured these have got out to those families most in need. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with your school if you feel you are eligible for a device.

We will shortly be sending out a 'pulse survey' for all parents and carers to complete. This will be focussed around the provision of remote education by the trust. Your feedback will be invaluable and will ensure we plug any gaps and further develop the provision for your children. The survey will take you no more than 5 minutes, thank you in advance for your time in completing this.

Reopening of schools

Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State, has said that schools and parents/carers would have "absolutely proper notice" of when children are going to return to school. He has assured us that there will be a "clear two weeks" notice for teachers and families to get ready. A return after February half term is looking highly unlikely at this stage but we will of course keep you up to date.

Summer Examinations

The Ofqual consultation on plans for summer assessments is now out as explained in the most recent letter sent by Miss Proctor to Y11 and Y13 families. I'd urge everyone to look at it and complete where appropriate. Miss Proctor has also outlined a clear timeline for how the school will approach the teacher assessments for Y11 and Y13 this coming summer. More details around KS2 assessments will be shared with you as and when we receive them. The key message from us to all pupils, is quite simply to continue to work as hard as possible to ensure they receive the best grade they can.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing COVID

Airedale Academy has quickly adapted and developed a system for testing their staff and those students currently in school who have given consent, using their supplies of the Lateral Flow Tests. National plans to test all students prior to their return to secondary school still remain in place, but as we know, there are many ongoing governmental changes so we will keep an eye on this and will keep you informed. If you will want your child to be tested when the time comes, it is vital that consent is given and that the appropriate form is completed in advance.

Home-testing kits for primary staff should be arriving in schools any day but there is no plan to test primary aged children.

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 in a cursive style.

Elizabeth Fairhurst
Chief Executive
Northern Ambition Academies Trust