



Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust

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CEO: Alan Hardie

19th March 2020

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Update 6 19/3/20

Arrangements for eligible pupils from Monday

Dear Parents and Carers

We had hoped to bring you more details about who is considered to be a “key worker” eligible to continue sending their children to school from Monday, if they wish. Unfortunately, we are still waiting to receive the Government’s definition of those who are “key workers”.

As soon as we have this information, we will put an electronic registration form on the trust and school websites for parents to register their child. Registration will also be possible by phone at each school or campus. We will require sight of a relevant ID badge to confirm eligibility. Further details will be on the form.

We expect the definition of “key worker” to include all NHS and education staff, police and fire service personnel and delivery drivers but we can only confirm this once we have the official list from the Government.

We are also able to continue to provide education for pupils who are considered vulnerable and we will contact individual parents and carers who have children who fall into this category.

Our intention is to open Duke’s School and all Bishop’s School campuses on Monday to those pupils registered by key workers or invited vulnerable pupils. They will be open from 8 a.m. and breakfast clubs will operate as usual. Each school/campus will close at 5.00 p.m. and pupils can either be collected at 3.00 p.m. or 4.30 p.m. A reduced lunch service will be available and our provision for two year olds will be mornings only.

Once we have a clear idea of numbers, we may move to providing education on a reduced number of campuses. We are also looking at a booking system from the second week of closure onwards so that we can identify demand and ensure we have enough staff to meet this.

Due to a staffing shortage and the complex needs of the pupils, we may not be able to open Castle School on Monday. We will make a decision on this after a reassessment tomorrow. Sara Wild, Castle Principal will issue an update to Castle parents and carers.

Free School Meals

We have been promised by the Government that they will soon put a national voucher system in place to support pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals. Until this happens, next week we will provide a packed lunch for each pupil who is eligible and these will be available to collect from Reception at each campus between 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. each day. We will review this arrangement at the end of next week.



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School transport

Northumberland County Council have confirmed that school transport will still be available for eligible pupils.

Home learning

All of our pupils will be given appropriate work to complete at home. Most of this will be based on online learning, but there are some paper based resources also, especially for Bishop's School pupils. We have no idea how long the school closure will last but it is vital that all of our pupils keep a good routine for learning in place so that they haven't fallen behind when we return. Full details will be sent out separately by each school.

Years 6, 11 and 13

All public exams have been cancelled and we have been told that an announcement will be made tomorrow as how grades will be awarded. We will let you know the details of this as soon as we have them but please be assured that we will work tirelessly to ensure that our secondary pupils get the grades they deserve. Year 6 SATs have been cancelled entirely.

We will also ensure that when we are able to reopen and the need for 'social distancing' has gone, that we put on an appropriate event to allow Year 6, Year 11 and Year 13 pupils to celebrate their time with us. This will probably be in the autumn but we are committed to ensuring that the pupils have the same chance as previous years to have a celebration event.

Communications

I appreciate that we have issued a lot of communications in the last few weeks, but in these unprecedented times I believe that it is vital to give parents and carers as much information as possible. There will be a further update tomorrow and as we move to a new role in supporting the fight against coronavirus, we will continue to give regular updates throughout the closure period.

Yours faithfully



Alan Hardie
Chief Executive
Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust