



# The Consortium Trust

*Where together excellence and pupils thrive*

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Covid-19 update**

As I write I am delighted to see so many kind words and supportive actions from parents and carers from all our schools and settings. It means an awful lot to our hard working staff right across the Trust. I do wish that the media and the Government would stop saying schools are closed and won't reopen until the 8<sup>th</sup> March at the earliest. As we all know, all Consortium Schools and nurseries are open, with all staff working hard. Not only providing in school lessons for many children of specified groups but juggling that with innovative and creative outreach teaching to ALL pupils using digital technology. Our admin, site, cleaning and catering teams continue to support our schools and provide vital services to our families. Media comments are simply not the reality of what is happening at school, it's disingenuous and actually plain wrong! Our staff couldn't be working any harder for you and your children.

**Lateral Flow Testing:** All of our staff now have access to home LFT testing kits and we are encouraging staff to carry out the covid-test every four days. This will improve confidence and reduce the risk of transmission in schools and in the wider community. Kits have been distributed to every setting at the beginning of this week.

**Half term 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Feb:** In line with government direction and as part of the effort to further suppress the spread of the virus all of our primary schools will be fully closed over the half term. Our Kirkley nursery and our central staff at Halesworth will be working as normal during that week.

**When will ALL pupils return to school?** If the government sticks to its aspiration of the 8<sup>th</sup> March and their commitment to give schools and parents two weeks' notice to prepare we should hear on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February on whether we will be returning to full time education in school. While I have no insider knowledge – the Trust is planning for the current restrictions to stay in place until Easter. I very much hope to be proven wrong on this, but I suspect that a return to anything like normal is more likely to be the 12<sup>th</sup> April.

The Trust and our schools are ready to switch from the existing blended offer to 'normal schooling' whenever the green light is given, but for now we will continue to refine and develop our digital offer, continue with our key worker and vulnerable children in school teaching and maintain our extensive outreach work to families and children that need that additional support.

I hope that you have a lovely weekend and we may even have the opportunity to play in the snow in a socially distant and Covid-secure way. Stay safe and please contact your school/setting or the Trust if we can do anything to support you.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne  
CEO & Principal

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