



16th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I do not normally contact you directly, your school's Headteacher/Principal is your key contact point and as a Trust we don't want to get in their way and create confusion through too many voices speaking at once. But these are unprecedented times and I felt it important to let you know how we are supporting your Headteacher/Principal as they lead the school during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Trust has a Core Team who are meeting regularly now to review our response to the outbreak and the advice we provide to our school leaders. We provide support to them as they consider how to respond in school to the huge variety of different issues that are caused by this situation. Our Core Team has expertise in HR, premises, finance and IT services as well as individuals with many years of school leadership experience. This provides a back-up to the strong leaders we are so lucky to have across our schools. By working together, we can make sure we have the best chance of making good decisions on behalf of all.

The most important advice we give to our school leaders is to follow the advice from Public Health England. We do have considerable experience in leading and managing schools, but we are not medical experts. We support our school leaders to follow the expert advice coming from the government's chief scientific and medical advisors, even though others may be very willing to give their own advice. The government has the best overview of the situation and they are issuing regular updates to school leaders that respond to the rapidly changing situation.

There are even more challenging times ahead and the advice to stay open may well change at some point. If it does, our schools will do all they can to provide some learning opportunities for your child during any sustained closure. What this will look like will vary from school to school depending on their context, age groups and the technology available. Schools across the Trust are collaborating brilliantly in looking at on-line and other solutions to providing learning remotely. If it becomes necessary, you will hear more about this from your school in the days or weeks ahead.

We must not be under any illusion, however, that anything like normal service can be maintained if schools are forced to close. We will have staff affected by the virus who are unable to work from home and we cannot plan for every eventuality. More staff may well have to self-isolate and the service schools are able to offer may vary day to day. What I can assure you of is that every school will do their best to support the young people they serve.

A particular focus will be, in secondary schools, on the Year 11 and Year 13 pupils who are facing public examinations. We know that government is working with the examination authorities and has a range of contingency plans in place. If these have to be deployed, you will be informed via your school or directly by the government. For the time being the advice to all these young people is to stay calm and keep preparing for those examinations.

ALLIANCE LEARNING TRUST TEACHER TRAINING

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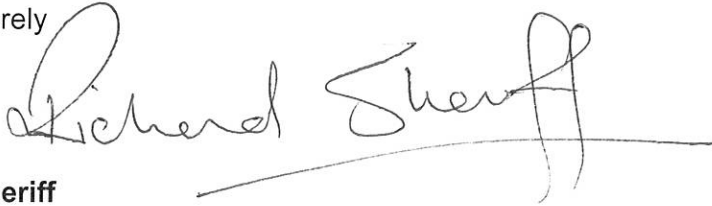
This is a time of national crisis but by working together we can, and will, get through this. But we need your support and I would ask you to help us by:

- Encouraging your child to follow the guidance re hand and nose hygiene
- Not sending your child to school if they have a fever or persistent cough
- Supporting the leadership of the school as they make difficult decisions in challenging times
- Reading carefully and following all the advice that comes home from school
- Showing kindness and respect to our school staff as they work under difficult conditions to support our children

I know this will be a very worrying time for you and your family and what happens at school will have a direct impact on you and your day to day life. The Trustees and Leaders of the Red Kite Learning Trust will do all they can to work with you and do their best to support the dedicated teachers and support staff who look after your children at school.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I am grateful for your support for our schools.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Sheriff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Richard Sheriff
CEO – Red Kite Learning Trust