



# The Consortium Trust

*Where together excellence and pupils thrive*

## Weekly Staff briefing

29<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Colleagues

You will have seen the Prime Minister's announcement yesterday that there will be further easements to the lockdown, including the now confirmed government position that schools will extend the provision to include pupils in nursery, reception, years 1 and 6 from the 1<sup>st</sup> June. This is in addition to the current provision for vulnerable pupils and children of key workers.

Yesterday evening the Trust Board met to discuss the extension of provision, and reviewed all the information available to them including the national picture, staff returns, anticipated pupil numbers and the plans and risk assessments from Academy Heads. It was the Trust Board's view that we are ready to extend provision and have approved the plans from Academy Heads and myself. **I can therefore confirm that from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June all 11 schools and the central offices at Halesworth will reopen to staff with pupils starting on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June.**

**Three step return to work and well-being process**, I remain committed to supporting you in returning to work and understand that some colleagues will be anxious. The Trust has developed a three step process that is designed to support you, I want to be clear by stating that every employee must engage with the process. My pledge to you is that the process will be:

1. Fair and transparent to everyone;
2. Only to bring staff on to site when pupil numbers require it;
3. Be compassionate to individual requests, including the use of unpaid compassionate leave;
4. Support you to be work ready and available to meet our charitable/social aims ASAP;
5. We are all responsible for each other's health, safety and well-being

Stage 1: All staff to complete the online consultation survey.

Stage 2: All staff to engage with their Academy Head or Line Manager, to review the staffing decision planner.

Stage 3: A return to work meeting, within ten days of starting back at work [at a school site].

It is essential that you engage with the Trust as your employer during this process.

**PD day**, on Monday the 1<sup>st</sup> June we will be holding a PD day for all staff. Academy Heads will confirm the arrangements for this day. Not all staff will be required attend in person, but everyone will be REQUIRED to dial in. Failure to attend (physically or virtually) the PD briefing on Covid-19 health and safety is a serious breach of contract and will result in a deduction of a day's pay. As the employer we have a duty to provide you with the necessary information and support, as an employee you have a duty to attend. The following is an extract from the HSE guidance, I see the PD day briefing as a central measure 'to manage and control workplace risks'.

*Duty holders continue to have obligations to comply with health and safety at work legislation and requirements to manage and control workplace risks, including protecting workers and others from the risk of COVID-19 infection in the workplace.*

This is for all colleagues no matter of your working days/hours, your Academy Head will confirm the time of the briefing, if this causes you a significant issue please discuss urgently with your Academy Head. The PD day will also give an opportunity for staff in schools to make necessary adjustments to the physical environment.

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**Virtual School**, part of our offer going forward will be the opening of the Consortium Trust's Virtual School, this provision will provide learning opportunities and resources for all our pupils that are unable to attend our school sites. This will replace our existing google-classroom offer and Academy Heads will explain the implication on teachers. Our aim is to spread the workload more equally to colleagues. The Virtual school will be headed up by Tamsin Little, Director of Primary Education and she will be building a team of virtually available teachers and teaching assistants. Colleagues that have been identified to join the virtual team, will be receiving information over the next few days.

**Joint Consultative Committee**, I am pleased to advise that I have called a meeting of the JCC, the Trade Union body that the Trust meets regularly. The meeting will take place on the 1<sup>st</sup> June and I will advise you of any updates from the meeting. The Trust has always maintained a good relationship with the Unions.

**Your safety**, the safety of everyone but particularly our staff is fundamental to us moving forward to extend our physical provision to more children, I can confirm the following:

1. Full risk assessments have been undertaken at every site and the Academy Head has confirmed they are content to open.
2. PPE equipment have been sourced and will be in place at all sites prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> June. PPE equipment is available and must be used in line with the DfE guidance.
3. Addendum to key policies have been made, and the attached addendum to the Behaviour and Inclusion policy make it clear that pupils that are unable or unwilling to comply with the social distancing rules will be refused entry to the school. I hope that this demonstrates that I have listened to staff concerns.

Please refer to the national guidance documents below, for further information

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>

Guidance on implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

Guidance for parents and carers as schools and other education settings in England open to more children and young people can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Yours sincerely

Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne  
CEO & Principal

Cc: Trust Board and Members–  
Locality Committee members

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## Behaviour and Inclusion Policy Addendum

### COVID-19 response

1. The following addendum to the Trust's Behaviour and Inclusion Policy will come into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 and will remain in place until the end of the Covid-19 pandemic or when revoked by the Trust Board (whenever soonest).
2. The addendum will be reviewed by the CEO and the Executive Team routinely and will make recommendations to retain or revoke based on the evidence and need in our schools.
3. The health, safety and well-being of all our pupils, families and staff is our highest priority and the Trust reserves the right to balance the needs of the individual and the school community.
4. The Trust reaffirms its commitment to inclusion and safeguarding for all pupils.
5. The Trust and our schools have undertaken detailed risk assessments on the re-opening our schools to more pupils, from the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 *at the earliest*.
6. A decision to apply the sanctions as laid out in this addendum is delegated to the Academy Head in consultation with the Director of Primary Education.
7. A decision to apply the sanctions as laid out in this addendum must be supported by a detailed assessment of risk, undertaken by the Academy Head to show that all steps have been considered and that the risk to the individual, other pupils and staff cannot be managed effectively to an acceptable level.
8. **Any pupil who commits serious or persistent breach of the new COVID-19 protection rules may be sanctioned by the Academy Head using the full range of sanctions available, dependent on the seriousness of the breach, up to and including withdrawal of the offer of a place at the school for a specified period and in extreme cases permanent exclusion.**
9. A serious or persistent breach of the new COVID-19 rules may include, but not limited to:
  - Failing to comply with social distancing;
  - Failing to comply with hand-washing and hygiene requirement;
  - Failing to observe all reasonable instructions from staff;
10. In the event of a pupil having a physical school place withdrawn or a fixed-term or permanent exclusion the pupil will be auto-enrolled in the Trust's Virtual School until a time where the pupil can return to school, the Trust Board revokes this addendum, or the COVID-19 response is no longer required as directed by the Government.

Addendum Author: Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne, CEO/Principal. 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Agreed by special resolution: Trust Board Meeting, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020