



## Northern Ambition Academies Trust

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Date: 20 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

As you know we are all facing extraordinary challenges at this time and the situation is placing pressure on all parts of society. Our staff have been doing all they can to keep our schools open or partially open since this crisis began and I would like to pay tribute to their remarkable commitment. They have been extraordinary and we will continue to play our part over the coming weeks.

As you may be aware, the government made several very important decisions on the 18th March about schools. There will be further details to follow but I wanted to ensure you had as much information as possible as early as possible.

The Government has advised schools in England to close, except for certain groups of children, from Friday 20th March onwards as a further measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. No date has been set for when schools will reopen to pupils. However from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March we will continue to provide childcare to the children of key workers who have no means of keeping their child/children at home and those deemed to be vulnerable. For children in these groups we have also been asked to try to remain open through the Easter holidays, and will do our best to achieve this.

Further Government advice and guidance to parents/carers was given yesterday evening, outlining the following key principles:

1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.
2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them. **You have notified us if you fall into this category.**
3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.
5. Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.

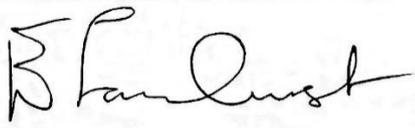
In line with our Trust values, we continue to approach this situation with bravery and resilience. It is essential that we all pull together to support our emergency services and key workers, and we will do our part, but I hope you will also recognise the difficult times schools and their staff now face. We are being called on to provide emergency childcare when for many of our staff their first thought will be to remain at home with their own families and children: so we too will need your support. You can help us by minimising your call on our limited resources, so children who do not fall into the groups listed above remain at home with appropriate care. I must stress schools are closed for public health reasons and this childcare is an emergency measure only. Please support our staff and each other by respecting the need for key workers and the most vulnerable children to have access to appropriate childcare at this time and not send your child to school.

The Government is due to offer guidance around tests and examinations at some point today. For children and young people who have worked so hard to prepare for these, this is an upsetting time and we sympathise with them. At the same time, we understand the decision the Government has made and we are assured that children's grades will be awarded on the basis of moderate assessment, in conjunction with the exam boards and Ofqual. This means that the hard work students and staff have done will be rewarded. It may not feel quite the same, and nor is it, but they will receive grades that will progress them to the next stage of their lives.

Clearly this is a rapidly changing picture – if circumstances change we will of course let you know. Please ensure you keep a close eye on the schools' websites and social media for updates during this period of closure and we will do our very best to keep you informed.

I would again like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and understanding in helping us to manage this unprecedented situation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E Fairhurst', written in a cursive style.

**E Fairhurst**  
Chief Executive  
Northern Ambition Academies Trust