

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020



**FAO All families of Bradgate Education Partnership**

Dear All

**Re: Ongoing arrangements at our schools – 6 weeks until Christmas**

As ever can I start with thanks for your efforts. We managed two fantastic months and enjoyed a superb return to school after the Summer. However, as I am sure you are all incredibly aware the virus has now begun to really have an effect on what we are able to deliver and our staffing capacity is being eroded day-by-day. Despite some herculean efforts by staff some of our schools are struggling to remain fully-open and some of you may already have experienced disruptions to your child's education. During the week we have contacted the DfE and made several requests to implement a range of models to try and be pre-emptive and manage the situation. These included tweaking the school day, using a blended approach of remote and face-to-face learning and implementing rota systems for older children. We have been told very clearly that these are not options available to us and that until told otherwise we must try to keep all of our schools open all of the time. Therefore, in order to be as transparent as possible we have outlined some of the steps we are going to take to try and keep our schools open and our staff and students as safe as possible.

Clearly when we are notified of a potential Coronavirus case we will continue to follow Public Health England guidance, with any affected students and staff asked to isolate. Some of the following steps simply outline the measures we will take due to the 'knock-on' effects as we see reduced numbers of staff available for work. We will:

- Ask any staff, including leaders, with any available non-teaching time to cover classes
- Where we have teachers isolating we will ask them to teach remotely with pupils overseen in school by support staff, assuming the teacher is well enough to do so.
- Ask support staff to cover pre-prepared lessons
- Where safe to do so arrange for external cover

Overall, our aim will be to try and keep schools open, even if the curriculum offer is slightly reduced. However, if we exhaust all of our staffing options and we feel we have reached the point where we cannot safely fully open our schools we will take the regrettable step to close all, or part of a school and use our remote learning platform until we have sufficient staff to safely provide on-site education. Unfortunately, if the rates of the virus, and therefore absence, continue to rise it is highly likely that many students will, at some point, need to access remote learning. The remote learning offer has been comprehensively developed since the March lockdown and will include some live and recorded lessons as well as on-line activities. If you have any concerns about accessing the remote offer please contact your child's school as soon as possible.

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We have also changed our regulations on face coverings. It is now mandatory for all staff and pupils in our secondaries to wear a face covering in communal areas. We will now also request that anyone, including parents & carers, coming onto school property wears a face-covering. This will include the drop-off and collection of children at primary school.

For those families who continue to use before and after-school childcare we will also try to maintain this service where possible. We understand that this is vital to many of you. However, any non-essential clubs and activities will be postponed.

As stated our aim will be to keep our schools open and our core curriculum offer available to all students whenever possible, and we pledge to only deviate from this if we have exhausted all other possibilities or it is simply not safe to do so. We are already experiencing incredible challenges but our staff, and your children, have been amazing.

Finally, we know that the next 6 weeks will be very difficult and that we are going to experience disruptions and difficulties. At all times we will try to communicate with regularity and clarity. If at any point you have any concerns or further questions regarding local arrangements, please do not hesitate to contact your child's school.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

**Yours Sincerely,**



**Gareth Nelmes**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Dean Pomeroy**  
Director of Schools