

18th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Exceptional Circumstances – Coronavirus and related information – Academy Closure

As you may be aware, the Government's guidance on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) has changed since the 16th of March 2020. We are getting in touch to let you know what we are doing in regard to this and in the specific context of our school community here at Warren Wood and Aegir.

We are, of course, very aware of the very complex medical needs of a number of our young people at both Aegir and Warren Wood.

We are taking, with yourselves, every care to ensure they are protected.

We would like to reassure you that at both Warren Wood and Aegir we have and will continue to take all of the necessary steps and precautions to protect our community and are continuing to follow official guidance from the Government and Lincolnshire County Council. However, as from the 16th of March 2020 the Government have stepped up their advice.

They have stated that they are advising those who are at increased risk of severe illness from Coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent and careful and have instructed that from the 23rd of March 2020 that this group must follow the new social distancing measures.

Given that all pupils of our Academy population have complex learning, communication, medical and health needs, this advice is very relevant and most poignant.

I also thank the many parents/carers who have been in touch with me and have discussed their own circumstances regarding vulnerable members in your family and your worries about infection. I am listening to what you have told me and am taking this most recent Government advice seriously. In addition, a number of our staff team have health conditions that come within the coverage of this guidance.

As a consequence of this, and in taking into account many of our Academy pupils must and have a need to travel on mini-buses for long periods of time, I have reluctantly taken the decision to close both Warren Wood – A Specialist Academy and Aegir – A Specialist Academy to all pupils from the end of Thursday, the 19th of March 2020 for the next two weeks and through the Easter holidays. I live in hope of receiving further secure, clear and specialist school specific guidance from the Government. Despite requests from Headteachers and professional bodies this is not available at the time of writing and general advice from the DfE is that it is the decision of the school/academy leader to take the evidence-based decision to close a school/academy.

I am very aware that the Government have decided not to close schools at this point in time. I understand why. However, in our specific context, I believe that based on the fact that the vast majority of our pupils are at a much higher risk of suffering an increase in severity of symptoms if they succumb to the virus, and have a wide range of underlying medical diagnoses and problems, then it is my moral responsibility as a

leader in our community to protect our pupils, staff team and our parents/carers and visitors as much as I am able to.

It is also for these reasons, and in the knowledge of your family circumstances and your child's health details, that I am confident that for the vast majority of our school population, social distancing puts them at much less risk of contracting Coronavirus. Of course, if there are symptoms showing, or indeed feared, other parts of the Government's isolating guidance must be followed. If you believe you or your child is experiencing severe symptoms, especially if breathing is compromised, dial 999 and ask for assistance.

It may be the case that you have considered the contents of this letter and may take the decision for the reasons mentioned above that you will keep your child at home. If this is the case, please let us know through the normal protocols. Today, we have taken the steps of requesting those pupils who are at the greatest potential risk will not be in the Academy from tomorrow. The relevant families were contacted by telephone today.

I thank you for your support and I wish you well in coping with what is to come and will keep you updated with any new information. This will be placed on our school website. We will also use 'text round' to send brief information.

Warren Wood Specialist Academy – www.warrenwoodspecialistacademy.co.uk

Aegir Specialist Academy – www.aegirspecialistacademy.co.uk

In this pack I have enclosed a copy of some further information. A pack of work has been provided for your child if we know they can work independently. Over the coming days we will place further resource links on our website.

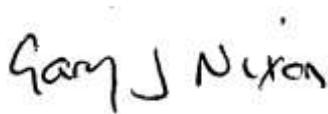
If you do not have access to the internet, please let us know by contacting the relevant academy office on:

Warren Wood – 01427 615498 / Aegir – 01427 619360

I have included some details on Social Distancing.

Please take great care, and think and act positively as we will come through this phase better and stronger. My personal thoughts and best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely



Gary Nixon
Chief Executive Officer