

9th April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Firstly, I and my team of hard working colleagues want to wish you and your families, your children, our pupils and students, a Happy Easter. It is somewhat strange to be doing that in light of the COVID-19 National Emergency. Nevertheless, it is very important that we share the many positive achievements in our school community over the last three weeks. Our teachers and teaching assistants are supporting you wherever they can. The regular contact with you and your children is being well received. This contact is important for us all as it ensures that we can all keep in touch, support and provide help where we can.

Our support staff across the Trust are working hard to keep our buildings clean and as safe as we possibly can. The site team and cleaning team are doing a brilliant job. Our clerical team is still working to ensure that communication takes place, and that all the many unseen things like paying bills, resolving the many issues with free school meal vouchers and making sure that the finance and security systems continue to function effectively. A big shout out for our catering team who are in school daily providing and sourcing food for those who are in genuine need. In that aspect, if you are genuinely struggling, let me know and we may be able to help or get help to you. The leadership team, including myself, are working daily to look after our staff members and to support you and our children. This is working very well and my thanks go out to them.

I am heartened by how resilient and talented our pupils and students are. They are coping very, very well overall. The key is, as you know, to keep up some routine and to try and go with the flow of emotions and the normal hustle, ups and downs of family life. I would like to alert you to keep an eye on computer based technology / social media / shared virtual games and other electronic devices. Just keep an eye out for any unusual activity or new people, not known to you, joining groups. This is to help keep you all safe and parents are allowed to look at their children's phones, shared games and electronic devices. So do if you need to.

Very importantly I need to be straight with you! This Virus can be very nasty and it has proven to be deathly as you can see by the daily news. Infection cases are increasing in Lincolnshire. I have been asked by a number of you if your children are at a high risk. This is a hard question to answer in a generic letter. My answer is yes overall; your children, our pupils and students, are at greater risk in many ways, including coping with everyday illness in any event as you know, some cannot fully understand being ill and find it very hard to cope outside of school and the home when they are. That is why it is important for them to stay at home when safe to do so. Also, not everyone understands how Autism, ADHD, medical problems and often a combination of these affect children and young adults with Special Educational Needs and/or Learning Disabilities, or quite frankly, is as understanding and knowledgeable as we all are. In relation to immune systems, it is known that as a group our students and pupils are weaker than many others because of their specific underlying health issues. In my simple view, this places them at a very high risk and God forbid if any of our children were infected and the infection caused significant distress – they would find it really hard to cope physically and psychologically. I would follow the current Government guidance – keep your children at home (apart from essential exercise) and safe; you must engage in social distancing outside the home – I know this is hard but it is ever so important. Keep safe, keep your family safe, prevent your children from having to go to hospital unless they really need to. By engaging in regular hand-washing, cleaning in your homes and being careful when you go out and being VERY CAREFUL ABOUT WHO YOU MIX

WITH – the risk reduces – but is still there. I cannot emphasise to you too much about how serious this situation is to you and your children.

Easter is also a time of looking forward and into the future. I am sure that once we all get through this, and we will, we will be ready to see you all face to face and look forward to meeting you again in person as soon as possible. Whatever happens, we will have our normal celebrations and a Prom and assemblies for our leavers; like you all, I am not sure when.

We enjoy hearing about what you have been doing as families. I get information from our teachers who keep me up-to-date. I know this is a very odd situation, try to be good to yourself and try to relax as much as you can. Mrs Cumberlidge, Mrs Lamb and I wish you well and thank you for your brilliant support. We will be taking a break over the Easter weekend.

Take care

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary J Nixon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in Nixon.

Gary Nixon
Chief Executive Officer