

14th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you are aware, on Sunday the Prime Minister announced that the phased re-opening of schools may begin after half term and their ambition is that secondary pupils facing exams next year (Year 10) will get 'some time with their teachers' before the summer holiday.

Further guidance was issued to schools on Monday night and we are told that more information will be shared with us 'over the coming days and weeks' to enable us to ensure that any way forward is safe for everyone within our school, however the debate is still raging nationally about next steps.

In the midst of all this uncertainty, I know that you will have a lot of questions and will, quite rightly, want to know in detail how our eventual re-opening will be managed, what steps we are taking to ensure safety, and how quickly we will be moving forwards. I would like to reassure you that the safety of our pupils and staff is our primary and main concern and that, whenever we are able to reopen, we will provide you with our detailed plans **in advance** so that you can be sure of the measures we are taking to ensure compliance with all guidance issued.

At this point, it is clear that many pupils will not be returning to school in the near future and indeed, that any return to school for children will not look the same as before covid-19 and we are working hard to support our pupils through this unprecedented period, both academically and emotionally. If you have any concerns about your child's wellbeing or feel that they would benefit from a 'check in' call from school, please do not hesitate to email us at help@hydecc.tameside.sch.uk and we will arrange for contact to be made. In addition to that, if your home circumstances change and there is information you wish us to know, again please do not hesitate to contact us on the same email address, or email your child's Head of Year directly, so that we can do our best to support you and your child. Please also be aware that changes in financial circumstances may mean that your child becomes eligible to access free school meals. You can find out more at <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims-tameside>.

Free School Meals

The vast majority of parents who are eligible to claim free school meals are now regularly redeeming their vouchers at their chosen supermarket. Vouchers are supplied on a two-weekly basis to the value of £30 and any newly eligible families will receive theirs at the next available slot. If you were expecting to receive a voucher and haven't, please get in touch via admin@hydecc.tameside.sch.uk and we will do our best to resolve the issue. Please put 'Free School Meals' as the subject of the email.

If you think that you may be eligible to claim free school meals for your child/ren but haven't done so before, please go to <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims-tameside> to apply.

Please be aware that fraudsters are already sending out scam emails and texts to parents relating to free school meals. You should **NOT** send any bank details in response to these emails or texts about free school meals, even if they claim to be from the Department of Education.

School trip cancellations

It is proving extremely difficult to reach satisfactory and timely resolutions in regard to school trips which have been cancelled, and we are working with the Local Authority to actively chase these. It is our intention to write individually to all families concerned (as each trip is different) before half term with an update. Thank you so much for your patience with this matter.

Learning at home

A huge thank you and well done to the overwhelming majority of pupils who are trying their best to do the work set by teachers in these difficult circumstances – grateful thanks to parents and carers too for your support in this matter. Please remember that when the internet falters and the battle for the laptop has only one victor at a time, reading at any and every opportunity is the best possible educational support.

Once we know more in relation to any reopening, I will write to you again but in the meantime please keep safe.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "ARadcliffe".

Andrea Radcliffe

Headteacher