



21 October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Since my last letter in July, our schools have welcomed every year group back for the new academic year. It has been encouraging to all staff to see your children on a daily basis.

With safety measures in place and comprehensive risk assessments across our schools, this phase of opening to all children and students has worked well. We are reassured by Public Health England through regular conversations that our systems of control remain fit for purpose despite the significant increase in positive test cases across the country over the last few weeks. Likewise, we are seeing a rise in the number of children and staff needing to self-isolate or being tested positive for coronavirus. Thank you for the support you have given your local school as it has opened with different processes and procedures in order to minimise the risk to others.

Please be assured that all schools have secure plans in place to transfer from school-based learning to home-based learning when necessary. Based upon advice from the Department for Education (DfE), we expect to see an increase in the number of 'bubbles' needing to remain at home for specific periods of time as we move into the winter months. One of our primary schools has moved to home-based learning this week due to an insufficient number of staff to maintain its opening; all parents should be prepared for such an eventuality as the annual winter cold and flu season is compounded by Covid. We will continue to ensure that we follow the national guidance in terms of placing children and students into separate 'bubbles' to minimise the risk of infection. We will maintain the stringent cleaning and disinfecting processes we already have in place to ensure that our schools are as safe as possible at this time. However, the rules outside school are different to when we re-opened in September; the 'Rule of 6' is now in operation and the new national Tiers 1, 2 and 3 will increase the difference between how schools operate when compared to the community which they serve.

The examination results in August provided us with challenges for our GCSE and A level students and I pay tribute to the staff in our secondary schools for providing stability and support as the government and Ofqual worked through the issues created. We welcome the announcement of a three-week delay in the timing of the 2021 examinations but await further information. At the time of writing, the DfE has yet to indicate how the national assessments which operate in primary schools each year are going to work in 2021. We will update you as soon as an announcement is made.

GLF Schools is pleased to welcome all our new families as well as welcoming Cherry Fields Primary School. Cherry Fields is the 11th brand new school that the trust has opened since 2013 and is a primary school serving a new community in Banbury, Oxfordshire.

I wish all our children, students and their families a restful break over half term.

Yours sincerely

Jon Chaloner
CEO, GLF Schools