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26 June 2020

Dear parent/carer,

### **Information for Parents/Carers: Summer Holidays & September 2020**

Since the government first announced the lockdown at the end of March nearly all of our special and alternative provision academies have remained open to increasing numbers of pupils. Many were also open over the Easter and May half term holidays, providing support to children of key workers and those most vulnerable.

Our staff have worked hard to ensure that all the school environments are as safe and as welcoming as they can be, and that those pupils unable to attend school have been provided with online learning resources, assistance and support in their own homes.

There has been much talk in the media about the options and potential for schools to open and provide educational 'catch up' programmes over the summer holidays. We are now in a position to confirm the approach that Esteem MAT will take during the summer and in September.

Esteem academies will be closed over the summer holidays. This is a decision of our Trust Board and headteachers and has been taken for the following reasons:

- We view 'catch up' as a long-term project that should be linked to teachers' assessments of the gaps in pupils' learning and each academy's individual curriculum. As our teaching staff are highly specialist and the curriculum designed for each pupil, we do not believe that a 'generic' catch up programme is relevant or desirable for our academies. Our skilled and experienced staff will work with your children and young people in the new academic year to assess any gaps in learning and development due to absence from school, and design individual plans to address these gaps in the following months.
- We also need to ensure that our staff, many of whom have been working non-stop since March, are given the chance to have a break, spend time with their families, and 're-charge their batteries', ready for a return to the new normality of education we will face from September.

If your child is expecting their exam results in August, the academy will communicate with you directly regarding the arrangements for obtaining these.

To assist families over the summer break, we will be providing you with information from charities and other organisations that can offer opportunities and activities over the holidays. Academy staff will post resources and links on school websites and social media to activities that parents/carers and children can access.

The Esteem Early Help Team will be launching a new website where families can access information on a wide range of subjects and be signposted to organisations that can offer help. We will also be maintaining communication with the local authority Safeguarding and Child Protection Managers to ensure that we are prepared for any additional levels of support required for pupils' planned return in September.


We are committed to ensuring that as many pupils as possible return to formal schooling in the autumn in the safest possible way. As you will appreciate, the landscape is changing, day by day, and we are expecting further guidance from the government very shortly. We will let you know in good time of our further plans for September and any guidance or changes affecting how we work. We will continue to make measured and reasonable decisions in the best interests of our pupils, staff, and families because their wellbeing and health are paramount.

On behalf of the Trust, we would like to thank you for your support and appreciation of staff, who have been led supremely by all our headteachers, to safely manage the learning of the wonderful young people who attend our academies.

Yours faithfully



Kevin Dean  
**Chair of Trust Board**



Julian Scholefield  
**Chief Executive Officer**