

Tuesday 30th June

Dear Parents and Carers

With a few weeks to go until the end of term I am writing to provide you with our current understanding of the plans for the summer holidays and September in RLT schools.

Whilst there has yet to be an official announcement from the Government, unlike over Easter and the recent half-term it is understood that schools will not be asked to stay open during the summer holidays, including for the children of critical workers or vulnerable children. As such, in order to help your planning for the summer, unless required by Government, I wanted to inform you that RLT schools will not be open over the summer holiday. We anticipate this will be in line with all schools across England.

As in previous summers, some school sites in Swindon may still be used for holiday clubs and activities run by external providers or in-school provision, although restrictions in place due to the coronavirus are likely to impact these services. We understand that Swindon Local Authority aims to publish on their website a list of local summer activity clubs suitable for children and young people.

A return to a more normal routine is of course what we hope for in September and we welcome the desire to have all pupils back in school when the Autumn term starts. We await further details from the Government as to the limitations and restrictions that will be in place and schools will communicate these with you when they can. Whilst we appreciate that the situation may change depending on how the pandemic develops in the UK, we are planning for all pupils to return in September.

We know that many of you may be concerned about the impact of your children not being in school for a considerable period of time. Part of our planning for September is how best to enable our pupils to build on their learning during lockdown to ensure the curriculum is covered. Linked to this, you may be aware that the Government has now announced an outline of its catch-up package for schools. Whilst we do not yet have the details, we know that schools will receive funding from September to support pupils, as well as having access to a National Tutoring Programme. This is welcome and will allow schools to focus on the needs of their pupils through the usual timetabled curriculum and, where needed, additional small group or 1:1 support. Schools are also very alert to the importance of meeting the social and emotional needs of their pupils, too, and we look forward with positivity and enthusiasm for the new term.

As a final part of my letter I wanted to both publicly thank you, your children, and my colleagues in schools.

To you and your children for your support and understanding as schools have been doing their best to support their pupils and school communities; to my colleagues who have kept schools open for critical workers and vulnerable children throughout the lockdown period, and have had to adapt to new ways of delivering education. Finally, to our Headteachers who continue to carry additional responsibilities far beyond the norm (since the end of March, with the daily email that comes from the DfE, there have been well over 120 either new or changed guidance documents to the sector).

These are exceptionally challenging times and whilst the experience of the pandemic will be different for each of us, we all continue to navigate this complex period as best we can. Thank you for your support for our schools.

Yours sincerely



Paul James
Chief Executive