



Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust

Josephine Butler Campus, Academy Road
Ashington, Northumberland NE63 9FZ
CEO: Alan Hardie

23rd March 2020

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Update 9 23/3/20

Dear Parents and Carers

We felt that it would be helpful we provided another immediate update, as the response to coronavirus is a rapidly changing situation.

The new role of schools

Thank you for all parents and carers who are key workers for registering for continuing childcare and using our service only when there is no alternative childcare available. We will have an online booking service available as soon as possible this week and a text will be sent to registered parents when this is ready. This will mean that eligible parents can identify the sessions where they require childcare and we can ensure that sufficient staff are available to cover each session. We will maintain a provision at each individual campus for as long as our staffing will allow.

Free School Meals

As an interim measure, we are distributing packed lunches from each campus. Duke's pupils can collect this from one of the primary campuses if this is nearer. We appreciate that the distribution of packed lunches from the campuses is not an ideal solution for many families. The Government have promised that a national voucher system will be put in place, but in the meantime we are working with our suppliers to try and create weekly packages instead of providing daily packed lunches. We will contact all families with eligible children if and when we can get this in place.

Please be aware that unfortunately there are some scam emails in circulation, asking parents for bank details saying something along the lines of *'As schools will be closing, if you're entitled to free school meals, please send your bank details and we'll make sure you're supported'*.

Please do not respond if you receive an email like this, as no school or government department will ever email you and request your bank details. If you receive an email like this then please delete it immediately.

Support for pupils working at home

We appreciate that this is a very difficult time for our pupils who now have to learn at home, and for their parents and carers. We recommend that as far as possible, our pupils complete work during their normal school hours to maintain as much of a normal routine as they can.

It's also important that pupils remain as physically active as possible and there are an increasing number of resources available to exercise at home. We recommend "PE with Joe" which is live on You Tube at 9.00 am each weekday but can also be viewed later on demand. This is a 30 minute



Northumberland Church of England
Academy Trust is a company limited by
Guarantee registered in England and Wales
with Company No: 6653439



workout aimed at children which can be completed at home:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rz0go1pTda8>

We will continue to update the resources we are providing to support home learning. The Department for Education are also working with the BBC to produce a range of resources in addition to what each of our schools have provided.

Support for families

We also appreciate the difficulties that parents and carers will experience with having the children learning from home for an extended period of time. There are some ideas on how to support home learning in <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-51959957>

Where parents or families feel under pressure and need extra support or advice, some useful websites are:

Action for Children <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/support-for-parents/>

Citizens Advice <http://www.citizensadvice.northumberland.org.uk/>

Family Action <https://www.family-action.org.uk/what-we-do/children-families/familyline/>

Family Lives <https://www.familylives.org.uk/>

Gingerbread <https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/coronavirus/>

NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/>

Relate <https://www.relate.org.uk/>

Young Minds Parents Help <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-helpline/>

Exam grades for Year 11 and Year 13

There will be a separate communication from Duke's School regarding this and a final opportunity for pupils to submit work which can support the predicted grades.

Future communications

We will move towards a weekly news bulletin. However, as we have had positive feedback about these updates then we will continue to issue them as and when appropriate.

If you need to contact one of our schools please use the admin email address which can be found on the school or campus web site.

Yours faithfully



Alan Hardie

Chief Executive

Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust