

# LINK ACADEMY TRUST

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Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June

## Covid Pandemic Restrictions and End of Term activities

Dear parents and carers,

On Monday evening (14<sup>th</sup> June), the Prime Minister gave a press conference to announce a 4-week pause at Step 3 in England until 19 July. The key message for schools and trusts is that all education settings should keep their current protective measures in place until there is a further announcement on Stage 4 of the roadmap, so this is how academies within the Link Academy Trust will operate.

### **Domestic Residential Visits**

The Prime Minister also announced that from 21<sup>st</sup> June there will be a change to the rules on domestic residential visits for children. From 21<sup>st</sup> June, out-of-school settings can organise domestic residential visits for children in consistent groups of up to 30 children. This replaces the current limit of 6 people or 2 households. The Trust had considered their position well in advance of this announcement and where possible residentials had been converted to activities weeks where daily experiences still gave our children something to look forward to even if restrictions remained in place. Some residentials where we would lose the money paid, it was agreed would go ahead if at all possible. We have tried very hard to respond appropriately to a situation where we were unsure of the position we would be in now.

### **Transition and Open Days**

The DfE has confirmed that schools should complete thorough risk assessments before running transitional, taster and open days, to ensure that they are run in line with your system of controls and align with the advice contained within the guidance for your setting and the roadmap out of lockdown.

This means that traditional transition and open days are unlikely to be feasible this academic year, but the DfE is keen not to restrict individual settings from designing events which maintain the integrity of bubbles or consistent groups, and adhere to the system of controls in place. The academies within the Link Academy will follow this guidance and Open Days will not be planned until the autumn term. Transition activities will only take place where our secondary schools can give us the assurance that they are able to follow guidance and risk assess appropriately.

### **Sports Days**

Government advice is that Sports days can go ahead. In line with the rest of the system of controls, pupils must remain in their bubbles and early years children should remain in their consistent groups as is usual for your setting. Sports equipment should be regularly cleaned throughout the event. If any school cannot manage these requirements effectively Sports Day will be re-scheduled for the autumn term.

Spectators must adhere to current social distancing requirements. Where events take place outdoors, spectators can gather in separate groups of up to 30 – the legal gathering limit. Multiple groups of 30 are permitted.

### **Leavers Events**

The DfE has confirmed that you should avoid hosting large group gatherings indoors for more than one bubble (or in early years more than one consistent group), such as assemblies or mass worship.

Outdoor events are generally lower risk, so a risk assessment will be completed and the event will be planned in line with our schools' system of controls outside.

Any parents attending outdoor events must adhere to current social distancing requirements. Where outdoors spectators can gather in groups of up to 30 – the legal gathering limit. Multiple groups of 30 are permitted.

For the above reason we will not be advising any of our schools put on Summer Fairs. The recent rise in local cases and the difficulty in restricting numbers in a feasible way, together with the fact that these events can be planned for the autumn term have led the Trust to make this decision.

While we realise many of these decisions are disappointing, we as a Trust feel keeping children safe is of paramount importance. Academy Heads will be organising any activity as safely as possible, within the restrictions of their school context, please ensure you comply with their requirements.

We hope the children all have an exciting and safe end of term.

Kind regards,

Nicky

Nicky Dunford, CEO The Link Academy Trust

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