

WILLOW TREE ACADEMY



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Mr A. Trueman – Chair of Trustees Mrs J.K. Fearnley – Chief Executive Officer

Dear Parents

Happy Valentine's Day!

What an amazing term we have had in our schools, despite that we have had to endure a very difficult and challenging Lockdown since the 5th January, 2021. It is good news that the infection rate is coming down now, but there are still many concerns as the situation in England and South Yorkshire continues to be well above that of nearly a year ago. The number of people catching the disease and dying from Covid-19 is just as much of a threat as ever before, so I want to say a massive 'thank you' to you all for ensuring that you and your family and therefore our schools, have remained safe and protected.

We know that the last eleven months have been very difficult and often very traumatic for everyone. Some of you will be grieving for lost loved ones and others for lost freedoms that isolation and being unable to be with our families and friends have brought.

As you know Willow Tree schools have done their utmost to be there for your children, through remote learning and supporting our most vulnerable and critical worker children in school. Our team has been incredible and have gone the

'extra million miles with an extra million smiles'

that have lifted everyone's spirits and hearts! I am so proud of our achievements! I know our staff have given everything they have to ensure great learning is happening every day, together with checking in on the wellbeing of our children and their families. Today they get a heart shaped medal for their unfailing duty of care. **Well done everyone!**

Our Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, has committed to informing everyone by the 22nd February whether schools will reopen on the 8th March; this date is based on the vaccination programme and protecting the four main vulnerable groups of the population. However, the date always carries the caveat '8 March, **at the earliest**', so whilst this would be wonderful, please don't plan



too much around schools fully reopening happening at the moment. We really don't know what the government will decide and you will probably know at the same time as we do.

We do know that from September to December when schools did reopen the pandemic escalated out of control, necessitating Lockdown 3. It is this that the government (and every single one of us is trying to avoid), so we will wait and see what happens but be well-planned for any eventuality, as always!

The three scenarios, we will look at, are;

- Fully opening to all children from the 8th March
- Opening partially to groups of children from the 8th March
- Remaining closed to all other children, other than critical worker children and those deemed vulnerable.

The lifting of lockdown restrictions will be based on the number of cases nationally and protecting the National Health Service. The biggest threat to health is now children and adults presenting as **asymptomatic, as high as 1:3**, so we are asking you to remain socially distanced from those outside your bubble. This term we have had 2 staff and 12 children testing positive, fortunately, though some have been ill they are recovering, and parents and schools' swift response has helped to break the transmission chain and keep families as safe as possible.

I urge you to keep going; we need to ensure that all our staff are safe and well and that all children are coming to school from families that are Covid-free. If we work together it will enable everyone to come through this crisis, please protect your children and family by upholding the lockdown and following the guidance. Once again, if you are in any doubt that you may have Covid-19 or been a contact, please get tested and keep your child at home.

Thank you all again for your continued support in these challenging times.

There is no doubt that together we can beat Coronavirus CoVid-19 and keep healthy and happy if we work together. Have a wonderful half-term break!

Together Anything Is Possible



Kind regards

Mrs Jane Fearnley

Mr Tony Trueman

Ms Louise Greenwood

CEO/Executive Head Teacher Chair of Trust

Head of School