



24th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I do hope that you are all keeping safe and well. It is a completely unprecedented situation that we find ourselves in. Each and everyone of us will be worried about what this means for us; be it how we will provide for families if we are unable to work or for those who we can no longer see owing to their age or underlying medical conditions. I think it is safe to say that a significant number of us can now speak from first-hand experience what this actually means; I know I can.

You will no doubt have seen the televised message from Boris Johnson setting out what he now expects from the nation. I cannot implore strongly enough how important it is that you act upon this... I have been informed that in some of our schools there were children present today who have parents who were able to work from home and STILL sent their children to school. This is no longer acceptable and I have instructed our leaders to enforce that only those who have NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE but to send their children to school should do so... you will be asked to have your children at home if you are there.

It is so important that you support us with this. School staff are now in the significant minority of people who are being expected to work, other than at home – they are more than happy to do so to ensure that those professions, who we rely on, to keep order and safety for our population can continue to do so, but they and their families are at immense risk of being infected with this virus – please do the right thing and think of my colleagues who are putting others before themselves.

We have already had a number of staff who have had to self- isolate or make the decision to not make themselves available for work in the interests of protecting their loved ones. After yesterday's announcement that 1.5 million people will now have to be in “shielding”; staff feel they can no longer leave the house other than for essential things to protect these particular family members. This does mean that our staffing levels are even lower than they were even a few days ago. As such, we are only able to care for those children who it is absolutely necessary to have in school.

This is absolutely the furthest from how myself and my colleagues would normally operate – we would endeavour to do our utmost to support everyone in this situation however, I have a duty as leader of this Trust to ensure that I look after my colleagues; please help me to do so.

If you are at home – your children should be with you. If you have informed your child's school that they will be in school tomorrow and you are able to be at home owing to the latest announcement – please let the school know in the usual way that they will not be attending.

Thank you as always for your continuing support, now and as we move through these worrying times.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Estelle Macdonald', written in a cursive style.

Estelle Macdonald
CEO
Hull Collaborative Academy Trust