

7<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

### Start of Term

I hope that everyone has enjoyed the summer break and is now looking forward to a busy, exciting, and successful new academic year. I would like to extend a particular welcome to the parents of *Kenley Primary School*, which joined our Trust on 1<sup>st</sup> September. This brings our family to five primary and two secondary schools, and I know that colleagues from across all are looking forward to working in collaboration over the coming year to deliver *exceptional education for all* of our pupils and students. Indeed, this collaboration has already begun, with the *Primary INSET Day* for teachers last week which focused on developing learning and progress in Maths.

I have been able to visit all our schools already this term and it is wonderful to see an ever-increasing sense of normality. Of course, we must continue to be vigilant about COVID-19 (and I shall say more about this later), but we must also ensure that we are delivering a full programme of learning and development in each of our schools. It has been a joy already to see young people settled into work, focused on learning, and making great progress. In most of our schools this learning is taking place in further improved facilities as a result of our *Capital Plan* and supported by the further roll-out of our *5-year IT Strategy*. Unfortunately, due to labour and material shortages, some of our capital improvements have not quite finished; please bear with us and over the coming weeks this will be remedied. However, I want to pay tribute to our incredible site staff, IT team and administrative colleagues who have worked tirelessly to prepare each school for the new year.

We do need to recognise that COVID-19 has not gone away. Each of our schools will continue to emphasise hand and respiratory hygiene to pupils and students, with good ventilation and regular cleaning. I would like to remind parents of a key change that was recently made with regard to *close contacts* of COVID-19 cases; such *close contacts*, if they are under 18 years of age, or have been fully vaccinated, will no longer be required to self-isolate. This means that if we have a case of COVID-19 in school, we shall **not** be identifying *close contacts* or asking any pupils or students to self-isolate. This means it is even more important for parents to monitor children carefully for symptoms of coronavirus; if your child has any symptom, do not send them to school, book a PCR test and follow *NHS Test & Trace* instructions. Please also keep the school informed.

I hope that during the coming year we shall be able to enjoy again a whole range of activities for pupils, students and parents. I also look forward to being able to meet with parents and carers at these events as we enjoy the achievements in our schools. Please remember that those achievements depend on your support for our teachers and support staff in delivering great work for your children; I look forward to that support through the year.

Yours sincerely



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Chief Executive

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