MAIDEN ERLEGH
TRUST

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Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope that you and your families are well. I feel as though I could write to you on a daily basis, but I am sure you could do without that! I did, however, want to update you on how the start of our wider opening has gone.

Last week, we welcomed additional pupils and students back to Great Hollands Primary School and Hamilton School. In the secondary schools, the numbers attending the "pop up" provision have increased and staff have been preparing and training for welcoming students from Years 10 and 12 this week.

Apart from dodging the torrential rain in some places, it has all gone swimmingly (*sorry!*). I have to say, there are many very happy faces as friends, colleagues and learners see each other for the first time in many weeks. It is genuinely lovely to see everyone.

I am aware that a small number of you are worried about sending their child back to school, perhaps of family members who are vulnerable and/or because you are from the BAME community. Please let me reassure you that schools are employing a range of strategies to keep children and adults safe eg: 2m distancing, hand washing, use of sanitisers, smaller groups and so on. I think we were all curious to see how the pupils and students would respond to the "new normal" but I am thoroughly impressed, and they are clearly benefitting from seeing friends as well as learning face-to-face. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's school. We do understand and I am sure they will be able to reassure you.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As well as all the work to ensure the best possible provision we can at the moment, we are looking to the future and thinking about possibilities for September. The DfE has not yet provided guidance on this, but we are already planning for different scenarios. More will follow on that in due course.

The DfE has updated its guidance for parents and carers regarding the following changes:

- A new section on flexibility for primary schools to welcome back additional children this term
- Amended definition of vulnerable children and young people
- Added further information on safety in schools and the national NHS Test and Trace programme
- Updated content 30 hours free childcare and/or tax-free childcare
- Updated content on transport which includes information on using face masks on transport
- Revised section on school meals, adding more information on the reopening of school kitchens as well as meals in colleges
- Updated content on exams in 2021

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under company number 07548754 with registered office at Silverdale Road, Earley, Reading, RG6 7HS.

We are also mindful of the fact that there are children who will be starting in our schools in September, and they will be both excited and a little nervous. Whilst we cannot run our usual transition programmes for students and parents, we will organise other transition "sessions" and work with primary schools and families to help the children settle into their new schools/year groups.

One of the things that was already on our minds for our **Trust and school strategic planning**, was a review of the curriculum and other aspects of our work through an **equality, equity and bias** lens. The importance of this work has tragically been reinforced through the recent and appalling circumstances surrounding the deaths of George Floyd and Rayshard Brooks in the United States and the associated, heightened awareness of issues such as structural racism.

Our values include ***"mutual respect, equality, an understanding of other cultures, empathy with the wider world and a strong and collaborative work ethic"*** **and helping young people become** ***"highly effective and positive citizens, employees and employers in an ever changing and complex world".*** **We cannot do that if people do not feel that they belong and that they can thrive in our community.**

We are committed to working with staff and pupils/students to review what we already have in place, and to improve what we can. This is not a new commitment, but we will be re-emphasising it in our strategic planning, both at Trust and School level. In this way we will build on what is already in place.

This work is not about quick fixes, but some actions have already been set in motion across the Trust. We will be listening to pupils/students and staff, to gain a more holistic overview of their lived experiences both at school and in the wider community, but also to hear their ideas for the future. I know that work has already started on reviewing the curriculum (and personal development provision) and this will continue.

I am interested also in hearing from parents. If you have any ideas about how to support this work further and would like to contact me, please feel free to email me through Zoe Watkiss (z.watkiss@maidenerleghtrust.org).

SCHOOL AND TRUST GOVERNANCE

We are very lucky to have strong and supportive governors, both at Local Advisory Board and Trust Board level. Being a governor is a fulfilling role and one where you can make a real difference by supporting schools and, by extension, all children and young people in them. We currently have **two Trustee (Non-Executive Director) vacancies** for specialists in Special and Primary Education and information about these roles can be found here. We also have **Local Advisory Board governor vacancies** available including an elected parent position at Maiden Erlegh School in Reading and a co-opted position at Great Hollands Primary School. If you are interested and would like to know more, please contact Vicky Boatman, Clerk to the Board of Trustees (trustees@maidenerleghtrust.org) before the 3 July.

Finally, as always and sincerely, **thank you** for your support for colleagues' work in all the schools and the Trust. We very much appreciate it.

Yours faithfully

Miss M Davies
Chief Executive Officer