

**Members of the Trust:**

Angel Oak Academy  
Applegarth Academy  
Beddington Park Academy  
Benedict Academy  
Breakwater Academy  
Burfield Academy

David Livingstone Academy  
La Fontaine Academy  
Gonville Academy  
Hawkes Farm Academy  
Heathfield Academy  
High Cliff Academy

Park Academy  
Phoenix Academy  
Tudor Academy  
Turnham Academy  
Westbridge Academy  
White House Academy

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STEP CEO: Mr M Ducker OBE  
STEP Deputy CEO: Mr P Glover

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

The purpose of my last communication, sent back in May, was to inform you of the three core principles that would guide decision making across STEP Academy Trust – *safety, community and choice*. Ensuring the safety of children and staff has always been our top priority, alongside doing all we can to support the communities we serve; which includes respecting parental choice. Throughout the ongoing pandemic, all STEP Academies have abided by these principles, within the guidance set out by the Government.

With the new variant of COVID-19 at risk of overwhelming the NHS, as a Trust, we are now tasked with seeking out effective ways to meet the national drive to reduce the risk of infection and rate of transmission, whilst at the same time delivering the best possible education. For those children in school, it has required keeping teaching group sizes small, so that contact with staff and other children is kept to a minimum. Indeed, as well as supporting the national effort, for parents who have no alternative but to send their children to school, and the staff that teach them, they must feel confident that the risks of infection and transmission are as low as possible.

For our children who are working at home, supported wonderfully by parents and other family members, teachers are working tirelessly to ensure that the learning opportunities provided remotely are of a high standard. Staff are also committed to keeping in regular contact, to ensure your needs and queries are addressed.

Clearly, managing this dual approach is extremely demanding and requires your support. If the numbers coming into school increase beyond a certain point, it not only risks becoming unsafe for the children and staff onsite, but it also impacts on our teachers' ability to deliver remote learning for those pupils at home. **So, unless you are a critical worker, without alternative childcare arrangements, please keep your child at home.**

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



MR M DUCKER OBE  
STEP CEO