



11th May 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Staff,

Re: The Government's COVID-19 Recovery Strategy

As you will no doubt be aware, the Government have today published their COVID-19 Recovery Strategy. This includes the 'roadmap' to lifting the current restrictions. Central to this is a phased return for schools, with the aim being to get Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 back in school 'in smaller sizes' from 1st June 2020.

The strategy also states that it is the Government's ambition for all primary school children to return to school before the summer break for a month 'if feasible' and that they hope that Year 10 pupils will get some time with their teachers before the end of the year.

This is going to require an extensive and comprehensive level of preparation, at the forefront of which will be my personal commitment to prioritising the safety of all members of the Advantage Schools community: children, families, and of course, staff.

Over the course of this week, alongside the Executive Team of Advantage Schools, the Senior Leaders of each of our schools and the Board of Directors, Sam Baxter and I will be planning for the phased re-opening of Elstow School from 1st June, 2020 and at the same time Tim Blake and I will be planning for the possible wider opening of Bedford Free School.

This will include how to incorporate the 'COVID-19 Secure Guidelines' that the Government are going to release over the next few days, as well as all of the details surrounding the organisation of the school day for those children both in school and off-site.

In the meantime, both schools continue to be closed. The schools are repurposed for the childcare of children of those whose work is essential in the fight against COVID-19, and where there is absolutely no alternative for those children.

These are extraordinary times. Like you, I have concerns and anxieties about what we are having to endure at the current time and the impact of all of this on our children. All I can say is that we can draw an enormous amount of strength and resolve from the fact that we belong to a special community; one that shares common values and has an

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absolute commitment to each other – especially when accepting any challenge that it may face.

As soon as I am in a position to update you of the trust's plan, I will do so.

Stay safe.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Lock', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Stuart Lock
CEO