



“Strong Partnerships, Strong Community, Strong Schools”

*SECAT House, Delaware Road
Shoeburyness, SS3 9NP
E-mail: admin@secat.co.uk
Tel: 01702 580 463
CEO: Mrs Ruth Brock*

Monday 23rd March 2020

Dear all

Firstly, I would like to thank each and every one of you for heeding the government’s clear guidance over the weekend to keep as many of your children at home as possible where they will be safest. So many of you sent good wishes to staff to thank them for making the provision available, but saying that you had found alternative arrangements for your children so as to ease the burden on schools. Thank you.

As a result, we have had far fewer children in our schools than was anticipated on Friday. I personally visited all schools this morning to see how the provision is working, and as always, I am proud of the SECAT staff within our schools and how they continue to step up to the plate despite most of them feeling very uncertain about their own circumstances and feeling vulnerable about their families.

We cannot however, be too complacent as several parents have already contacted us to say that they will need to make use of the provision within schools later this week or next as they start their shift patterns. You will therefore, I am sure, appreciate that this is a moveable feast. What is more, as further staff, children and parents have to self-isolate, this alters both the provision that is needed and the capacity of our schools to manage it.

We at SECAT, have also taken the government’s stance very seriously. I am very pleased that there was further guidance about our duty to our frontline workers. Of course, this has and always will be, in the forefront of our minds. Many teachers, support and office staff are doing their utmost to maintain the provision for your children where necessary.

However, as a duty of care, and following the review of provision that we always knew we would do as soon as we had a better understanding of the numbers we would need to provide for, we will be putting in place a rota for staff.

What is more, as time goes on, we may well not open all schools. We may do what others MATs have done; group our pupils into one or two hubs. That way the staff rota is shared much more widely across SECAT.

Once again, until we review the provision as it settles this week – which is likely to be by Wednesday afternoon – we will know make a decision about the practicalities of the scenarios we are discussing as we

Southend East Community Academy Trust is a company registered in England and Wales 7825856.
Registered Office: Delaware Road, Shoeburyness, Essex, SS3 9NP

SECAT Central Finance
C/O Shoeburyness High School
Caulfield Road
Shoeburyness, SS3 9LL
Email: Finance@secat.co.uk



SECAT Central HR
C/O Richmond Avenue Primary School
Richmond Avenue
Shoeburyness, SS3 9LG
Email: HR@secat.co.uk



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speaking. Rest assured; you will be notified as soon as a decision has been made. It is however, unlikely that our secondary provision will alter in any way until after Easter.

For those of you who children are eligible for free school meals, vouchers will be made available. We are in the process of setting this up and awaiting yet further guidance from the DfE about the logistics of it. However, once again, you will be informed via your child's school as to how these vouchers will be accessed via the school's chosen form of communication.

These are difficult and challenging times. May I just reiterate that staff in schools are doing their level best to be accommodating. We are all working flat out to ensure that the SECAT community is well-catered for and that our children feel happy and safe if they remain in our schools.

With very best wishes for the weeks ahead.

Kind Regards

Ruth Brock

Chief Executive Officer



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C/O Richmond Avenue Primary School
Richmond Avenue
Shoeburyness, SS3 9LG
Email: HR@secat.co.uk