

SECAT House, Delaware Road
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CEO: Mrs Ruth Brock

20th April 2020

Dear Parents

First, I do hope that the Easter holiday has been as enjoyable as possible for you all. Secondly, may I once again thank you for the many and varied messages of support and appreciation that we have received. We all recognise the many challenges that families are facing and admire the sustained contributions of the very many individuals who are sustaining vital services for us all.

I am sure you would want to join me in taking this opportunity to thank staff who managed a ‘holiday club’ facility during the Easter break. We achieved what I wanted; to give the majority of SECAT’s full and part-time staff a well-earned holiday. However, some peripatetic staff and sports staff who operate out of Shoeburyness High School, have done a sterling job at giving the 28 or so, pupils activities they have all clearly enjoyed.

You will all now know that the government has enforced the ‘stay at home’ rules for another three weeks. This will take us up to 7th May, when a further review will take place. We continue to adhere to and follow the government and DfE advice.

Today, Monday 20th April, begins SECAT’s HUB working about which you are all now familiar. **As always, we reiterate that children are safest at home.** However, Richmond Avenue Primary School and Nursery is well prepared for the small number of your primary-aged children that we are expecting from any of the five schools. Leaders have gone to great lengths to ensure that social distancing is securely observed and that children are catered for in their familiar, school groups by adults they know and with other children they would normally see at school. There were 42 children from all of the primary schools. They settled brilliantly in their separate rooms with the teachers they know well and with their friends. All very happily telling me about the Easter egg hunts they have taken part in and how many eggs they all ate! Good to see them all and to greet so many of you at the gate with Miss Money Penny.

Shoeburyness High School will continue to be open to the secondary pupils who cannot be accommodated at home. Once again, all social distancing rules are being strictly adhered to.

In both HUBs, only certain areas of the schools will be used. Other areas have been cleaned in preparation for the inevitable – even though no date can be given at present – reopening of schools.

Southend East Community Academy Trust is a company registered in England and Wales 7825856.
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The schools at Bournes Green, Thorpedene and Hinguar have all now been cleaned and are ‘no-go-zones’ so that they are immediately ready for reopening at any point.

I am immensely proud of all our staff members who are working on our on-site supervision rota. Some at Easter and all who are able, during term time. Not to forget of course, our many teachers and members of support staff who continue to work on all manner of vital functions that are essential to our continued provision. Including keeping in regular contact, where appropriate, with vulnerable children or those children who have special educational needs or disabilities and supervising on-going essential building works.

Remote learning

On Monday 20th April, our provision for remote learning will resume. Individual schools have been providing activities for pupils to do – some with you – at home. This will continue and you will no doubt have updates as the week begins.

Valuable learning activities – with the focus very much on next steps, will continue to be provided for Year 11 and 13 for the time being. This does not prevent students in those year groups of course, using their time, beyond this, to look ahead to the subjects and topics that they might wish to begin in the Autumn.

Exam grades for SATs, GCSE, AS and A-level

We have carefully reviewed and will continue to review any further updates, the guidance from the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) and OfQual, regarding the process that will be used to determine GCSE, AS and A-level grades. Parents and pupils may wish to remind themselves of the arrangements that were shared with you all prior to the Easter break and when SECAT received the guidance from the DfE. The school will apply the relevant procedures and submit for consideration, for each individual in each subject, grade information that is consistent with the *‘highest grade that the candidate had a realistic chance of securing: based on prior assessed tasks and tests’* – in this way, there will be no detriment to any individual. Guidance has been very clear that this grade information will not be shared with students or parents.

As it stands, the only proposed route for appeal for secondary students – if a student is dissatisfied with a grade ultimately awarded by OfQual – will be through entry to a formal written examination in the Autumn. The details have not yet been published.

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Return to ‘normal’ school attendance

There has been considerable speculation in the media regarding the re-opening of schools, not least as other countries across Europe have made their initial steps in this direction. In the absence of a published plan or clear national leadership announcements, there will no doubt be much debate. England has amongst the highest class sizes, lowest staffing ratios, and most densely filled school buildings in Europe: it will simply not be possible to follow, for example, the German or Danish approaches because of social distancing.

I will be in touch again when we have further guidance from the DfE and government about plans of how SECAT will reopen our schools, albeit in phases I have no doubt, and with any further details about examination and transition arrangements.

For the time being, do take good care of yourself and your families and friends. Be safe and stay at home.

Kind Regards

Ruth Brock

Chief Executive Officer



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