Message from the Chief Executive

You may have seen the Prime Minister’s statement on Monday in which he reviewed the size of the pandemic and confirmed it is the government’s intention that primary and secondary education will recommence in September with full attendance. We need to understand what this means for our planning and are awaiting further detail from the Department for Education, which we expect within the next couple of weeks. We will update you on our planning as soon as we are able. With this in mind, we would advise families not to book a holiday abroad at the end of the summer break that may require them to quarantine on return and potentially delay children’s return to school.

You will also, I am sure, have heard the news that the Department for Education has announced a £1 billion funding package for the 2020-21 academic year to support lost learning. We have heard nothing further about the detail of this but what we do know is this:

- £650m for state schools to lift educational outcomes; and
- £350m tutoring scheme specifically for the most disadvantaged.
- Schools and trusts will decide how the £650 million is spent, but there is an expectation that this is to be spent on tuition. This will be a one-off grant that recognises that all young people have lost time in education because of the pandemic, regardless of their income or background.
- Separately, a National Tutoring Programme, worth £350 million, will increase access to tuition for the most disadvantaged young people over the 2020-21 academic year.

This is very welcome news indeed but there is no further information as yet about how much money individual schools and trusts will get and no information about how it must be spent. We will share this with you as soon as we are able.
We are very pleased by the high attendance rates in our schools for the eligible year groups – Reception, Year 1, Year 6 and Year 10. That said, remote learning continues to be the daily reality for the majority of children and young people in our trust, and around the country, and our staff are putting considerable effort into providing this. Our message to the children and young people in the remaining year groups is to keep up with your learning so you are in the best possible place when you return to school in September. It is not long now.

We are looking at how we can welcome more children back into our primary schools before the end of this term but, given the constraints in place, and protective measures we must take, this is proving very difficult to achieve. Each school in our trust is looking carefully at how it can do this and will contact parents/carers if they are able to offer some provision for more children. Where this is the case the priority will be children in Year 5 but please be aware that some schools will not have the capacity, in terms of classrooms and/or staff, to do this. It has been made clear to secondary schools that they must not exceed 25% of Year 10 in school on any one day and must not take any further year groups back before September. I am pleased that we have been able to ensure an opportunity for all Year 10 pupils to have some time in school before the summer break.

It is a relief that life does seem to be returning to some sort of normality and we are so looking forward to having our schools open fully again. In the meantime, we really do appreciate the support we receive from parents/carers and thank you most sincerely for your understanding.

With best wishes,

Andrea Arlidge, Chief Executive
It is great to be back at The Meadows and we were so pleased to be opening the school again as it had been closed since the end of March. Thank you so much to SBL academy who hosted our key worker provision during this time. The children and families that have returned have been amazing and quickly adjusted to the changes we have put in place. A big thank you to the whole school community from Mrs Mounter and the staff.

A parent said, “My child has had the best day back at school and wouldn’t stop talking about it. He has had his tea and is now wanting to go to bed. What a result so thank you.”

Year 6 feedback, “I was very excited to come back to school as I got to see my friends and teachers. I really missed school. Mrs Holmes said we might get to design our own t-shirts, which I am really excited for.”
Hand drawn “Selfies” by Cory and Lily in Year 3, uploaded at home onto the Seesaw learning platform.

The Year R bubbles have been spending a lot of time outside and with nature.
Cheddar Grove

Wider Opening

This week marked the second week of the ‘wider opening’ of our school to Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. The number of children returning to school has continued to increase steadily and the weather has been very conducive to outdoor learning.

Virtual School Council Meeting

This week marked the return of the School Council, who met online, to discuss the issues faced by children and the school since the start of the lockdown period.
St John’s Primary

Our Year 6 pupils have been using their sewing skills to make some great creations and enjoying some physical activity in the sunshine.

A lovely quote from one of our parents:

“I just wanted to say thank you to all the teachers/teaching assistants and you Mrs Clark of course for making the transition this week back to school so smooth.

The communication has been great and it has been so good to be back. The smiley and encouraging faces every day from the staff have been so comforting to see during such an anxious time.”
Bedminster Down

Just some of the great work BDS pupils have been doing at home.

Olivia Green's English project work.

**BDS Art Departments’ Stars of the Week**

Some fantastic artwork from Belkisse Elazrak (Year 11).
Cath Riley’s observational drawings using graphite.

Miss Stentiford has been busy during the lockdown making crochet face mask extenders. They have all been sent to St Michael’s Hospital where they have been greatly appreciated.
IKB Academy and Wellsway School

Year 10 pupils from Wellsway School and IKB back at school in IKB Academy.
Secondary School Remote Learning

Thank you to those parents and carers that responded to the questionnaire on secondary school remote learning. We were delighted to receive over 600 responses, the results of which can be found here.

I was very pleased to see that the significant majority of responses were positive. The changes made to remote learning after Easter to increase contact from school, including through approaches such as narrated PowerPoints, were also very positively received.

As part of the remote learning questionnaire, there were some questions about how we could improve or what parents and carers would like to see going forward. There were many responses that featured the term 'live lessons', which usually refers to a video lesson at a set time, allowing pupils to respond in real time to the teacher.

I thought I would explain a few reasons why, as a trust, we have not adopted this approach:

- The Education Endowment Fund (a significant, national, educational research body) undertook a review of the evidence from remote learning during lockdown. They concluded there is “no clear difference between teaching in real time (“synchronous teaching”) and alternatives (“asynchronous teaching”)."

- Many young people don’t have exclusive access to a laptop or an effective broadband connection. Despite, as a trust, distributing more than 200 devices, we know that many families have at most one device for the household. We also know that some children’s access to the internet is limited. This would significantly disadvantage a number of our pupils.

- Evidence from live lessons conducted with whole classes identified significant issues with attendance and passivity. Pupils struggling to engage were not more likely to attend a live lesson at a certain time; significant numbers did not engage with the lesson in any active way.

However, we have started 'live lessons' with students in Year 12, where groups are much smaller and access to devices and the internet are not an issue.
Approximately 20% of parents reported they are unaware how to access support for wellbeing. I have included links to support sites in today's newsletter, which can also be found here.

We are continuing to focus on how we can improve the experience for pupils and parents as we continue with remote learning as the main vehicle for education. I thank you for all the hard work you are putting in to support your child at home.

Gary Schlick,
Director of Education

Year 12 live lessons

A screen shot from a recent Year 12 English Language lesson. They all seem to be enjoying it and they had some really good discussions about political speeches. Some of the students were too camera shy to show their faces but were happy to show their diligent notes instead.
Happy students in Mrs Mitchell’s Year 12 virtual Maths lesson.

**IKB live lesson**

Year 12 Product Design live sessions on Microsoft Teams with Mr Davies, a 48 minute session to go through Year 12 major project research section supporting their remote learning. Including screen sharing and issuing of supportive documentation.
The Bath Studio School

Every year, The Bath Studio School holds an exhibition of the students’ final outcomes. As they were unable to hold an exhibition on site this year, they have put their exhibition online.

The work in the exhibition exemplifies the commitment, creativity and hard work students have put in over the last two years. See TBSS students’ final outcomes exhibition online.
Mental health and wellbeing support

- **Kooth** provide free online emotional and mental health support.
- **Off the Record** provide a range of free services including counselling and listening support.
- **Childline** is here to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they’re going through. It is free, confidential and available any time, day or night, tel: 0800 1111.

Vacancies

**SMSA and Senior SMSA**

Chandag Infant School are looking to appoint two reliable and committed individuals who can provide care, guidance and support for the children during the lunch break in the roles of lunch time SMSA and Senior SMSA.

For more information and how to apply please see the [Wellsway Multi Academy Trust’s careers](https://www.wellswaymat.com/careers/).

The closing date for applications is: 23:59 Thursday 2nd July 2020.