



## CENTRE ACADEMY EAST ANGLIA

6 January 2021

Dear Parents,

As we are now too aware, the government changed its policy and shortly after 8:00 pm on 4 January, announced what is a full-scale lockdown for all schools. This announcement effectively undermined our previous plans that would enable face-to-face teaching; this was to have commenced in a graduated fashion and fully embrace the entire student body by 18 January. Since the government's u-turn, the entire CAEA staff has been working out the details for our remote learning programme. This will commence on Monday, 11 January, and you will be receiving a package of information prior to that time.

The programme will embrace all of our students, with the exception of the very few key worker children who qualify for in-school learning. Information has already been provided to these families.

We think it important to note that our previous effort with distance learning proved quite successful. As you will be aware, following the last lockdown there has been a significant amount of information indicating that the overwhelming majority of students in England made little progress, and many actually regressed. We at CAEA carried out our own baseline assessments of all our students who returned to school last September. These assessments indicated that many of our students made good or above average progress, reflected in the school's overall score of progress. This, of course, is not in any way meant to overshadow the tremendous sense of loss that all of our teaching and therapeutic staffs feel. The disappointment remains highly discernible, and at this point we all look forward to the day when CAEA will return to "itself."

In the meantime, however, our Senior Management Team is working closely with all subject teachers to ensure that any changes to the curriculum will be accommodated to remote learning. Schedules are meanwhile being finalised, and we are making sure that work set will be appropriate and consistent. As you will understand, we will have weekly staff meetings with teachers and subject leaders, and we will also be establishing ways wherein we may reach out for feedback from your children and, indeed, from yourselves.

You will likely be aware of a variety of new initiatives external to CAEA, many of which will use live video chat/platforms. As parents will recall, there was advice last year that such approaches were not recommended for SEN children, in part because they tended to cause frustration and anxiety, and there were also some safeguarding issues raised in the advice. However, our research indicates that there is a growing acceptance of technology-based initiatives; this may suggest that some of the previous difficulties have been reduced. Accordingly, after considerable deliberation, we have decided that a variety of approaches may have merit and utility for CAEA. We continue to believe that parental assistance makes a considerable contribution to a child's learning—and especially to that of a young child. However, recent technology-based innovations and advances may well prove beneficial to other and possibly older students. Accordingly, our distance-learning information package that all parents will be receiving shortly will embrace both—which we might consider traditional on the one hand and innovative on the other.

On that note, let us close by wishing our entire parent community a very happy 2021—safe in the knowledge that it has, indeed, a very easy act to follow.

Mrs Kim Salthouse

Dr Duncan Rollo