



20 May 2020

**The Talent Factory
4-14 Barmeston Road
London SE6 3BH**

020 8698 7049
office@griffinschoolstrust.org
www.griffinschoolstrust.org

Dear Griffin Schools Trust Families,

These past eight weeks have changed lives and indeed the way we all live and work suddenly and shockingly. I sincerely hope that you are well and that you are coping with the different challenges with which we all are faced. Inevitably, our community of some 7,000 children, 800 staff and their families will have suffered dreadful bereavement and loss, sickness and uncertainty, personal and financial pressures and dilemmas we could not until recently imagine. I hope that you have found great comfort and support in your immediate circles, from your school community and your wider neighbourhoods. We want to find ways when the time is right to share our experiences, to make some sense of them and to plan for the future in a way which uses what we have been through and learned as a whole GST family.

Today I am writing in a practical way to outline our approach to opening our schools further in the coming weeks, according to government requirements and guidelines.

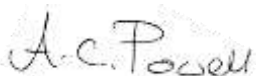
Our schools have been open all the time of course, for children of key workers and others in urgent need. We have tried to ensure, by any means possible, that assistance has reached families who would normally access it at school, from meals to specialist support and a listening ear. And we have supported our staff as they ensure your children are still learning and feeling connected whilst they deal with the demands and pressures of Covid19 in their own lives. Every school has provided work for all its pupils and found the means to 'meet' in imaginative ways, from virtual school trips, through video assemblies to catch up phone calls. This will continue for as long as it takes until we see the full re-opening of schools, so that you and your children still feel part of the school family and the wider Trust community, engaging this year in the Griffin Arts Festival through a series of virtual events and competitions.

We have kept going with the busy cycle of assessment and evaluation of this year's work and planning for next whilst discussing what we learn every week from these exceptional circumstances. We are meeting virtually with our Board of Trustees every month and Local Governing Boards have met as scheduled to support and guide those working in schools every day. And now we are planning for partial re-opening. Over the past few weeks all our schools have consulted with staff to gather ideas and issues connected to re-opening from every perspective. We will use their responses to make our plan, carefully balancing the government requirements with the safety and wellbeing of your children and the staff who work with them.

These are times which need leadership and judgement, when there is no clear 'right' and no simple rule book to follow. Every one of us is in it: no one is excused or excluded. Our Trust community of staff, children and families will I hope be confident that we are making decisions and plans which do more than simply comply with official guidance. We hope you also understand that plans and guidance could change suddenly as the hold of the virus reduces or 'spikes' again. We will do our very best in all conditions to keep everyone safe whilst re-introducing the daily routines, activities and relationships which make life in our schools so educational in the broadest sense.

The Head will be in touch with more detail as soon as we know it.

Meanwhile, my sincerest best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A.C. Powell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue circular stamp behind it.

Anne Powell
Chief Executive Officer