

Plymouth CAST Multi Academy Trust
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4th September, 2020.

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the new and very different academic year.

I hope that you and your family have kept safe and well, and that you've enjoyed some quality time over the summer period.

I am conscious that there are very mixed emotions amongst pupils, parents and staff as our schools fully open after the extended period of partial closure and holiday. There is undoubtedly excitement and relief that our schools will once again be full of young people, and that pupils will be reconnecting with their friends, teachers and learning. However, understandably there is a level of anxiety created by children separating from parents for the first time in many months, and by fears about the transmission of COVID-19.

School leaders and their teams have worked hard and effectively with the Trust to undertake thorough risk assessment and planning to ensure that our schools are able to open safely for all children and staff. The control measures that have been put in place have resulted in some physical and operational changes, but the schools' heart, soul and commitment to your children remain as strong as ever. The risk assessment and control measures take full account of government guidance, best practice and common sense, are kept under constant review, and will flex and change in light of local, regional and national changes to the COVID-19 context.

Whilst acknowledging the enormity of the pandemic and the long-term partial closure of schools, Trust leaders, headteachers and school staff are, and will remain, optimistic and positive. Our pupils are not a lost generation. These young people have been uniquely touched by a global tragedy; there will have been many positives in their lockdown experiences as well as some significant negatives. Our teams have revised curricular plans; teaching approaches and intervention strategies to ensure that they build upon and support the individual experiences and needs of each child.

Thank you for supporting your school's procedures and protocols to ensure its full re-opening. I am confident that together we can use the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic as an impetus to create a pathfinder generation that makes exceptional academic progress and helps to develop a fairer, more effective society, and a safer, more protected and appreciated world.

On behalf of the Trust Board and officers I wish you and your family well as we head into another challenging stage in our battle against COVID-19.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kevin Butlin'.

Kevin Butlin
Director of Education

**Plymouth CAST operates Catholic schools within the Local Authorities of Cornwall, Plymouth, Devon, Torbay, Dorset, Poole & Bournemouth*

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