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Dear Parents and Carers

Resilience is a key attribute which we actively cultivate in our academies and I think you will agree that it is much in demand at the moment. On behalf of the Board of Trustees at RMAT I want to compliment the staff, students and families in all of the communities we serve for the remarkable resilience demonstrated so far.

In the space of less than a week staff at our academies had to respond to daily Government updates, marshal resources, re-plan whole courses, assemble an enormous amount of data, organise rotas, familiarise themselves with different teaching methodologies, and set up our sites to offer a completely different environment for learning continuity.

Parents have played a significant part in helping our academies to avoid the transmission of the current virus by making other arrangements for the supervision of their children within their own households just as the government has requested. A small staff group in each academy is supporting those children of front line workers who cannot be cared for at home. In addition, all staff who are currently well are supporting student learning and supervision remotely. Making sure children are safeguarded is central to our systems and as part of that drive we will continue to provide support during what would normally be the Easter break.

We have had good news today that the Government has worked out a strategy to support children with access to Free School Meals. At RMAT we had already made arrangements on similar lines ourselves by distributing supermarket vouchers so we welcome this clarity.

I'm sorry to say there is no clarity as yet about how GCSE/A levels will be awarded this year so we all have to be patient on this one. We trust that the assessment will be based on fair and accurate data and therefore reward our students appropriately. All staff will be ready to provide whatever information is requested by Ofqual during the summer term.

There is no denying that this is an anxious time for absolutely everybody. It is good to know that we can all play a part in keeping our students' resilience levels topped up by maintaining routines, making sure learning materials are accessed, that exercise is taken, and above all reminding them that this is a temporary situation. Schools will resume! Our students will have to get used to early mornings, bells, timetables, and hard work all over again. I think we will all be surprised by how willing they will be to return to that normality.

Thank you for your support and a huge well-done to the staff and leaders in our academies.

Annette Hall
Chair of the Trust