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15<sup>th</sup> January 2021,

Dear Parent/ Carer

Wk. Two update from the WHF Special school sector- Nylands, St Luke's and The Peak Academy

Firstly, can I thank you all for the incredible efforts and adapting so quickly to home study or onsite provision. You have all responded brilliantly to the recent events.

As you may know, my role is to lead the special school sector and interpret the government guidance. Which in turn, means directing and advising the Special schools, often in the absence of guidance from the government. This hasn't been easy over the last 10 months. However, I am proud to say we have an incredible team of school leaders and staff that help make those difficult decisions easier.

We currently find ourselves in another period of lockdown and I aim to send weekly updates to keep you informed of the amazing work pupils and staff are completing. During my time in the Royal Marines we would encounter many difficult periods and one thing that united us was the ability to overcome hardship and **GROW** through adversity. I know being in lockdown makes things so much harder for you and us. But I promise everything is being done to make that process easier for you and if you contact the school or myself we will endeavor to go above and beyond to assist. In order to do this, we must remain true to our values.

**Excellence, Trust, Respect, Perseverance, Humility, Friendship, Responsibility, Ambition, Tolerance and Kindness.**

What does this mean in practice?

We promise 3 things **"The White Horse Pledge"**

1. Covid safety at all times
2. High quality educational delivery
3. Well-being of staff and pupils

If at anytime you feel we can improve, please don't hesitate to contact me or the Principal and we can work together. Of course, if you feel we are doing a good job please let us know. Its nice to hear positives as well.

## Celebrations

In brief, I have witnessed and heard of some incredible pupils and staff who have risen to the challenge. In no particular order here are just a few of the highlights so far;

- Both WHF Secondary schools responding to the government over the Christmas holidays and having C-19 testing centres in school ready for use by the 5<sup>th</sup> Jan.
- All WHF special schools remaining open and encouraging attendance.
- Improved tightening of control measures.
- All pupils having access to onsite or remote schooling with a determination to make it equitable.
- Staff visiting and supporting parents and pupils at home with laptops and resources for home schooling.
- Over 300 live lessons taught so far.
- The 3 WHF special schools creating engaging competitions and challenges to promote the wonderful culture within our world of education.
- Mr Coombes from Nylands championing home learning support.
- Ms Ingles from Peak Academy rising to the challenge in pupil services.
- Mrs Swift and Mrs Wojewodka from St Luke's always there to help and step up in pupil services.
- Ms Cole from Peak who has passed her level 3 in attachment and trauma course.
- Plus, all the amazing work we see on Twitter from your children.

Lastly, your child's welfare continues to be our highest priority during face to face support and when studying at home. All our staff are working as normal and are available for advice and support. Please let us know if there is anything which we should be aware of or can help with. The weeks ahead are going to be difficult for all of us, but better days are coming.

If you have any questions, please contact me or the schools.

Many thanks for your support

Yours sincerely,



Richard Lewis

Director SEMH, The White Horse Federation/ Principal, The Peak Academy