

It seems like only two minutes ago since October when I took over as CEO of Minerva Learning Trust. Since then, so much has happened and the world, as we know it, has changed beyond recognition. It was a very sad day on the 20th March when our four schools closed their doors temporarily as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak and we received the news that the summer exam series for our Y10, 11 and 13 students were cancelled.

I know this is a very worrying time for all students, parents and carers; especially those who were due to sit exams this summer. I also understand the difficulties parents and carers are facing as they step up to the challenge of home learning. All of our brilliant staff are working hard to learn a new way of working in order to provide you with a huge range of quality home learning resources and to produce estimated grades for all students who were due to sit exams. This has not been an easy task, but all our staff have all stepped up to the mark and I am extremely proud of what they have managed to achieve in such a short space of time. Rest assured, they are doing the very best job possible.

This is also an incredibly pressured and worrying time for us all in many other ways. Some of us will be worried about the health and wellbeing of loved ones, or our own personal health. Others may be struggling with loneliness or missing daily contact with their friends and family. For some, this crisis may have made an already difficult financial situation even worse. Even though our doors are physically closed, other than to families of key workers, our help and support remains open. We are still here to help so please keep in touch.

During the last few weeks it has been great to see so many acts of kindness take place across our four schools which has ranged from donations to food banks, providing food parcels for families in need, delivering learning equipment for our most vulnerable, making PPE equipment for frontline workers, setting up pub quizzes to raise much needed cash and staff giving up their own time to volunteer for the NHS. The level of care and generosity being shown has been breath-taking at times. I hope that this level of generosity and care continues when life returns to normal.

For all of our amazing students - we are still here to support and care for you too. Use this time not only to do the home learning set, but to maybe learn something new, do something creative, help around the house, do good deeds for others and keep fit and healthy – both mentally and physically. I have really enjoyed reading the countless Tweets from students across our schools showcasing the wonderful things you are getting up to. We would love to hear about them on our Minerva twitter feed too @MinervaTrust so please keep us posted.

When our doors do finally re-open, we will be there waiting for you, with a big smile on our faces, happy and excited to welcome you back! Until then, take care of yourself and others, stay at home and stay safe.

Bev Matthews
CEO Minerva Learning Trust