



Dear Colleagues

In these unprecedented times adjusting to a different way of working can be challenging and frustrating. Whether you are directly providing on-site or remote services to our children and parents/carers, or supporting the provision of those services, each of us is trying to balance delivery with our own unique and very personal circumstances.

The working environment in schools is foreign. Each of us has 'worked from home' at some point over recent weeks and this will likely continue to varying degrees for some time, but I think we all very much recognise that the reality is we are at home, during a crisis, trying to do some work! At times, working in either of these environments can be overwhelming and when we combine this with the reduction in engagement with colleagues, friends and family members it can also be lonely and isolating.

*Feeling lonely or isolated isn't uncommon, finding the current situation challenging or frustrating isn't uncommon and it is important that we continue to engage and support each other in a mindful and sensitive way. As such, I am communicating with you all today, to highlight an important upcoming event: **Mental Health Awareness Week 18th May – 22nd May 2020**. A week in which we will talk, raise awareness and we work together to remove the stigma, of mental health.*

*I am delighted to announce the trust's own initiative running alongside MHAW: the **Astrea Festival of Kindness**. During this time, the trust will be holding a number of virtual events, providing support, sharing content, promoting and showing acts of kindness and most importantly; talking about mental health and raising awareness. Future communications will come from our MHAW@ email address.*

I look forward in the forthcoming weeks to share more details with you and urge for you to get involved in what will be a fantastic week of raising awareness for such an important matter. Apart, together.

With kind and healthy regards

Benedick Ashmore-Short
Interim CEO
Astrea Academy Trust