Ms J Williams, Headteacher
Hassenbrook Academy
Hassenbrook Road, Stanford-le-Hope
Essex SS17 0NS
By email

20 May 2020

Dear Ms Williams,

As students express their gratitude to teachers on Thank a Teacher Day, I am writing to express my thanks for all of the hard work that you, your teachers and support staff have put in during this outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19).

I recognise that many of your teachers have been supporting home learning through providing online material for children whilst working from home, often competing with the challenges of looking after their own families and children at the same time.

The ongoing support that staff have provided to vulnerable children and those of key workers has allowed our shops to stay full of food, our roads open, our police to protect us and our heroic NHS workers to save as many lives as possible. This would not have happened without their support.

The challenge before you, as you open school more widely in a phased way following new COVID-19-Secure guidelines, developing new classes, procedures and routines is equally as challenging. I pay tribute to the resolve of senior leadership and the flexibility of all staff to make this possible so that more children can return to receiving the education they deserve.

I understand the worries staff may have about allowing more children to return to school and the real challenges they may encounter to find suitable childcare. But we know that students not at school almost certainly suffer from education inequality, with pupils from better-off families being afforded better access to extra resources than their less well-off peers.

I know that your school will rise to the next set of challenges coronavirus presents you with. You have my full support and I am immensely appreciative of all your efforts. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Metcalfe