19th June 2020

Dear Carer,

It has been a week that has seen many more of our children return to school. I would like to draw your attention to:

1. A COVID 19 addendum to Sandwell Virtual Schools Pupil Premium Plus Policy (attached)

With the growing uncertainty of what schooling will be like for our children in September 2020 and the potential that some remote learning may still have to be in place. Sandwell Virtual School will play its part in bridging the digital divide for our vulnerable children so that learning is personalised and relevant. So, during the period including 1st June 2020 to 16th October 2020; **If during the Personal Educating Plan (PEP) meeting it becomes apparent that the child needs a computer to research or complete school work then the PP+ can be directed into the purchase of a device for the child.**

The device will belong to the child and be purchased by the school so that all relevant security protocols and software can be administered to the device.

1. We are extending our offer free access to the Encyclopaedia Britannica resources, where there is a wealth of information that young people can use to complete homework and research without having to trawl through volumes of books.

Details of how you can access the resource is attached.

1. I attach details of Sandwell Virtual Schools annual Art Competition
2. Connexions Sandwell is providing careers information (education, training or employment), advice and guidance for children in care aged 13 – 18. Please call 07917174735 or 07917174702 to ask for a call back or email us on sandwell\_connexions@sandwell.gov.uk.
3. Finally; BT have joined forces with the Department for Education (DfE) to open up millions of WiFi hotspots from June 16.

Access will be provided via a BT WiFi voucher-code system and will allow youngsters from the poorest backgrounds to access the web for up to three devices at a time, for six months.

The voucher will allow access with comprehensive content filtering, and will point children to online resources and learning programmes.

Distribution will be handled directly by the DfE, which will issue families with the necessary voucher usernames and passwords. Details are to follow.

Kind regards

**Balwant Bains**

**Head of LACE Virtual School**