



**TRAFFORD  
COUNCIL**

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FAO Senior Leadership Team

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Dear All

I thought it important to contact you all and provide a further update on the current situation.

As I'm sure you are aware there has been a significant increase in COVID transmissions and a number of authorities have now moved to a reduced menu for all their schools.

Over the past three weeks we have seen an unprecedented number of staff absences which has resulted in us moving staff from one school to another almost on a daily basis to ensure we can provide all the children with a meal.

Even though we have increased our pool of mobile staff, recruiting nearly 20 additional staff we are unable to sustain re-deploying staff, especially qualified cooks. I would also like to add that in many cases of staff absence's the remaining staff are doing everything they can to deliver the service and meals the children deserve. However, we cannot circumvent the legal requirements set by environmental health with regards food controls and allergens which requires us to have a qualified cook on site.

Therefore we have no option but to move a school to sandwiches with fresh fruit and yoghurts for desserts when there are insufficient numbers or qualified staff at the school.

This is not a course of action we wish to take and we will make every effort to continue to deliver a full service where staffing allows.

I sincerely apologise for having to take this action but there is no alternative at this time.

In addition, the issue of food supply disruption continues, this is due to all suppliers suffering from a shortage of HGV drivers and an increase in staff self-isolating as the COVID transmission rate has increased. We have taken active steps to minimise the impact by seeking new alternative suppliers and have secured new contracts for bread and

sandwiches, unfortunately few suppliers are keen to take new contracts on due to the risk of them not being able to meet the demand.

Finally I would like to thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Valentine', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Phil Valentine  
Strategic Business Manager