

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well.

I would like to start with some good news. The children who returned to school have settled well in to our new school systems. We have been able to welcome Nursery, Reception and Y6 children who required a place with the exception of one Academy this week.

### **Pupil Places for Y2-5**

As I am sure you are now aware, the government has retracted their plan for all pupils in Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 to return to school for the month before the summer holidays. The Prime Minister has said schools can admit more pupils if they have the space. Although we are keen to educate all children, due to the current requirements on staffing and space, all our Head teachers have reported that they are unable to create any additional space. I would like to reassure you we are working to get all of our children back to school, but until social distancing requirements and staff to pupil ratios are revised, we are unable to accommodate any more children.

### **Procedures if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19**

I am very pleased to report there are still no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in any of Elevate Academies for either children or staff. We have spent time this week further reviewing guidance on how we should report suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19.

**If a child/adult shows symptoms at school:** We follow DFE Guidance of isolating the child in a room until they are collected by a parent. The member of staff who stays with the child until collected will wear PPE. Once the child has been collected, the areas the child has been in will be cleaned.

- If a child/adult tests negative, they will return to school.
- If a child/adult tests positive, then parents of children in that bubble will be immediately contacted:
  - All children and staff in the bubble are sent home to isolate for 14 days;
  - Siblings of children in the bubble are sent home to isolate for 14 days;
  - Child/ren of staff in the bubble who may be at school are sent home for 14 days.

**If a child/adult/member of the family shows symptoms at home:** that child/adult does NOT attend school until a test has been carried out and the results are negative.

- If a child/adult tests negative, they will return to school.
- If a child/adult tests positive, then parents of children in that bubble will be immediately contacted:
  - All children and staff in the bubble are sent home to isolate for 14 days;
  - Siblings of children in the bubble are sent home to isolate for 14 days;
  - Child/ren of staff in the bubble who may be at school are sent home for 14 days.

**If more than 1 person in the same bubble shows symptoms at school or at home:** The Trust will take advice from PHE;

### **Communicating about cases of Covid-19**

I do want to directly address the challenge of how we report possible and confirmed cases of Covid-19 to you. I am sure you will appreciate that, on any given day, children in school can show symptoms of colds, headaches, fevers and coughs. While we may treat these symptoms as potentially symptoms for Covid-19 and follow our procedures as stated earlier, we will not be able to report every

incident to parents as potential cases. Our policy will be to communicate with parents only when a test proves positive. This may change if there are extenuating circumstances.

### **Summer School**

Some parents have questioned whether there will be an option for 'summer school' for their children to help catch up with missed lessons. There is currently no guidance for this. Boris Johnson did report last night an intention for summer school provision to help pupils catch-up, but strategy for this has not been communicated. When there is more information from the government, I will let you know how the Trust plans to respond.

### **Long Term Plans**

While it is very difficult to predict what will happen in September, I will continue to keep you informed of our plans on a regular basis.

For September, based on current information provided by the government, I can see three courses of action that could be taken;

1. A relaxing of social distancing rules and all children can attend school.
2. A return to school for all pupils on a rota basis
3. Fewer children returning as a result of increased infections.

As a Trust, we believe option 2 may be the one the government will choose. Therefore, in order to ensure the best education, we are looking at a 'blended' educational approach. This would be a mixture of school taught lessons and lessons at home. We are currently reviewing all home learning across the Academies to further develop this approach. There are many limiting factors here but please be assured that your children's education is the primary focus for our Head teachers and school improvement team.

### **Surveys**

I would like to thank you for your quick responses to our survey for school places over the last two weeks. As Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 have now returned to school we have a clear picture of the demand for places and therefore there is no longer a need for this survey. If your child is eligible for a place but not yet taken it up please contact the Head teacher of your Academy directly to discuss this.

All of the staff at Elevate appreciate the support you have shown your Academies over the last few months. We still face difficult times ahead but I am confident with continued collaboration and mutual support we can overcome the challenges that lay ahead.

Kindest regards,



Nigel Ashley

CEO

Elevate MAT