

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. As we enter the last few weeks of term, I wanted to share with you the current situation regarding COVID and our plans for the coming weeks and also for the new school year in September.

Current Situation in Elevate Academies

As you may have seen in the news recently, cases of COVID in schools across the UK have quadrupled in the last two weeks. Having had an online meeting with colleagues from across the North of England region regarding this yesterday, it does appear that many schools are experiencing an up-turn in the number of cases and, subsequently, many more children are having to isolate at home. While we have not seen the same dramatic rise as in other areas, our Elevate Academies are beginning to experience new cases and we have had to shut 'bubbles' in two of our Academies in the last 24 hours.

The challenge we currently face is that according to some recent studies and what is being witnessed by colleagues in other schools, the Delta variant is more transmissible between children and the symptoms are slightly different than previous variants. We are having it reported to us that schools with Variant D are having multiple infections and having to shut multiple 'bubbles' and in some cases the whole school. It is for this reason we are asking you to be extra vigilant and if your child shows symptoms including;

- Runny noses
- Sore throats
- Upset stomachs
- Persistent cough
- Fever
- Headaches

we would ask that you keep your child off school, inform your Academy and recommend that you carry out a LFT test. If it is positive then you will need to carry out a PCR test.

If you or your child displays COVID symptoms i.e. a high temperature, a new continuous cough or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste we again would ask you to keep your child off school, inform your Academy and arrange to have a PCR test.

We are very aware of the amount of lost learning your children have had. I have met this week with Head teachers to discuss current measures to ensure we are doing everything we can to limit any further closures and keep children and staff safe.

Current Guidance For Schools

As reported to you in the last letter, as a Trust, we have decided to keep our COVID plan in place until the end of term as there was such a short duration of time left until the end of term. However, in response to the increased number of cases (yesterday's figure - 24,351) and after consultation with Head teachers, we have felt it necessary to add some extra measures. These include;

- 1) The restriction of staff working across multiple sites;
- 2) Extra vigilance around cleaning, particularly toilets;
- 3) Extra vigilance in protecting 'bubbles' and keeping groups segregated; and
- 4) Only essential meetings to be held face-to-face.

As there is currently no requirement to wear masks outside unless for large gatherings, we will continue to maintain this policy but do ask that you maintain a 2m distance.

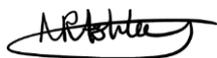
Sports Day

We have had some queries regarding parents not being allowed to attend sports day. Turning on the TV and seeing thousands of spectators sat together at a football match, I can understand the frustration this has caused. In many ways, the easing of restrictions is more difficult than any other time as there are such wide-ranging views on what should be done. I do hope you understand that all our decisions have been made to ensure we keep everyone as safe as possible, limit infections and keep our Academies open. I hope you agree our school staff have worked tirelessly this year for your children and I ask for your understanding that any decisions made will be made with the best intentions for your children.

September 2021

We are currently planning for a return to normal in September with the removal of 'bubbles' and integration across school. It would however be remiss of us not to be prepared for other scenarios depending on how events play out in the next few months. I think we can all agree that things could be very different within two months in the current climate. All of our Academies already have plans in place for multiple scenarios and we await government guidance on their intentions for school procedures in the new academic year.

Kindest regards,



Nigel Ashley

CEO

Elevate Multi Academy Trust