

19 October 2020

Dear parent/carer

Notification process for a positive coronavirus (COVID-19) to parents and carers

Now that we have completed the first half of this term, and having worked in partnership with local public health teams and Public Health England (PHE), an agreed process has been embedded on how and what we as set of schools should communicate to parents and carers.

I thought it would be helpful to set out the agreed process that we have established with local public health and PHE, which complies to the General Data Protection Act 2018, as of course we are dealing with personal health data, which is defined as special category personal data and is subject to a higher level of protection in law.

The agreed process we are operating to is as follows:

- For an isolated positive case, where the close contacts (see the definition of close contacts below) can be identified, we will write to these contacts and the parents directly, as they need to self-isolate.
- If a 'bubble' is closed, the academy will write to all the parents/carers of pupils in that class/year group to self-isolate. In addition to this, a general communication will be sent to all parents/carers in the school to explain what has happened and in which class/year group. Please note any close social contacts identified will also be written to and asked to self-isolate too.
- If a member of staff has tested positive, then an assessment is undertaken to establish which classes and individual pupils are affected and any close contacts are then written to so that they can self-isolate.

Additionally, it is worth noting that in some instances, it is possible that even though a pupil or member of staff has tested positive, a bubble might not need to be closed and people might not be asked to self-isolate. This is because the person who has tested positive for Covid-19 was not in attendance at the school during the infectious period. Public Health requires detailed information from the school in all cases and an assessment is made; the school is then guided as to what those next steps are.

What is meant by close contacts?

A 'contact' is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 anytime from 2 days before the person was symptomatic up to 10 days from onset of symptoms (this is when they are infectious to others). For example, a contact can be:

- people who spend significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19;
- a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre), with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, including:
 - being coughed on;
 - having a face-to-face conversation within one metre;
 - having skin-to-skin physical contact, or
 - contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact;

- a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 for more than 15 minutes;
- a person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 or in a large vehicle or plane near someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.

I trust the above information provides clarity on when the academy will or will not write to you regarding any positive cases that are reported to the school.

I would also strongly encourage all parents/carers to work with us as we deal with positive cases to avoid unintended consequences for others. If your child develops symptoms, is being tested or has a positive result, the academy needs to know straight way, as we need to act immediately with our colleagues in both local public health and Public Health England to assess the situation and then take the appropriate actions. The earlier we know, the earlier we can act and reduce the risk of onward transmission of the virus.

Finally, I would also encourage parents/carers to consider carefully what is posted on social media regarding positive cases, as without having the full context this can cause distress and upset to other parents/carers by only providing partial information for which an incorrect conclusion may be reached.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and cooperation in these challenging times.

Yours sincerely

Mr P Knight
Chief Operating Officer
Trinity Multi Academy Trust