

As incidents of positive Covid cases emerge in our academies, we recognise the concerns that parents and carers have and wish to reassure you that we are working in line with the Schools COVID-19 Operational Guidance issued by the Department for Education in August. This marked a significant change to the measures that were in place previously and a move towards reducing the disruption to children's education.

Each Academy continues to have a Risk Assessment that is regularly reviewed and updated taking into account their circumstances and advice from the Staffordshire Local Outbreak Control Team. Each academy has an Outbreak Management Plan which details the actions taken should there be an increase in positive Covid-19 cases.

Schools are no longer expected to undertake contact tracing; this is undertaken by NHS Test and Trace. Our academies are not obliged to inform parents or carers when positive Covid cases arise within a class. Children who are identified as a close contact are expected to continue to attend school as normal. Only those with symptoms should not attend; a confirmatory PCR test should then be taken and the child self-isolate.

Additional actions are taken where the number of positive cases increases to five (or 10%, whichever threshold is reached first), within a ten-day period where there has been close contact between pupils or staff. Further advice is then taken from the Staffordshire Local Outbreak Control Team. This is the point at which the academy will inform parents and carers of an outbreak. Additional control measures, advised by the Staffordshire Local Outbreak Control Team and detailed in the Outbreak Management Plan, will then be implemented to break the chains of transmission.

Please be reassured that control measures including ensuring good hygiene for everyone, maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes, keeping occupied spaces well ventilated and following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19 are in place in each academy. Measures are stepped up in response to increased cases.

Please refer to your respective Academy website for details of the current Risk Assessment and Outbreak Management Plan. If you have any concerns, please contact the Headteacher or Head of School. Your patience and understanding at what remains a very difficult time for everyone where all wish to do their very best for the children who attend our academies, is greatly appreciated.

*Fierté Multi-Academy Trust Executive Team*