

18th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

On Monday the Government updated the advice for dealing with the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We are writing to you now because we want to be sure everyone in the Learn-AT community is aware of the latest information and understands the steps we are taking at Learn-AT to ensure that all our children and staff remain safe and healthy.

Please take time to read this detailed letter and speak to your child's teacher or school office if necessary. This will ensure that we have the most up to date information about your children if they have any of the underlying clinical conditions outlined below.

The new advice recommends that everyone should now take steps to reduce their interaction with other people (known as social distancing). These are:

1. Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough
2. Avoid non-essential use of public transport, varying your travel times to avoid rush hour, when possible
3. Work from home, where possible. Your employer should support you to do this. Please refer to [employer guidance](#) for more information
4. Avoid large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces such as pubs, cinemas, restaurants, theatres, bars, clubs
5. Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media
6. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services

Anyone who is over 70, who has an underlying health condition or is pregnant is strongly advised to significantly limit face-to-face interaction with others if possible. Underlying health conditions include:

- chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
- diabetes



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- problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
- a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)

There are also some clinical conditions which put you at even higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19:

- people who have received an organ transplant and remain on ongoing immunosuppression medication
- people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia who are at any stage of treatment
- people with severe chest conditions such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma (requiring hospital admissions or courses of steroid tablets)
- people with severe diseases of body systems, such as severe kidney disease (dialysis)

If your child has any of these underlying or clinical conditions, we need to know so that we can ensure that appropriate precautions are taken to protect them. Please speak to your child's teacher or contact the school office as soon as you can so that we can discuss these with you.

If anyone in your household starts to show symptoms of the virus - high temperature (37.8 degrees and above) and/or new and continuous cough – then **all** members of the household need to stay at home and not leave the house for **14 days**. That includes coming to school, even if your child is not displaying any symptoms themselves. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.

In addition if anyone in the household starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from when their symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14 day isolation period.

Guidance on staying at home can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

The official advice is that if you have coronavirus symptoms:

- do **not** go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.
- if you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, or your symptoms do not get better after 7

days, then use the [NHS 111 online](#) coronavirus service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

Learn Academies Trust and our schools are taking steps to protect the health of our children and staff, and reiterate the important role that you all play in this. We are in regular contact with Public Health England and Leicestershire County Council. The Trust and all schools continue to receive a significant number of updates from Public Health England and the Department for Education. We are acting on all of their instructions and guidance and following developments closely. We are also looking into ways in which we can support any of our families who need to stay at home over the coming weeks and will share more details with you as soon as we can.

As it stands, we are still advised that there is no reason for us to disrupt the education our children receive in any of our schools. We are continuing to ensure that cleaning is done to the highest of standards and, while doing all that we can to not worry our children, we have been working hard with them so they understand the importance of handwashing, and insisting on regular handwashing routines. Your support in reinforcing these messages at home would be greatly appreciated.

We understand that parents will be worried about their children and the staff working with their children at this difficult time. There may be many reasons why members of staff or children are absent from school. We emphasise that we are in daily contact with Public Health England and the local authority. If the situation changes, either for everyone, or for individual schools, we will of course inform you as soon as we possibly can, following the advice we are given. Please be assured that Public Health England's advice and instructions will be strictly followed. It goes without saying that we must respect everyone's right to privacy and confidentiality whatever their circumstances and be supportive of one another as tackling this virus is a whole community effort.

We will continue to monitor the situation and keep in touch with you as it develops. Thank you for your support in protecting the health and wellbeing of all our pupils, staff and communities.

Yours sincerely



Stef Edwards
Learn-AT Trust Leader



Gill Weston
Chair of Learn-AT Trustees