



## **Covid 19: Our Commitment to Ensuring Your Safety and Wellbeing.**

We have produced this short document to share with you our thinking, plans and actions in regards to Covid 19. We hope it reassures you at this uncertain time that we are doing all we can to keep everyone as safe as possible. We would like to thank you all for your incredible flexibility and resilience at these challenging times as well as your positivity, hard work and good humour! It's been incredible to see the quality of tuition that has been achieved online when the country was in 'full lockdown' and it's great to see a return to 'normal' begin to happen. As we move into the new academic year, we are mindful that students, tutors and families may be anxious (as well as excited!) about the months ahead. Please know that, as ever, you can contact us at any time if you wish to discuss your thoughts, concerns or suggestions for improvement. Thank you.

### **What is Covid 19?**

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as MERS-CoV and SARS (Cov). The official name for this new disease, not previously seen in humans, is COVID-19. On 11 March, the World Health Organization (WHO) categorised it as a 'pandemic' which, in WHO terms, is 'the worldwide spread of a disease'.

### **How does it spread?**

COVID-19 spreads where there is close contact between people. If someone with the virus coughs or exhales and is close to someone else, the other person could catch it by breathing in droplets of infected fluid. People can also catch it by touching contaminated surfaces or objects. Most people infected with the virus have mild symptoms and recover, but some experience more serious illness and may need hospital care. People over 40 seem to be more vulnerable, as are those with weakened immune systems or an underlying health condition such as diabetes, cancer and lung disease.

### **What is the incubation period and how would I know it I have it?**

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 and 14 days. Common signs of infection include a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a change or loss of sense of smell. Our advice is, if you feel at all unwell, seek [NHS advice](#) and speak to us. We also know that

many people can present as 'asymptomatic' so it is always best to maintain the strictest safety regimes, even when all parties are well. (See below!).

### **What is the current state of play?**

Following the UK peak of the pandemic in April and May, there was a steady decrease in new cases in all four nations but a small upturn since early July. The risk status was changed to level 3 on 19 June with gradual steps on reopening. Over the summer the virus was still in general circulation with localised outbreaks occurring and 'regional tier' responses in place. As of 5<sup>th</sup> November 2021, England moved back into National Lockdown, following a significant increase in cases.

### **What are we doing at Learning Academies to keep us all as safe as possible?**

At Learning Academies we are keeping up to date with Government and public health advice: This is a very fast-moving issue. We encourage all Learning Academies team members and parents/carers who are concerned about infection, to use official and expert medical sources such as [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), the [National Health Service](https://www.nhs.uk) and [NHS 111 online coronavirus service](https://111.nhs.uk). Government information is being updated regularly and we continue to monitor this. We have reviewed our ways of working and will continue to monitor our response as the Pandemic progresses. We have completed a series of 'risk reviews' and have introduced new ways of working safely. Our biggest change has been to formally introduce use of our secure, Virtual Tutor Spaces across the company, providing all active tutors with a secure, online tutoring space. We continue to use these successfully wherever appropriate. We review each student and school case on an individual basis in order to determine the best way of working – with full consideration given to the national picture. We give full consideration to the preferences of our students, parents, tutors, county councils and schools in deciding upon the best way to work. National and county preference is currently for F2F work with students to remain in place wherever possible – and we are delighted to be making this happen in the majority of cases. We are committed to maintaining a flexible and reflective response. We see being 'Covid Safe' as part of our ongoing Safeguarding Commitment to all involved in Learning Academies and, as such, this is a collective and collaborative responsibility. We encourage and welcome feedback on new reflections, suggestions and concerns at all times. Please contact Sacha or Matthew Brakenbury on 01206 252152 if you have any concerns or by email to [info@learningacademies.co.uk](mailto:info@learningacademies.co.uk).

### **What changes have to made to our F2F work in order to be Covid-Safe?**

We are working hard to ensure the implementation the [Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) guidance](#). Adapting this to meet the needs and facilities of each learning space. As we work in a range of settings we require our tutors to stay at the 'forefront' of monitoring and reviewing safety. Our parents and students can equally share ideas and suggestions! If tutors feel that personal safety is compromised in anyway at a venue they should contact Head Office immediately and tuition will be safely 'suspended' until suitable control measures can be introduced.

In particular, these are our current guidance notes:

#### *Personal Review*

Make sure you are safe to teach and learn. The [Government](#) and [NHS advice](#) is that anyone with certain symptoms (such as a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a change or loss of sense of smell) must self-isolate at home for 10 days from when the symptoms started (before 30 July, it was 7 days). Anyone living in the same household should self-isolate for 14 days. You should also self-isolate if you're waiting for a coronavirus test result or have tested positive for the virus, or if you live with someone with symptoms who has tested positive or is waiting for their test result. There is separate NHS Test and Trace advice if someone has been in contact with a person who has coronavirus. We will monitor and implement changes to this as they are introduced nationally.

#### *Cleaning and hygiene*

All tutors, parents and students are required to continue to use the basic but effective hygiene protection measures that help prevent the infection's spread, including:

Making sure that all places of learning are clean and hygienic.

Promoting regular and thorough hand-washing by everyone.

Ensuring access to an alcohol-based hand sanitiser for use before and during sessions. Parents/carers should provide this for all students. Tutors should ensure their own personal access to sanitiser and should ensure access to hand sanitiser for students where this is not provided (cleaning it after use!) Where Learning Academies own venues are used then sanitiser and wipes are provided.

Encouraging students to use and bin tissues – with tutors and parents/carers modelling good practice.

Using antibacterial wipes to clean surfaces prior to starting a session and part way through if required. Where Learning Academies own venues are used (e.g. Little Green Offices) then this will be provided.

#### *Maintaining Safe Social Distancing*

##### **Maintain 2m social distancing, where possible**

Where possible, we will maintain 2m between people by:

Adhering to signs to remind workers, learners and visitors of social distancing guidance

Avoiding sharing workstations/desks. Working side by side rather than face to face wherever possible. (Still maintaining space).

Adhering to 'one-way traffic systems' through the workplace/learning space if possible.

Ensuring only essential people are involved in tuition. (E.g. no additional 'friends' or siblings of learners should be sharing the same space if at all possible.

### **Where people cannot be 2m apart, then we commit to managing the transmission risk**

Where it's not possible for people to be 2m apart, we will do everything practical to manage the transmission risk by:

Considering whether an activity needs to continue for the business to operate – Considering the use of secure online virtual tuition where the safety of the learning space is compromised.

Keeping strictly to start and finish times.

Using side-to-side working whenever possible – rather than face to face.

Staggering arrival and departure times of students, allowing time for a clean of surfaces and equipment between all sessions.

Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering.'

### *Personal Equipment and Resources*

Students are asked to bring their own stationery to each session (notebook, pen, pencil, ruler, rubber and any specific equipment required by the tutor) in a single bag. Only essential items should be taken to tuition. Where it is not possible for students to provide their own stationery then tutors should keep each student's supply in a separate folder/bag and ensure it is sanitised after each session. Please contact Head Office if stationery is required.

### **Stay Reflective, Responsive and Flexible**

In a world experienced constant change we need to maintain our mental agility! Staying reflective in regards to our personal safety and those we come in contact with. We need to be responsive if we feel that safety is in anyway compromised and willing to work flexibly in order to provide consistency in times of change. At Learning Academies we encourage everyone to 'look out for' the wellbeing of both themselves and others. If anyone is concerned or struggling with the current situation then please talk to a us or a trusted friend or colleague. We can be contacted both inside and outside of office hours if required by phone or email.

Thank you all.