

25 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope you are managing to keep safe in these changing and challenging times. I wanted to write to you all in the spirit of transparency, to inform you that we have had a small number of confirmed Covid-19 cases within our academy community. In consultation with Public Health England, I have been advised to send home a small group of students.

I sincerely apologise for the disruption that this causes to our students, their learning and to our academy community as a whole. It is not a decision I have taken lightly. It has been based on the considered advice and guidance that has come through working closely with local Public Health teams and Public Health England. Every student/parent affected has received a phone call today and a personal letter, explaining how self-isolation should work and with references to the relevant government guidance.

I am very conscious of the impact decisions like this have on the emotional states of students and their parents, and I again wanted to express how proud I have been of the students, the maturity that they have shown and the decisions that they are continuing to make. I don't want any students to feel isolated, at fault or unsupported at any time during this period, and I wanted to reiterate the role of my Personal Progress Tutors in answering any questions or concerns that students or parents have.

I also wanted to draw attention to the excellent work that has been underway on our 'Blended Learning' pathway. Teachers are regularly updating Microsoft Teams with classwork so that students facing inevitable absences from general illness, or because of suspected Covid-19 symptoms, can still access work from home. Further guidance around our Blended Learning model has accompanied this communication. In the meantime, it is vital that students log into Microsoft Office 365 with their school account details and download the Teams App onto their personal devices and any laptop / PC they use at home as this is how they will be able to access online learning. Should they experience any difficulty with this or be unable to log in for any reason they need to e-mail their PPT as soon as possible so that any issues can be quickly resolved. It is equally important that your child checks their school emails regularly as teachers are already emailing about online lessons and extra guidance over the coming week.

Lastly, I wanted to draw your attention to the publication of the new NHS Covid-19 app, which aims to support the NHS test and trace system. Guidance on the app can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-the-nhs-covid-19-app-in-schools-and-further-education-colleges/use-of-the-nhs-covid-19-app-in-schools-and-further-education-colleges>. Although, not mandatory, we are urging students and staff to download and use the app in a bid to add further enhanced tracking that will aid the safety of each other.

Today has been described as a 'small cluster of cases' by Public Health England. The rapid response of students and parents in informing us of suspected symptoms and the conscientious approaches to testing has ensured that we are able to keep the academy open for the masses. I thank those families personally involved for your proactive response. The culture within the academy to Covid-19 is first class but we can always do more. I would ask for your support in asking students to be mindful of their interactions at lunchtimes. It is not an all or nothing approach and our attitude to social distancing is that wherever possible, students should maintain it. Our slogan has become, 'Why not?'

Northgate House, Halifax, HX1 1UN
tel: 01422 240033 email: contactus@sixth.trinitymat.org web: sixth.trinitymat.org

Once again, I apologise for the disruption and thank you for your ongoing support. We will continue to work with local and national Public Health experts for the safety and health of our community.

Take care, stay safe and thank you.

Yours faithfully

Mr M Fitzsimons
Principal

Northgate House, Halifax, HX1 1UN
tel: 01422 240033 email: contactus@sixth.trinitymat.org web: sixth.trinitymat.org

Head Office: Trinity Multi-Academy Trust, Shay Lane, Halifax, HX2 9TZ Registered in England No: 6897239 VAT Reg No: 257 1209 15