

Thursday 10th December 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

Re: End of term arrangements

On Tuesday afternoon we received guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) regarding end of term plans and schools' ongoing responsibilities to the track and trace programme during the Christmas holiday.

The DfE have been looking at ways to reduce the risk of students and staff having to self-isolate over Christmas, and to minimise the need for schools to carry out contact tracing in the Christmas holidays. One way to do that is to ensure that the last contact between students is at an earlier point. They have therefore proposed a solution which is to allow schools to make Friday 18th December an Inset Day for staff training. Whilst the timing of this announcement is far from ideal, and the notice period for parents is very short, I do believe there is some merit in this option. Consequently, **Thursday 17th December will become the last day of term for students.** School will finish at the normal time on this day.

I would also like to make you aware that at the time of writing, schools are being asked by Public Health England to agree a 6 day window after the final day of teaching to remain contactable so that they can assist with contact tracing where necessary. This means that up to Wednesday 23rd December, you may be contacted by the school to tell you that your son / daughter may need to self-isolate. I would like to stress that whatever we as a school feel about this, it is Government guidance and I am compelled to abide by it.

The guidance from the DfE is as follows:

- Where a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.
- For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.
- School staff are not asked to remain on-call or conduct any contact tracing more than 6 days after the final day of teaching. Where a schools last teaching day is on Thursday 17th December, there should be no pupil contact tracing asks beyond Wednesday 23rd December.

If you have a notifiable positive case where symptoms first developed **within 48 hours of being in school**, ie **up to and including Saturday 19th December**, then you should email me at rjohnson@severnvaeschool.com. I will use the information available to me and from the affected student to notify close contacts who will need to self-isolate in line with Government guidance. If symptoms appear after Saturday 19th December, you do not need to contact the school.

Should you require further information on this or any of the most recent guidance, you can view it by clicking [here](#).

As always, if you would like to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely



R Johnson
Headteacher