

Our Ref: SLT/FSC-0912SCD

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

### School Closure Day - Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December

I'm sure you read yesterday that the government has recommended that schools close a day earlier at the end of this term, to help limit the possibility of a spike in Covid-19 infections over Christmas.

Nick Gibb, the School Minister, in his statement yesterday morning, said:

*"We want there to be a clear six days so that by the time we reach Christmas Eve, staff can have a proper break without having to engage with the track and trace issues," he said.*

*"So, we are about to announce that inset days can be used on that Friday, December 18, even if an inset day had not been originally scheduled for that day.*

*He said he acknowledged the "huge stress" school staff have been under, adding: "I don't think some of the senior leadership teams of schools have had a break at all since the pandemic began."*

As a school we have reflected on this announcement and discussed the implications with our Governing Body. Behind the announcement is the recognition from the government that its own track and trace systems are less effective than those put in place by schools. The government acknowledges that there are significant risks of a spike in Covid-19 infections over the Christmas period and it needs senior leaders in schools, along with our admin and attendance teams, to be on duty until the 23<sup>rd</sup> December, to make track and trace phone calls following any positive tests from members of our school community that come to light after the end of term.

Of course, as senior leaders, we will rise to this challenge and accept the responsibility of being on call until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December. We all have to do our bit to make sure that cases continue to fall in our area. However, we do believe that it is unfair for us all to be on duty on Christmas Eve, so we will agree to the government's request and will **close the school on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December.**

**Christmas Jumper Day will now take place on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December and Christmas lunch will also be served on this day.** Other than these events, Thursday will be a normal school day and students will be expected to bring all the equipment they need for their usual lessons.

Our instructions to our staff are that our students have already missed out on learning over the last nine months, so all lessons will continue as usual right up until the end of term, with no Christmas activities or films being watched - the focus will fully remain on learning.

My regular weekly communication will be issued next Monday so that I can reveal the results of the Parent Governor election. In the meantime, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully



Richard Briggs  
Head Teacher