



December 9th 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Changes to end of term date following DfE guidance issued yesterday

Mr Jones and I are writing to you jointly to clarify both school's Christmas holiday dates. You may have already heard in the news that the Department for Education yesterday asked schools to reconsider their end of term dates.

The last day of term should have been Friday 18th December, but it will now be Thursday 17th December instead.

The DfE has issued guidance encouraging schools to close on the 18th December in order to ensure that 6 days can elapse before the start of the national Christmas break (23rd and 27th December), when 3 bubbles can mix and enjoy the festive period indoors, together. This also means that school staff will be 'on duty' to follow up Track and Trace notifications in school up to the 23rd December, but can then enjoy the same break as everyone else between the 23rd and 27th.

Please see below an extract from the DfE guidance:-



End of term – advice for schools

We recognise the challenges of this responsibility at the end of term. Public Health England has agreed a 6 day window after the final day of teaching in which schools and further education providers are asked to remain contactable so they can assist with contact tracing where necessary. This will allow enough time for positive coronavirus (COVID-19) cases to be identified and confirmed by a test and for relevant contacts in the education setting to be traced.

We recognise this communication has arrived with schools late in the term but would ask schools to be as helpful to parents as they can by sharing any changes to end of term arrangements as soon as possible, particularly where schools choose to make Friday 18 December a non-teaching day. Your support with this is appreciated.

We recommend all schools ensure staff, parents and carers are aware of the following information and relevant arrangements regarding positive cases in the holidays:

- 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 school's last teaching day is on Thursday 17 December, there should be no pupil contact tracing asks beyond Wednesday 23 December.*

We do realise this places yet more pressure on working families and those who have other commitments and we would like to apologise on behalf of the DfE for the short notice, but schools were only informed yesterday. If you would like to discuss these changes further, please contact us via either school's office telephone.

Thank you in advance for your support and can we take this opportunity to wish all our families a very Happy Christmas. Let's hope 2021 proves easier than 2020!

Yours sincerely

Miss Anna Pendleton
Headteacher of Rednal Hill Infant School

Mr R Jones
Headteacher of Rednal Hill Junior School