

Winchcombe School

Greet Road, Winchcombe, Cheltenham, Glos, GL54 5LB

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Headteacher: Mr Jonathan Templeton

Wednesday 9th December

INSET Day – Friday 18th December 2020

Dear Parent

I am very sorry to inform you at such short notice, that **following government guidance we will be finishing the school term on Thursday 17th December at 3.10pm**. At 2.15pm yesterday we received an email from the DfE setting out their concerns about the ability of PHE to carry out contact tracing during the Christmas break. They are asking schools to be available to continue to carry out this work until 23rd December. In their guidance they have asked that schools close to students on Friday 18th December to give a 6-day window for any close contacts to be traced before Christmas.

Although rates of infection in the local area appear to be falling, we feel that following government guidance (even though very late) is the best and safest course of action.

This situation is frustrating to all involved. At Winchcombe School we have worked incredibly hard to ensure that we are open to as many students, for as much time as possible. We have kept our school community clean and safe by all working together. As you are aware, we have been fortunate to only have had only one confirmed positive case in the school so far. Average attendance in the Autumn term has been 95%, well above both the national and local averages. **We must continue to maximise learning time - attendance over the remaining period in the school term is essential.**

To be clear not a single member of staff at the school has requested that we close early. Staff will still be working on Friday 18th December, developing curriculum resources, and under-going Teaching and Learning training. They, like you will be frustrated by the lost teaching time this late notice closure brings.

I have been asked by the DfE to share this advice to all parents:

- 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** (via wcc@winchcombeschool.co.uk), as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school

Where this early closure may bring significant hardship to you please contact the school office (admin@winchcombeschool.co.uk) where we will look to find ways of supporting you.

Yours Sincerely,



Mr J Templeton