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10<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parent or Carer,

I would like to thank you for your support over this last term which I know has been challenging for everyone as schools have managed the safety of both children and staff. We recognise that some have had disruption to the face to face learning due to having to self-isolate where a positive case arises. I do recognise that this may have been disappointing for some, but the decisions have always been made with the pupils' own safety and wellbeing in mind. Whilst we have had a steady flow of positive cases over the course of the term, the way these have been managed by schools has avoided the surge in cases we have seen elsewhere.

As we all prepare for Christmas, the Department for Education has provided guidance very recently to our schools regarding the end of term arrangements. The DfE has suggested some flexibility for schools to use one of their 5 INSET days on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December to then close at the end of the day on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> with the planned day later in the year becoming a school day for pupils or students. For some schools it may not be possible to change their planned training but for others, it may. Therefore, some schools may not be operating on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December but you may find that the children of other nearby schools are still in school. I felt it important to clarify why different schools will have different plans for the 18<sup>th</sup>.

Whilst we recognise how challenging this may be for you, we also need to advise you that should your child develop Covid symptoms over the weekend of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> December, or you are contacted by your child's school to notify you that he or she is contact of a positive Covid case, it is important that they self-isolate over the holiday period.

Whilst really wishing everyone a Christmas where people can connect with families and friends and acknowledging the very challenging year we have all experienced, I do wish you all a safe holiday and a more settled new year.

Yours sincerely

**Paul Wagstaff**  
Director of Education & Skills