



11th December 2020

Dear Families

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your support over the last term. We have levied many changes upon the school which have been embraced and supported by you all. I am so pleased with how the term has gone and the sense of normality that we have created, that at times I think we could be excused for forgetting we are in the midst of a pandemic. We have almost made it to the end and, for now at least, have managed the journey with very little disruption. I am aware that it can all change at any moment, so we are not out of the woods yet.

I don't know if it is sheer luck or something specific that we have done. I know that many other local schools have not fared as well as us. All I can put it down to is what has happened outside of the school. We have done all we can to reduce risk and create as safe environment as we can. I do think however, that as a community it is the actions and precautions you have all taken that have enabled us to progress at a careful and safe pace and this has ultimately been to everybody's benefit. Thank you.

Schools are yet again in the media spotlight this week. This time it is about our role leading up to the Christmas break and whether we should take an extra day of holiday. I would like to clarify our position for you all. We will not be modifying our end of term date, which remains as Friday 18th December - this is a half day where learners finish at 1pm.

As you will be aware, we have a Learning Group based timetable for our last day of term which will further reduce contact among our learners. Learners do not return until Wednesday 6th January. This will provide a nine day period between the end of the Christmas bubble period and learners coming back to school.

I am sure that, like me, many of you may be anxious and worried about spending time with family over the break. The implications of being dragged into the test and trace system - or worse still being missed by it and unintentionally transmitting something to a loved one are serious. Caution is certainly the word of the day.

We still have a duty as a community to support each other so that we all remain safe throughout the holiday period. I would therefore like to outline the steps that we as a school will be taking to support you and the testing and tracing system.

When tracking a positive case we are asked for a list of contacts over the 48 hour period before symptoms appeared. Close contacts within that time frame are then asked to isolate for 14 days. When schools close we will be unable to support contact tracing in the usual way and there will be a reduced chance of school-based contacts existing. However, for the first few days we will be supporting the testing and tracing of cases where there is a likelihood of school-based contacts.

Please follow the guidance below if your child begins to show symptoms of Covid-19 during the Christmas break:

If your child develops Covid-19 symptoms or tests positive within 48 hours of being in school (Between 1pm on Friday 18th December and 1pm on Sunday 20th December) This includes children who test positive but have been asymptomatic.

You must seek a test for your child and the household must isolate at home until the test result is returned. You should let the school know that this has occurred as soon as symptoms appear so that we may prepare in the event of a positive result - please don't wait for the result to come back, the sooner we are aware the more effective we can be.

The quickest way to obtain a test is to book a test at your local testing centre via <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. Please do not use postal tests unless absolutely necessary as these take longer.

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If the test result is positive for Covid-19, you must inform the school. We will identify if there are any other individuals within the school community who are impacted by this and will contact them with instructions to self-isolate. This contact is likely to be via email over the holiday period. If the test result is negative, you should still inform the school and you do not need to take any further action.

Please use the following email address to contact us over this period: c19testing@honywoodschool.com When contacting us you must provide the following: name of learner, when the symptoms started, date of test result (if received), when they were last in school, Learning Group, Cohort, whether they travel on the school bus and which one.

If your child develops symptoms of Covid-19 more than 48 hours after their last day in school (After 1pm on Sunday 20th)

You must seek a test for your child and the household must isolate at home until the test result is returned.

If the test result is positive for Covid-19, having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, you must contact NHS Test and Trace and follow the advice given by them: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/

You should contact the school using the normal methods if your child will be absent on the first day of the new term.

Many of you will be rightly concerned about the last week of term. I have already spoken to several families worried about the holiday period and the implications if their child does not attend fully in the last week of term. I would like to reiterate the sentiments that I have maintained right from the start of the pandemic: we are all running our own race through our own unique circumstances and must do what is right for our family. It is impossible to put a plan in place for all situations, however, you must do what is right for you and your family at the time. Whilst I do not endorse absence from school, as everything we have been implementing is designed to make school as safe as possible, I understand the anxiety that some families are feeling and empathise with many situations. You know your family better than anyone and you know the risks you are comfortable with. Please send me an email if you have any worries - you have my full support.

We continue to have the advantage of all our learning being seamlessly integrated into our remote platform of Google Classroom which is allowing any learners that are isolating at home to keep on top of the learning taking place in school.

Finally, I would encourage you all to adhere to social distancing and all Covid-19 social mixing guidance for the remainder of term to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus. The last thing we want is anyone being unwell or required to self-isolate over the holiday period or indeed for the start of the new term.

It has been and remains an absolute pleasure to serve you all. Thank you for your cooperation and ongoing support. I wish you all a happy holiday. Stay safe.

Yours sincerely



James Saunders