



9 December 2020

Parent(s)/Carers

Dear Parent(s) / carers

As you may be aware, the Department for Education announced yesterday that schools could close early for Christmas and can use an Inset day to achieve this.

As the vast majority of Bracknell Forest schools have planned their inset days already for this academic year, the Council has taken the decision that, where possible, schools should move to online learning on Friday, 18 December, meaning that face-to-face learning for pupils will end on Thursday, 17 December.

As the majority of schools were due to break up on Friday 18, December, it should only entail one day of home schooling for most pupils, including key worker and vulnerable pupils.

In addition, it has been announced by Public Health England today that all schools need to provide full contact tracing support for six clear days after term finishes in physical school buildings. This is an essential part of keeping our community safe.

We know that this will not be welcome news for some parents/ carers and we apologise for the short notice, but we are dealing with a fast moving situation. This will enable our hardworking and diligent school staff to complete the bulk of the contact tracing, which can be complicated and complex, before the Christmas bubble system comes in on 23 December. It also means that all contact tracing by schools will be carried out by Christmas Eve, which will hopefully provide a little more certainty for you for Christmas Day itself.

From Thursday, 24 December, all contact tracing will be carried out by NHS Test and Trace.

PEOPLE DIRECTORATE

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Parents and carers are advised that:

- where a pupil or staff member tests positive for 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 ([Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk))
- for the first six days after teaching ends (up to but not including Thursday 24 December in Bracknell Forest), if a pupil or staff member tests positive for 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 six days after the final day of teaching. Where a schools last face-to-face teaching day is on Thursday 17 December, there should be no pupil contact tracing asks beyond Wednesday 23 December.

Any child identified as a close contact needs to self-isolate for 14 days. This means that they must not join any Christmas bubble while they are in self-isolation in order to protect their family and friends.

A number of Bracknell Forest schools have full or partial closures in place currently due to outbreaks and contact tracing. Children with symptoms, who have tested positive or who have been asked to self-isolate should continue to follow the guidance the school has provided.

Unless children are self-isolating, have symptoms, or have tested positive they should continue to attend school as normal until home schooling starts on Friday, 18 December. Schools will advise parent(s)/carers directly of what online learning will be available on 18 December.

More information on symptoms, self-isolation and test and trace can be found on the NHS website. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Yours sincerely



Rachel Morgan
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