

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December

Dear Parents and Carers

**Friday 18 December 2020**

The Department for Education (DfE) is seeking to minimise the burden of track and trace falling on schools over the Christmas period and have sent emails to all schools, suggesting that they use Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December as a Teacher Training Day to support this aim.

After a meeting with Headteachers of other Ashington Partnership schools, we have reluctantly decided to take the decision that the children will break up for Christmas at the end of the school day on **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December**.

Public Health England and the DfE expect schools to continue to track and trace the contacts of any positive coronavirus (Covid-19) school cases for a period of six days following the final day in school. We would be grateful; therefore, if you would continue to inform school, using our Covid-19 email address ([covid@ellington.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:covid@ellington.northumberland.sch.uk)), if your child shows symptoms and you decide to take them for a test. Please inform school via the email of the test results.

However, if your child tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), **having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school (from Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December onwards)**, the school should not be contacted. In this scenario, parents and carers should follow the contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

As Friday 18 December is now a designated Training Day, the scheduled summer training day of 7th June 2021 is cancelled and will be a normal school day, to ensure that our children receive the designated teaching allocation.

Once again, the DfE has contacted schools, informing them of their advice at an incredibly late stage of proceedings. They appreciate that this information is provided at very short notice for parents and I am writing to you at the earliest opportunity and apologise for any inconvenience this decision may cause.

As we approach the end of term, if you have any concerns about the health of your child and believe they may have symptoms of Coronavirus, please continue not to send them into school.

Please check your emails as you should already have received this letter electronically and inform us if you experience any difficulties as this is the way that the majority of our correspondence will be sent to you in the future. Copies of all letters will also continue to be posted on our website.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you once again for your support in what has been a very difficult year for everyone and to wish you all the very best for Christmas and the new year.

Please note that school will reopen for the children on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January and that current arrangements for collection and picking up of children will remain in place.

Yours sincerely,

K Vardy

(Headteacher)