



Christmas Holidays and Remote Learning

As you will know St Catherine's Catholic Primary School term dates are set alongside the Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership, and they are set in line with the Bishop's guidance. This guidance asks schools to work as close to the two Great Feasts of Christmas and Easter as possible. This year our final day of the Autumn term is Tuesday 22nd December, and the school day would end at 3:00pm (3:30pm for Nursery).

If we had known about the implications of COVID-19 when we set the term dates, we would have set them differently. We currently have four classes working from home due to a positive test in three households.

The Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of the Partnership schools have been discussing the implications for our families and staff of staying in school until the end of Tuesday 22nd December. In light of recent announcements regarding contact between households over the Christmas period, we have decided to close our school **buildings** on Friday 18th December and provide home learning for the last two days of term. This decision has the support of the local authority, Learn Sheffield, Public Health England and the Diocese of Hallam.

This is our reasoning:

If our last day in school is Friday 18th and we are notified of a positive case of COVID-19 on Monday 21st or Tuesday 22nd, we can notify those who have been in close contact with that person in the 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms.

However, if we break up on Tuesday 22nd and we are notified of a positive case after that time, school will be closed and communication to those who have been in close contact could be delayed; this would increase the risk of transmission in the community.

One positive test result leads to at least 32 other people having to self-isolate; it is vital that we are able to contact trace all of those affected, as soon as possible. Closure on Friday 18th December gives a full week before Christmas Day, and families would know by Tuesday 22nd if there were any need to self-isolate.

What will happen on Monday 21st and Tuesday 22nd December?

Children will work at home on Monday 21st and Tuesday 22nd December. Staff will prepare home learning with an Advent theme and will give it to the children on Friday 18th December.

Senior leaders will be available until the end of Tuesday 22nd December, and will be able to respond to those who communicate concerns about COVID-19. They can be contacted by phone or by email: 0114 3030381 or enquiries@stcatherines.academy

If anyone has a significant difficulty with any of this, please contact Mrs Rigby.