



9 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

**Additional INSET Day, Friday 18 December 2020**

Yesterday afternoon the Department for Education (DfE) contacted schools to propose allocating Friday 18 December as an additional INSET Day in order to create a little more separation between the end of the school term and Christmas family events.

In line with all other schools in our Trust, the Lighthouse Schools Partnership, we believe that it is right to adopt this additional INSET day because:

- This gives an additional day of separation between the school term and Christmas family gatherings, giving families a little extra reassurance where many children will be hoping to spend time with more vulnerable family members; this is also the case for members of staff.
- If there were to be a positive case amongst the student body confirmed in the first few days of the holidays, it gives a little more time to establish close contacts, make the necessary communications and allow families to make any changes to their arrangements.
- It will mean that any school involvement in 'Test and Trace' activity will finish on 23 December (as there is a 'six day contact tracing window'), so families will then be reassured that there is no further risk of children being identified as close contacts over the rest of the Christmas period; this is also the case for members of staff.

I fully appreciate that the late notice of this may cause some frustration to parents, as it does for us – until this point the DfE have been clear that schools should not bring forward the end of term. However, we do believe that this is in the best interests of the school community as a whole at the end of an incredibly testing year for all, and more challenging months ahead.

As such, the school term will now end on Thursday 17 December. This will be a full school day, with some time for a virtual assembly and house Christmas messages during the afternoon to mark the end of term. It will also be a non-uniform day. We have been incredibly proud of the way that our students have taken great responsibility in protecting others and focusing on learning despite the very significant challenges that we have all faced.

I will write again with my regular update on Friday.

Kind regards

Mr J Nunes  
Headteacher