

9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

**\*\*IMPORTANT \*\***

**School Closure on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

In line with Dfe guidance, please note that **all of our schools will be closing a day earlier than planned in December**. The last day we will be open to children therefore, will be **Thursday December 17<sup>th</sup>**. All Trust schools will be closed to pupils on 18<sup>th</sup> December and this will be an on line Inset day for staff.

We understand that this is short notice and that it may impact on your working arrangements and we apologise for this, however, the Dfe only issued the guidance to schools yesterday. The reason for this early closure is that headteachers are required to be on call for 6 days following school closure to support the contact tracing system. Closing to pupils one day early as recommended by the DFE means that school staff will not be required to work on Christmas Eve and can enjoy some well- earned break.

Please note that as all our schools opened to children 3 days early in September, your child will not miss any statutory learning days, and this additional INSET day has already been made up.

Therefore, children should return to school on **4<sup>th</sup> January 2021**.

- Your child **MUST** not return on 4<sup>th</sup> January if your child lives in the same household as someone who has Covid 19 and must stay at home for 14 days from the first day the person with Covid19 had symptoms or had their test.
- If your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (Covid 19) they should remain at home for at least 10 days from the date when their symptoms appeared (or from the date they received a positive test result).

Please be aware of the following information for a child/household where Covid 19 symptoms are developed **after 17<sup>th</sup> December**:

- If your child tests positive for coronavirus (COVID 19) having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, you **MUST** contact the school. Parents and carers must follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.
- For the first 6 days after school closes, if your child tests positive for Covid 19 having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being at school, the school will assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation as the child may have been infectious whilst in school.

No pupil contact tracing will take place by the school beyond Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

I know that you are aware of the enormous pressure staff have been under to keep schools open and work in extremely difficult circumstances. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how proud I am of the staff across the Trust who have worked tirelessly and enthusiastically to ensure that children have as normal a learning experience as possible in these difficult times. Staff have taken on lunch duties, cleaned tables in between breaks, taught exciting lessons in class, met all curriculum needs of the children, provided lunch and after school clubs to help children with on line learning. In addition, they have provided a comprehensive on line learning package for children to continue learning at home that has been outstanding.

I am truly grateful to the staff across the Trust in the school and back offices who have kept the system going.

The children have been amazing since their return following lockdown and have worked hard to catch up and adapt to a very different school life.

I know you will want to join with me in thanking the staff of The HEART Education Trust for continuing the long held tradition of going the extra mile to be amongst the best schools in the country.

I wish you a restful and healthy Christmas break and look forward to welcoming you all back on 4<sup>th</sup> January.

Warmest wishes



Christina Kenna

CEO

The HEART Education Trust