

Junior School

Infant School

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High Down Schools

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High Down Schools

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Executive Headteacher

Mrs A Cowan

Yesterday afternoon the Department of Education contacted all schools to inform them of the need to continue to provide Track and Trace support for a 6 day window from the final day of term. This will allow enough time for positive coronavirus (COVID-19) cases to be identified and confirmed by a test and for relevant contacts in the education setting to be traced. By having the new INSET day on 18th December it will mean that any school involvement in 'Test and Trace' activity will finish on 23rd December, so families will then be reassured that there is no further risk of children being identified as close contacts (in a school bubble) over the Christmas period; this is also the case for members of staff.

As staff will be having a well deserved rest over the holiday period our telephone and office email system will not be manned. Instead I have set up a new email

head@highdownschools.org

to be used during this 6 day window until (and including) Wednesday 23rd December. After that period this email will not be used.

If your child has tested positive and had symptoms that **began before 20th December** then please email me, using the above email address. In your message please note your child's name, their class, the date of the test and the date their symptoms began.

Please note if your child tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school (20th December or later), the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

The DfE have noted that the email system should be checked once a day (**I will check around mid day**). If there is a positive case I will then send a text message to the primary mobile number of the parents/carers of children in that bubble requiring them to self-isolate for the given period of time.

Please note that if your child is self-isolating as term starts in January please let us know, on the office email, so that we can provide online learning for your child.

It is very unfortunate that the timing of this information has been shared so late with schools. However, I was pleased to note that in their message the DfE acknowledged the hard work of school staff: "We know that school and further education leaders, teachers and staff, as well as nurseries and childminders, have worked tirelessly over the last term. This has included their important role in contact tracing, to help in the national effort to limit the spread of the virus. We are aware that this has led to additional work over weekends and holidays and we are incredibly grateful for this."

Thank you for your continued support and I hope that I do not have to contact you over the Christmas period.

Mrs Andreyia Cowan

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