



9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

**RE: Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you may be aware from the media, schools were notified yesterday afternoon by the Department for Education that they might wish to consider making Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 an INSET day on which pupils should not attend school. They were clear that this should not be an additional INSET day, but must be an INSET day planned for later this year being brought forward. The DFE has been explicit that, 'In all circumstances, teaching time must be made up at another point in the academic year.'

This suggestion from the DFE runs in parallel to the expectation that schools' responsibility for COVID-19 Track and Trace will extend into the first week of the Christmas holidays:

'Public Health England has agreed a 6 day window after the final day of teaching in which schools and further education providers are asked to remain contactable so they can assist with contact tracing where necessary. 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. We are clear that beyond 6 days after the final day of teaching, school and further education staff are not asked to play a role in any contact tracing.'

If schools finish their term as planned on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December, their responsibilities for Track and Trace continue up to and including Christmas Eve. We are happy to support this approach for the safety of our children and their families.

If any pupil receives a positive COVID-19 test up to and including Christmas Eve, parents should notify the school immediately via our Enquiries e-mail ([enquiries@swracademy.org](mailto:enquiries@swracademy.org)) so that we can begin the contact tracing process. Please do not leave a message on the school answerphone, as this will not be regularly monitored.

Having carefully considered the option of making Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December an INSET day, we have rejected this idea for the following reasons:

- The school has already used all of its allocated INSET days for this year
- We want to maximise the learning time with our pupils before Christmas, as all of our children missed face-to-face time with their teachers during lockdown
- It is providing parents with too little notice to arrange suitable childcare
- Even if we changed our term dates later in the year to create an INSET day, this may inconvenience parents later in the year
- There is insufficient time to arrange a meaningful INSET day for school staff with just over a week's advance notice

As a consequence, **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December will operate as a normal school day for all of our pupils including Sixth Form.**

Thanks for your continuing support of the school.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Guest  
Headteacher