



The Arnewood School

11 – 19 Academy

Working Together - Shaping Tomorrow

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11th December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: News Media Coverage of Additional INSET Day / Reporting COVID During the Holiday

You may have seen coverage in the national news media that schools have been told that they may arrange an additional INSET day for Friday, 18th December 2020. This story seems to have originated from recent Department for Education Guidance, which implied the additional training day was being offered to “ensure that [education] staff get the time off they need and deserve”. The fine detail of the guidance, which was only issued on Tuesday, is that early school closure is optional not mandatory.

Our plans for the last day of term will therefore remain unaltered and **the school will be open as planned on 18th December** with timings for the staggered end to the day as previously advised. This is because we wish to maintain the continuity of teaching; we put considerable care into our staff training – it is not a day off; and we feel it would cause disproportionate inconvenience to working parents given such short notice to arrange childcare. Most local primary schools are remaining open.

The Department for Education has asked that we share the following information with our community regarding what to do if your son/daughter develops COVID symptoms and tests positive during the Christmas holidays: -

- Where a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms **more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted.** This would be for symptoms that start after 1 pm on Sunday, 20th December 2020. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.
- For the first 6 days after teaching ends (up until Christmas Eve), if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), **having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school**, the school has been asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school. This would be for symptoms that start before 1 pm on Sunday, 20th December 2020. You should contact the school via the covid@arnewood.hants.sch.uk email address if you need to report that your child has COVID symptoms, or has received a positive test result.

If your child happens to be a close contact of a positive case identified once school has broken up we will be contacting you by either email or telephone as we have staff on standby to do so. Please do check your emails in the first week of the holidays.



We obviously want to avoid having to ask anyone to isolate over the festive period, especially the 5 days between 23rd December and 27th December. Therefore, we ask for your support in asking your child to maintain social distancing, and good respiratory and hand hygiene.

Separate to this, schools have also been asked to provide parents and carers with information about the new NHS Mental Health Triage Service. It is recognised **that many people have had a challenging year, continue to struggle, and may find it difficult to know where to turn in times of crisis. The NHS 111 service can listen, connect individuals to community-based support, and can signpost as well as make referrals into mental health services. The attached leaflet provides further details.**

In addition, we have been provided with a small grant from the government to assist families facing hardship this Christmas. Kindly contact Mrs Donna Lenton, Extended Services Coordinator, in confidence at D.Lenton@arnewood.hants.sch.uk if you require urgent help.

Finally, we have analysed the returns made by many of you to our recent community survey on Firefly. Thank you for the overwhelming appreciation you have shown for the school's efforts during the Autumn Term. It has been very challenging but your kind words have lifted spirits.

Again, wishing you a safe and happy Christmas,

Yours faithfully

N. M. Pressnell

N M Pressnell
Headteacher