

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



HEAD TEACHER: MRS. A. D. THORPE

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: MRS. C. HORSLEY

Front Street, Stanley, Co. Durham. DH9 0NP
E.mail: stanleystjoseph@durhamlearning.net

Tel: 01207 232624
Website: www.stanley-pri.durham.sch.uk

9th December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

ADVANCE WARNING OF SCHOOL BEING CLOSED FRIDAY 18th DECEMBER 2020

The following government guidance was issued to schools, late last night (8.12.2020).

If a child/staff member is confirmed with a positive COVID-19 test, having developed symptoms anytime up to and including Sat 19th December, please can you inform school via email stanleystjoseph@durhamlearning.net. In the unfortunate case of a positive test being received by School from a child/staff member developing symptoms during that 48 hour window, Mrs Thorpe will text the parents/staff of that whole bubble asking them to isolate for 14 days from Thursday 17th December – 31st December 2021, following national government Test and Trace guidelines.

The Government recommends all schools ensure staff, parents and carers are aware of the following information and relevant arrangements regarding positive cases 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 (Sunday 20th December onwards), the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace, and bubbles will not need to close.
- If a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school on Thursday 17th December eg. Up to Saturday 19th December, school must be informed via email and the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.
- School staff are not asked to remain on-call or conduct any contact tracing for more than 6 days after the final day of teaching. Where a schools last teaching day is on Thursday 17th December, there should be no pupil contact tracing asks beyond Wednesday 23rd December. School tracing is only for pupils who become symptomatic up to and including Saturday 19th December, only staff/parents of those children who develop confirmed COVID-19, need to contact school via email. After that time, you need to work with the national Test and Trace system.



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For the first 6 days after the end of term, schools are not asked to be on-call at all times. Staff responsible for contact tracing will designate a limited period in the day to receive notification of positive cases and advise close contacts to self-isolate (this can be done by text or email). Mrs Thorpe will check the email each morning at 10am from Fri 18th December to Wed 23rd December for emails relating to positive COVID-19 tests. If you need to email confirmation that your child has received a positive test result into school please put COVID-19 POSITIVE TEST into the subject field. Mrs Thorpe will only be responding to those positive test emails during the first week of the school holidays.

The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline and PHE advice service are available to support with any queries schools will have about positive cases in their school. Where pupils are required to self-isolate, due to contact with a positive case after the first 6 days following the end of term, schools do not need to be informed about their absence until the first day of the new term.

Further to all of the above government guidance and in full consultation with the Chair of Governors, an Inset day has been allocated to Friday 18th December. We appreciate that this may cause difficulties for some parents who are working with childcare due to the late notice from the Government, however we hope you understand that we are trying to reduce the need for a late bubble closure over the Christmas holidays. We also understand that different schools will have made different arrangements, however we feel for our children and families this is the best option. Children are asked not to attend school on Friday 18th December, but they can of course access all of the remote learning projects on their class's pages, if they wish too. As with all Inset Days, staff will continue to be working all day, however they will not be delivering live remote learning lessons online.

We just hope and pray that no one becomes ill with Covid-19 during this last week and that everyone in our school community gets to enjoy a peaceful and safe Christmas with loved ones. As always, we appreciate all of your patience and support as we move through this pandemic. We continually keep all of our pupils and their families in our thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.

Best wishes,

A D Thorpe

Mrs A. Thorpe
Headteacher

C Horsley

Mrs Horsley
Chair of Governors

