



Girton Glebe Primary

Cambridge Road

Girton

Cambridge

CB3 0PN

Headteacher: Mr A Spencer

Dream bigger, learn better

Wednesday 9 December 2020

DfE Announcement Regarding School Closures & Christmas Contact Tracing

Dear Parent/Carer,

You may have seen in the media yesterday the Department for Education (DfE) announcement that schools are permitted to make Friday 18 December a non-teaching day.

The rationale behind this proposal centres around schools' requirements to participate in the contact tracing programme. Should schools remain open on Friday 18 December then it is possible that, due to timescales outlined within these protocols, parents could be contacted on Christmas Eve and asked to self-isolate because of potential contact with a positive case in school on the final day of term. By this point, Christmas journeys and plans will be in place and, therefore, the proposal's wider intention is to keep Christmas Eve sacrosanct.

With the above rationale in mind, the decision has been made by Eastern Learning Alliance to **close all schools within the Trust on Thursday 17 December**. We appreciate that this provides little notice to parents. Schools, however, are compelled to respond to the timing of government announcements.

This decision does not, in any way, compromise our commitment to honour our contact tracing commitments as a school. The Government's published guidance is a little unclear as to how educational settings will fulfil this requirement, and therefore I will endeavour to clarify how we will manage this commitment between the end of term and December 23. Below is an extract from the DfE guidance and a summary table the school has devised as to how this specifically relates to our Girton Glebe:

- *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**. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.*
- *For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school is asked to*

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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 more than 6 days after the final day of teaching. Where a school's last teaching day is on Thursday 17 December, there should be no pupil contact tracing tasks beyond Wednesday 23 December.*

(Department for Education Guidance,
December 2020)

To clarify this, I have summarised this information in the context of Girton Glebe in the table below:

Symptoms began on (or date of positive test if asymptomatic)	Between Monday 14 th – Friday 18 th December	Saturday 19 th December	Sunday 20 th December – Monday 4 January
Action Required	Parents Inform school immediately. School will notify individuals within respective bubbles who may have come into contact. Notified individuals will have to self-isolate for 14 days.	Parents Inform school immediately. School will notify individuals within respective bubble who may have come into contact on Thursday 17 December. Notified individuals will have to self-isolate for 14 days.	Unless testing was delayed following onset of symptoms, case was not in setting and therefore there is no need to contact school.
	I have set up a designated number for parents/carers to contact me <u>in the event of a confirmed case</u> between the close of school on Thursday 17 December and Wednesday 23 December . This number, which can be found at the end of this letter, is to be <u>used exclusively for contact tracing purposes and not for other communications.</u>		
Parental Responsibility	Parents to notify close contact family and friends and follow advice as per NHS Covid-19 guidelines http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/		

In order to ensure these arrangements work effectively and minimise the risk of compromising families' Christmas break, please adhere to the following:

- Parents to seek tests via testing centres rather than via postal tests as this can significantly delay confirmation of results. Results are normally forthcoming in 24 hours via test centres.
- Parents to notify school if children have symptoms after schools close (as outlined above) – even when waiting for a test result, families can be advised to take necessary steps whilst awaiting confirmation.
- So as to minimise the risk of infection within school (and the wider community) please ensure you continue to adhere to social distancing protocol.

The school Contact Trace number is as follows: 07748 501364

If you have any further questions relating to this, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding in such challenging times,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'A' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Andrew Spencer
Headteacher