

10th December 2020



**THE
HASTINGS
ACADEMY**

Rye Road, Hastings,
East Sussex, TN35 5DN

www.thehastingsacademy.org.uk
office@thehastingsacademy.org.uk
01424 711950

Principal: Hilary Morawska

Dear Parents and Carers

Academy Closure- Friday 18th December – DFE Advice

This is an extraordinary parent and carer letter, based on the recent information advised by the DFE, regarding the academy being closed on Friday, 18th December. I thank you for your understanding in advance of what academies have been advised to do, based on scientific advice. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and the part you have played in keeping the academy informed of confirmed Covid cases. This has ensured that we are able to follow, effectively, the track and trace guidelines. This, to date, has contributed massively to the national effort to limit the spread of the virus, which is also evidenced within the academy.

The Department for Education has recognised the challenges schools across the UK have faced and the additional work caused by the role we have played in contact tracing. Therefore, yesterday, it was announced that Public Health England has agreed to a 6-day window after the final day of teaching in which the academy will remain contactable, so we can continue to 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 within our academy to be traced. Beyond 6 days after the final day of teaching, we are not asked to play a role in any contact tracing.

In light of the above arrangements, the Trust has decided to follow government advice and **will be closing our gates on Thursday 17th December** and will hold an additional INSET day on Friday 18th December **to provide a more significant gap between the end of teaching and the beginning of family gatherings over the festive period.**

Important Information Below:

- Where a pupil 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 - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testingand-tracing/>



- For the first 6 days after teaching ends (i.e until Wednesday 23rd December), if a pupil tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, parents and carers are asked to contact the Principal, Hilary Morawska via email on h.morawska@thehastingsacademy.org.uk. Ms Morawska will review her emails each day to pick up the information you have provided. Within your email please provide the following:
- Contact number for the Principal to call you on, if needed and the name of the main contact
- When your child was last in the academy
- The date your child presented as unwell
- What symptoms your child presented
- What date the Covid test was taken
- What date the positive result was advised
- The Year group your child is in
- Names of close academy friends (socially during break time/walking to and from the academy and with socially since school closed to students)

The academy will begin the contact tracing to advise parents where self-isolating is required based on PHE advice.

Going forward from 23rd December 2020:

- School staff will not be on-call or conduct any contact tracing more than 6 days after the final day of teaching. There should be no pupil contact tracing asks beyond Wednesday 23rd December.
- 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.

I certainly hope that you all remain safe and well and that no contact is made regarding confirmed cases. However, until the 23rd December please be advised that any confirmed case will be actioned in accordance with the PHE guidelines as has been our usual practice.

The academy will open for the students on Tuesday 5th January.

Kindest regards



Hilary Morawska
Principal

