

11th December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you with what I hope will be the final coronavirus update for this calendar year. I am sure by now that many parents and carers will have read statements from the Department for Education (DfE) in the media that have suggested to schools that they may close to all students on Friday 18th December and that this day may be allocated for staff training instead.

This suggestion from the DfE is intended to ensure that senior staff in schools are not in a position where they are required to contact families on Christmas Eve for track and trace purposes. The following points have been extracted from the DfE press release:

- *Where a student 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 student or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, 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 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 student contact tracing beyond Wednesday 23 December.*

Given the information above it is clear that there is potential that schools that remain open on Friday 18th December may be in a position where they have to contact families on Christmas Eve.

Having given this issue careful consideration, we have decided to remain open to all students next Friday (18th December). The exception to this will be students in Year 13 who should not attend as they will not be returning to regular lessons at the conclusion of their trial exams on Thursday. Students should attend school at their regular start times. The day will finish at the following staggered times:

- Year 12 11.15am
- Years 7, 8 & 9 11.50am
- Years 10 & 11 12.00pm

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Mr Gary Mullings BA (Hons)
Headteacher

All students should return to school on **Thursday 7th January**.

I would ask that parents and carers support the school and its staff by ensuring that their child attends for the entirety of next week. Obviously, we are hopeful that the whole community remains safe over the Christmas period and that we are not in a position where we are required to conduct a track and trace activity. However, if your child does develop symptoms for COVID-19 within 48 hours of being in school and subsequently tests positive then please email **Mrs Bashford-Hynes** ehynes@vynersschool.org.uk and **Mrs Foster** afoster@vynersschool.org.uk up to and including 24th December. This will ensure that the information will be received and that we can contact all relevant families.

As a reminder, if somebody in your household develops symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19 other members of the household must self-isolate for 14 days but do not need to get tested unless they develop symptoms.

Thank you to all parents and carers for their continued support. I hope that all members of our community have a safe and peaceful lead in to the Christmas holiday.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Mullings', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gary Mullings
Headteacher