



10th December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we draw to the close of what has been a very different year, I wanted to write home with a few key messages, as follows:

End of term arrangements

Throughout the current pandemic, we have followed national guidance and remain committed to doing so. This means offering our full support for the government's Track and Trace programme, and contactable if needed. I also remain committed to ensuring the wellbeing of all staff, and I do not feel it is reasonable to ask them to effectively be 'on call' on Christmas Eve. I think, as parents/carers, you will appreciate that position.

Therefore, we will move to using Friday 18th December 2020 as an INSET day as suggested by the government. To clarify, this means the last day of teaching pupils will be 17th December 2020. More information on our slightly amended 2020-21 term dates will be published on the website, and we will also send a reminder of this change to all parents/carers in a future communication.

I acknowledge the short notice of this development, particularly for parents/carers. It is not done lightly, nor without an appreciation of the potential impact on working patterns/childcare arrangements. However, I would also add that schools were informed of this yesterday by the DfE, and so I hope you will understand that we are acting as quickly as we can.

Final day of term – Thursday 17th December

On the final day of term, next Thursday, we encourage students to wear Christmas jumpers to mark the start of the Christmas break. Christmas themed face masks and hats or headbands are also allowed. If students choose to do this, we also encourage you to make a small donation (usually £1) to charity through parent pay. The money raised will be going to our campaign to support Kids Club Kampala which supports young people in Uganda and we appreciate all donations.

Communications about COVID-19 in our academy

We have tried to keep everyone informed of any issues when we have needed to. It is also very important for me to outline just how well we have managed to control the situation in school. Despite the virus being at large in society and us being in a tier 3 area, we have managed to remain open for most children most of the time and put measures in place in the academy that have certainly reduced the risk of transmission.

Whilst nobody can completely eradicate the virus, we can report that we have had just 16 confirmed positive cases amongst students since our return in September. The most significant action we took, other than isolating small groups of close contacts wherever a case occurred, was to keep year 11 at home for a short period of time in the lead up to Christmas. That was in response to just 3 cases in a year group and was a cautious approach to ensure we took the safest possible action at that time. I am also pleased that staff absence has been relatively low.

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As a result, I can positively reassure parents that we are remaining extremely vigilant and proactive in our approach to hygiene and safety for the whole community and will continue to do so.

What if there is a positive case over the break?

Further to the last statement, should your child test positive before 24th December then please do contact us by e-mail covid@cathedral.trinitymat.org and we would then trace the close contacts and inform anyone affected by this. Of course, beyond this date you should also continue to inform us although you should not expect any further response until the start of term. A reminder that term begins again for students on Tuesday 5th January 2021.

Uniform Expectations when we return

The key point here is that the uniform expectations are no different than usual. However, towards the end of the year it is important to re-emphasise expectations as we will be paying close attention to uniform standards when we return.

The full uniform list is here <https://cathedral.trinitymat.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Uniform-Policy-2020-21.pdf>. However, please make particular note of the following, which are often the areas that have to be challenged:

- Footwear (students must wear black leather school shoes, not trainers or boots)
- Skirts (these must be knee length pleated skirts)
- Trousers (School trousers only, no jeans or tight-fitting pants)
- Hair (natural colours only)
- Piercings (no facial piercings, one ear stud in each ear only).
- No coloured nail varnish or false nails.
- Students are allowed to wear subtle make-up only and no false eye lashes.

And finally, thank you for your support!

We couldn't have predicted how this year would pan out and despite the immense challenges, we have continued to work incredibly well as a community to support in the best way we possibly could. I have seen this in numerous forms – the high attendance levels of students, the responses of parents when we have had to send students home to self-isolate, the extremely positive responses to our parental survey, the engagement of students in online learning, the donations made by parents and students to our foodbank charity appeal and the commitment of the staff in providing remote learning as well as planning and delivering all their normal lessons. The responses of people have reminded me of why and how we achieved the 'Excellent' SIAMS grading back in February. Thank you to all involved!

For now, I hope you all enjoy a great Christmas and New Year, which heralds a brighter future as we look forward to 2021.

Best wishes,



Rob Marsh
Principal