

14th December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

End of Term Update

I hope you are all keeping as well as possible in the difficult circumstances we all find ourselves in, and that everyone will get some peace, rest and a bit of family time at Christmas. Our thoughts go especially to all those who have been bereaved this year, including our wider school family.

Important Updates:

1. **All our schools plan to remain open up to and including Friday, 18th December 2020**

We have Christmas events planned for the young people throughout the week, some of which will be made available online for parents to share. We want to make this a happy time for all our pupils and students. One of our schools, Mayfield, is experiencing a perfect storm of staff absence at the moment which means that we are having to prioritise key year groups and children of key workers/vulnerable children. But we have resolved the opening and locking up/security issues and secured extra cleaning help, so hopefully we will be able to bring more pupils back for the last days of the term.

2. **If your child tests positive for COVID up to and including Christmas Eve (24th December), you must report to school by the school's systems. Schools are obliged to continue to track and trace all contacts who might have affected up to 6 days after the positive test/symptoms, which means that Headteachers and Senior Staff will be on duty up to and including Christmas Eve.** If your child has been a contact, the school will contact you. I appreciate no one wants to hear this, but we have to prevent the spread of the infection which is so dangerous – and sometimes deadly – for older people especially and those with health issues that make them more vulnerable. After 24th December you do not need to report any confirmed Covid cases to school. Reporting starts again when the term begins. I am sure you will all join with me in thanking the leadership of all our schools who have ensured the provision for children and families since last March without a break.

3. **Changes to the self-isolation period**

We were informed on Friday that the period for self-isolation for Covid-19 has been reduced from 14 to 10 days from Monday 14 December. This reduction also applies to anyone who is currently self-isolating. This means that:

- Anyone who tests positive for Covid must now isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms, or 10 days from the point of taking the test if they did not have symptoms
- Anyone who is a contact of someone who has tested positive must also isolate for 10 days
- For pupils in schools, this means that if a member of their household has tested positive, the child must isolate, as must the rest of the family. Similarly if the child has been a contact of someone at school who has tested positive and is sent home to isolate, that period of isolation is now 10 days.

Our schools are contacting children already isolating if this change to the regulations means that they can return earlier. In practice very few are affected. If in doubt, please contact your school before sending your child in.

4. In January and the new term

We look forward to welcoming all our pupils back for Spring term but please do not send your child to school if they have any COVID symptoms. Keep them at home and get a test. Again, this is about preventing the spread of the infection. It is upsetting for children and frustrating for you if “bubbles” have to be sent home, so it is better to be safe than sorry.

For Blue Coat Year 11 pupils, there will, of course, be mock examinations, but the school has allowed time if students have symptoms and need to be tested. The main thing is to keep the communication with the school going.

5. Remote Learning

We have all come a long way over this last term in developing and delivering remote learning for young people – and there are further developments to follow including, where possible, online teaching if Year 6 pupils have to self-isolate (this is already in place for Years 7-13). It will focus on the key elements pupils will need for SATs and progression to secondary and will be quite focused and precise. The teacher may also be teaching half the class that is in school at the same time. So, if we do this, please can I ask parents to be aware that this not “normal” teaching. It makes big organisational demands on teachers and engaging pupils remotely is very different to engaging with them in the classroom.

5. Mass Testing

We are starting to hear about mass testing of pupils and/or staff which is to be rolled out first in London and the South East. We will send further details when we have them.

6. What’s important if your child has to isolate?

- (a) Set aside the time for your young person to do their school work;
- (b) Ensure that the work teachers ask them to return is completed and returned by the system your school uses. If unsure, contact the school and ask.
- (c) Put things in place so that your child can log on to any live lessons. Sometimes it is as simple as making sure they are up and out of bed before you leave for work. If they get behind, they can start to lose heart.
- (d) Communicate with teachers and school staff. All our schools regularly contact pupils who are isolating, as part of pastoral care, and to check up on learning. Sadly, a small number of parents are not picking up calls. If there is a problem, please let the Headteacher know and we will do our best to help. We have to work together to support our young people.

Thank you!

7. Public Examinations

The government has confirmed that Key Stage 2 SATs in Reading and Maths **will** go ahead in the summer, as will GCSE and A-Level examinations.

There is a consultation ongoing on how these exams will be adjusted so that they are fair for all, including young people whose learning has been interrupted several times by COVID. We will know more in the Spring.

But this does emphasise the need for **all** Year 6, Year 11 and Year 13 to engage fully with remote learning, so that they are all in the best possible position for progression.

8. Parent Meetings in Spring 2020

Our intention is that these will go ahead, Covid-permitting, online. Further details to follow.

9. New recruitment website

We are proud to be launching a brand-new Cranmer Education Trust careers website this Christmas. Teaching and support colleagues feature, including staff stories and video interviews. It will be live via the Trust [website](#) by the end of this week. Please take the time to have a look and share with family, friends and your other networks. We will also be posting a series of social media posts about working within our growing Trust and asking for expressions of interest in future posts, particularly in relation to recruitment for our new secondary school for Oldham, [The Brian Clarke C of E Academy](#). If you are not already following us on social media, please take a moment to do so over Christmas:

Twitter: [@CranmerTrust](#)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CranmerEDT/

Instagram: [CranmerEducationTrust](#)

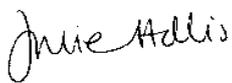
LinkedIn: [Cranmer-Education-Trust](#)

Finally, and after all that, we wish all our parents and carers a happy, peaceful and safe Christmas with your children. Christmas is **the** time of hope – of light coming into the darkness, and the promise of hope for the future through God's love, born in Jesus, for the whole of humanity.

Our young people are all taking part in Christmas events which reflect both the light of faith and the warmth of family. With their teachers and wider school staff, they are all making a commitment of generosity and kindness to others – spreading and sharing the light. We are immensely proud of them all.

Happy Christmas, God bless, and every best wish for light and hope in 2021 for us all.

Yours sincerely,



JULIE HOLLIS
Chief Executive Officer
The Cranmer Education Trust