

7th December 2020

Dear parent/carer,

As we enter the second week of Advent and our first weekend out of national lockdown, we are reminded of the business of Christmas. I took time out on Saturday to visit the Christmas Tree festival at the Cathedral. The



theme this year is '**light**' and '**hope**' where entrants were called to lift people's spirits in these challenging times. The image of a star shimmered above the choir whose voices filled the space with hope and joy. Our annual Carol Service this year will be shared virtually on **Tuesday 15th December** at 7.00pm. Please look out for the link via school email which will be sent before the event.

Bishops' bearers of hope – Christmas charity events

Students are called this week to take part in our charity 'Christmas Jumper Day' on **Friday 11th December**. Donations will bring hope to children across the world as funds raised will go to Save the Children. For a £2.00 donation payable on the day or through the school gateway students can wear their own clothes and are encouraged to wear a Christmas jumper or the festive colours of green/red or gold.

<https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/christmas-jumper-day>

This builds on other social action projects taking place during the final weeks of term which include community Christmas cards, working with local care homes and supporting our Nepalese partners Classroom in the Clouds.

Light – the end of term (and 2020) is near – Friday 18th December

School term ends on Friday 18th December. It is a half day. A staggered finish will bring a busy term to an end with the following finish times. Lessons finish at the following times:

- Year 7 – 12.10pm
- Year 8 – 12.15pm
- Year 9 – 12.20pm
- Year 10 – 12.25pm
- Year 11/12/13 – 12.30pm

Students in key stage 3 will have their breaktime and lunchtime as usual. Students in key stage 4/5 will have their breaktime as usual. Transport have been informed and private school buses will leave in accordance with these timings. The S5 and S61 buses are currently going to be following their normal timetable on December 18th. We are waiting to hear back from Stagecoach if they will be able to put on an earlier bus. Staff will be onsite to supervise students until then but students wanting to take advantage of an earlier finish time should look at alternative routes home.

Christmas Test and Trace Arrangements

We want all in our school community to have a Christmas period free from the need to self-isolate. It is therefore extremely important that all members of the community continue to work together to reinforce measures that help to stop the spread of COVID -19. This includes mask wearing, social distancing and not mixing outside of household or school bubbles and following the Tier 2 guidelines.

Please continue to notify school if your child develops symptoms of COVID-19 or are asymptotically tested (tested when they don't have symptoms) in the final week before the Christmas break using the following email attendance@bishopschester.co.uk.

Between 3.15pm on Friday 18th December 2020 and 3.15pm on Sunday 20th December 2020

If your child develops COVID-19 symptoms or is asymptotically tested (tested when they don't have symptoms) and your child was in school in the 48hrs prior to the symptom on-set (or test if they have been tested but don't have symptoms) email attendance@bishopschester.co.uk.

You do not need to notify the school if your child has not been in school in the 48hrs prior to the symptom on-set (or test if they have been tested but don't have symptoms)

After 3.15pm on Sunday 20th December 2020 and Sunday 3rd January 2021

If your child develops symptoms or is asymptotically tested (tested when they don't have symptoms) **after 3.15pm on Sunday 20th December 2020**, don't contact the school. Please follow guidance from NHS track and trace. The national test and trace service will contact you to complete the contact tracing. The school does not need to be notified if your child is required to self-isolate during the Christmas holidays. If your child is required to isolate after **Sunday 3rd January 2021** and will not be in school on **Monday 4th January 2021** please email attendance@bishopschester.co.uk by **Sunday 3rd January 2021** outlining the reason why they are isolating and the date they will return. We will then review these emails when we re-open on **Monday 4th January 2021**. Normal COVID – 19 attendance procedures will resume from this date.

Testing

We would like to remind parents that children should only be tested if they develop any of the three COVID-19 symptoms:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

They should not be tested asymptotically (when they don't have symptoms) unless they are part of a study or have been advised to do so by a Consultant in Public Health.

The Local Authority have also asked us to update parents that when a child under the age of 16 attends A&E or is admitted onto a hospital ward following a self-harm incident, the hospital will communicate this, at the

earliest opportunity, to the Safeguarding Lead in school. This will help to ensure that the school are able to support children and young people in a way that means they feel safe and included. Further details can be found on our website – [here](#)

Returning to the theme of advent and our preparations to celebrate the birth of Jesus, I hope you are able to find peace and joy at this time and continue to be uplifted by our shining stars – the students at the heart of our school community who have worked together with adults to look after each other in a very challenging term. They continue to be a source of ‘light’ and ‘hope’ and we look forward to welcoming them back after a well-deserved holiday to see how they sparkle in 2021.

Yours sincerely



Helen Cairns
Deputy Headteacher

Summary of COVID notification deadlines

Dates	Actions	Contacts
Up to Sunday 20 th December 3.15pm.	Continue to notify the school if your child develops symptoms of COVID-19 or is tested asymptotically (tested when they haven't got symptoms)	attendance@bishopschester.co.uk
After 3.15pm on Sunday 20th 2020	Do not notify school if your child starts with symptoms of COVID-19 or is tested asymptotically (tested when they haven't got symptoms)	No contact required
3 January 2021	Notify the school if your child is self-isolating and will not be returning on the 4 January 2021	attendance@bishopschester.co.uk
4 January 2021	Notify the school if your child develops symptoms of COVID-19 or is tested asymptotically (tested when they haven't got symptoms)	attendance@bishopschester.co.uk