



St Benet's RC Primary School  
St Benet's Way  
Ouston  
Chester-le-Street  
Durham  
DH2 1QX

Website: [www.st-benets.durham.sch.uk](http://www.st-benets.durham.sch.uk)

Email: [stbenets@durhamlearning.net](mailto:stbenets@durhamlearning.net)

Telephone: 0191 4105857

'A happy and holy place of learning  
and the centre of a thriving community'

Head teacher: Mrs C Young  
Acting Deputy Head Teacher: Mr J Quinn

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Yesterday, the Department for Education released a statement to all schools stating:

*'We recognise the challenges of this responsibility at the end of term. Public Health England has agreed a 6 day window after the final day of teaching in which schools and further education providers are asked to remain contactable so they can 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 in the education setting to be traced. We are clear that beyond 6 days after the final day of teaching, school and further education staff are not asked to play a role in any contact tracing. It is also likely that the need to support the tracing process will reduce dramatically over the course of the 6 days as the majority of cases should be identified earlier in the week.'*

*To ensure that staff get the time off they need and deserve, schools may wish to use an INSET day, making Friday 18 December a non-teaching day and using the day for staff training, which could be delivered online.'*

The Governing Body of St Benet's have agreed however that as we have had very few positive Covid cases amongst children and staff, we shall continue to remain open on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December. **Our school will therefore close on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December and children will leave in their staggered bubbles from 3.00pm (as usual).**

I must stress that as we are breaking up on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December, there will be an expectation for any parents to contact school if their child tests positive within the first few days of the Christmas holiday. If a staff member within a bubble tests positive within this time frame, this too shall be shared with parents. The Department for Education states:

- *Where a pupil 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.*





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- *For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil 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.*

As always, I thank you for your continued support that you have shown throughout this pandemic. March 2020 seems a long time ago now, yet hope is on the horizon for 2021 with the introduction of a vaccine. Please for the remainder of this term, continue to keep your children at home if they are unwell in any circumstance so we can ensure that all of our families and staff get the Christmas holiday that we deserve!

Kindest regards,

*C. Young*

Catherine Young  
Head teacher

