



TRAFFORD  
COUNCIL

The Willows Primary School  
Victoria Road  
Timperley  
Cheshire  
WA15 6PP

9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parent or Carer

### Christmas Holiday Arrangements

As the end of term approaches, we would like to thank you for your on-going support as we have continued to adapt and do the best we can to keep all of our children and staff safe in their schools. This term has been hard for us all with the restrictions and disruption caused by Covid, but through the continued hard work and dedication of our schools and nurseries, we have managed to keep our settings open and provide the education our children and young people deserve.

Yesterday, the Department for Education produced an announcement to support schools in their end of term planning and 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 advice states, "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. Where term would normally finish in the week commencing 21 December, schools may wish to consider adjusting term dates to make Friday 18 December the last day of term (which could be an INSET day), and bringing forward the start of term in January by the same number of days."**

Having reflected on this announcement with staff and key governors here at the Willows primary School, we have taken the decision **NOT** to change our end of term date. We believe that this announcement is too late to expect parents to make alternative arrangements. Furthermore, we would have to 'pay back' a day which would mean an extra day in school for the children on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021 rather than finishing for the summer on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Therefore, school will remain open on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December and close at the end of the day according to normal bubble finishing times.

We know how much our children and young people enjoy the Christmas/Winter holidays. This year more than ever, the opportunity to spend time with our loved ones cannot be underestimated. However we are asking you to think hard about how you chose to celebrate this year.

Because of the national lockdown, the rates for new Covid infections are decreasing across Trafford and Greater Manchester and we want this decline to continue. We all need to continue to abide by the safety precautions, as not being careful now means that rates may increase again over Christmas and into January, putting our older and more vulnerable family and friends at risk of serious illness. A change in the rules does not mean the way the virus transmits has changed.

There is a slight relaxation of the national guidance for Christmas, between 23 and 27 December:

- you can form an exclusive 'Christmas bubble' composed of people from no more than three households
- you can only be in one Christmas bubble
- you cannot change your Christmas bubble
- you can travel between areas for the purposes of meeting your Christmas bubble
- you can only meet your Christmas bubble in private homes or in your garden, places of worship, or public outdoor spaces
- you can continue to meet people who are not in your Christmas bubble or your support bubble in some outdoor public places, in a group of up to 6. This limit of 6 includes children of any age.

In the two weeks that follow your last meeting with your Christmas bubble, you should reduce your contact with people you do not live with as much as possible.

**On the run up to the relaxation of the rules and into January we need to continue to work together to bring the rates down. We need your help with this.** Families are advised to support their school and their children's education by following Covid safe actions;

- Social distancing is the most effective way of preventing COVID transmission. Stay 2 metres away from people you do not live with unless they are in your support bubble.
- Wash or sanitise your hands regularly.
- Ensure good respiratory hygiene: cough or sneeze into your elbow, or if using tissues, follow the catch it, bin it, kill it rules.
- If you or someone in your home has covid symptoms, (high temperature, new and continuous cough or loss of taste or smell) you should all self-isolate and the person who is unwell should have a test.
- If someone in your household is waiting to be tested or for test results, all household members must self-isolate until the results are known. Do not send children into school, or go into work yourself until the test result is known. If the result is positive, the person tested must self-isolate for 10 days, and all other household members must self isolate for 14 days.
- If you are told you are a contact, you have to self-isolate for 14 days from the last contact with the case.
- Do not have visitors into your home and do not visit others in their home, this includes not having play dates, sleep overs or parties as this can increase the risk of infection spread between households. Even if your children are in the same school bubble, they should not mix outside school, as the longer they spend together, the greater the risk of spread of infection.
- Reduce mixing of different households or families even outdoors.

We understand times are trying, having to stay at home is not easy or ideal, and disruption to education is frustrating. To ensure we have a happier 2021 we need to keep working together.

Yours sincerely



**Eleanor Roaf,  
Director of Public Health,  
Trafford Council**



**Jill McGregor,  
Director of Children's Services,  
Trafford Council**



**Kirsten Warren  
Head Teacher  
The Willows Primary School**

# What happens if someone in your family gets sick?

