

End of term – advice for schools

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.

In all circumstances, teaching time must be made up at another point in the academic year. You should not limit attendance at school before Friday 18 December. It remains vital for all children to be in school up to the last day of teaching.

We recognise this communication has arrived with schools late in the term but would ask schools to be as helpful to parents as they can by sharing any changes to end of term arrangements as soon as possible, particularly where schools choose to make Friday 18 December a non-teaching day. Your support with this is appreciated.

We recommend all schools ensure staff, parents and carers are aware of the following information and relevant arrangements regarding positive cases in the holidays:

- 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.
- 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. *Parents must therefore contact the school.***
- School staff are not asked to remain on-call or conduct any contact tracing more than 6 days after the final day of teaching. Where a schools last teaching day is on Thursday 17 December, there should be no pupil contact tracing asks beyond Wednesday 23 December.

For the first 6 days after the end of term, schools are not asked to be on-call at all times. Staff responsible for contact tracing may designate a limited period in the day to receive notification of positive cases and advise close contacts to self-isolate (this can be done by text or email). The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline and PHE advice service are available to support with any queries you have about positive cases in your school.

Where pupils are required to self-isolate due to contact with a positive case after the first 6 days following the end of term, schools do not need to be informed about their absence until the first day of the new term.