



The Birley Academy
A L.E.A.D. Academy

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Dear Parents and Carers

Yesterday the Government updated its guidance for schools regarding the end of term and the expectations upon academies. This includes the ability for the academy to put in an INSET day on Friday 18, December.

The reason for this is because the academy now has to stay on duty up until and including the 24, December to perform the Track and Trace process for any student who tests positive for Coronavirus. This was a way of the DfE ensuring that Academies do not have to be on duty on Christmas Eve.

I wanted to let you know as soon as I could that The Birley Academy, will not be putting in an INSET day on the 18, December. We feel that the notice is too short for parents to make arrangements. Also, as we have just had two INSET days. I feel that we would not be able to use it to its full benefit. The last day is also traditionally one where we get dressed up, and start to celebrate Christmas as well as doing learning. We think that our pupils have already missed out on enough this year.

This means we will be open for our usual final day on 18, December. We will be doing our traditional early finish, which I talked about in my update to you last week. The times for the finish will be staggered as follows:

Year 7 - 12.30

Year 8 & Year 9 - 12.20

Year 10 & Year 11 - 12.10

We are increasingly getting contacted by parents who are concerned that they feel they need their child to isolate from school to protect elderly and vulnerable relatives over the Christmas period. Many of you have told me you are hoping to see family and friends for the first time in a long time. I completely understand your reasoning for this and will try to accommodate all requests where I feel I can legally do so.

However, I would genuinely ask all our families to protect Christmas for all of our students, our staff and their families, many of whom might be vulnerable. Please do not send your child to school if they have any symptoms that might be Covid – no matter how mild. Please also familiarise yourself with some of the wider symptoms too. I have included this information published by the BBC and taken from the WHO. This is the only way to guarantee the safety of our community.

It would be awful to have to phone families on 24, December telling them that their child or children have to isolate over Christmas day. To do otherwise would be putting others at risk or breaking the law.

Thank you for your continued support for the Academy.

Yours sincerely

Gina Newton
Headteacher





Symptoms	Coronavirus	Flu	Cold
 Fever	Common	Common	Rare
 Cough	Common	Common	Mild
 Loss of taste and smell	Sudden	Rare	Sometimes
 Fatigue	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
 Headaches	Sometimes	Common	Rare
 Aches and pains	Sometimes	Common	Common
 Runny/stuffy nose	Rare	Sometimes	Common
 Sore throat	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
 Sneezing	No	No	Common
 Shortness of breath	Sometimes	No	No
 Diarrhoea	Sometimes for children	Sometimes, especially for children	No

Source: WHO, CDC

