

14 December 2020

Dear parent/carer

Re: Principal's Update

I am writing to provide you with a number of updates as we approach the final week of term. I would first like to thank you for your continued support as we respond to the challenges of COVID whilst providing the highest quality of education for all of our students. Your prompt communication with the Academy, to notify us of COVID-related symptoms or positive tests, has enabled us to respond and act swiftly to isolate groups and therefore minimise the potential risk to others. It has now been four weeks since we had a positive test at the Academy.

It remains important that all members of our community continue to maintain our protective measures. Therefore, students should:

- ensure they maintain social distancing on their way to and from the Academy and during social times.
- wear a face mask, at all times, when travelling on school or public transport
- wear a face mask when in indoor communal spaces - please ensure you provide your child with a face mask, every day.
- maintain good hand hygiene by washing and/or sanitising their hands regularly.
- maintain good respiratory hygiene.

COVID-19 Track and Trace activity

The government has now issued advice on what happens, with regards to COVID-19 Track and Trace, as the Christmas holidays approach.

- If your child tests positive for COVID-19 after developing symptoms within 48 hours of last being in school and within the first six days of the holiday, you should notify me via email at office@dukeries.attrust.org.uk – this email will be checked once each day and we will assist with necessary contact tracing.
- If your child tests positive for COVID-19 after developing symptoms more than 48 hours since last being in school, then there is no need to contact us – you should instead contact NHS Track and Trace who will advise you.
- There is no need to contact us at all if your child tests positive after developing symptoms at any point after Thursday 24 December – you should instead notify us at the start of term in January.

Free School Meals: Christmas holidays

The government has also confirmed it will fund Free School Meals (FSM) during the Christmas holiday. We will be distributing supermarket vouchers to families who are eligible for FSM, via email, over the coming days. Bursary students in the sixth form will also be able to claim the money back for their lunches over the Christmas period, they will need to bring in their receipts in January.

Keeping Your Child Safe: The Safer Schools App

The Safer Schools app is an award-winning app that helps entire school communities to better protect themselves in the Digital World through delivering contemporary and relevant safeguarding information to teachers, students, parents and carers, including updates on harmful content which

may be circulating. We know many young people may be receiving new devices this Christmas so if you haven't already you can download the app from The App Store or Google Play, adding 'The Dukeries Academy' and the code 7675 to access the parent version. Your child can also download the student version using the code 3447 for Year 7, 4898 for Years 8 and 9 or 1544 for Years 10, 11, 12 and 13. We have also emailed all parents and carers a Safer Schools letter this week which includes a set up guide.

Last day of term

Late last week, the government offered schools the opportunity to take an additional INSET Day on the final day of term. Due to the short notice, the negative impact on learning and the additional pressure this would place on working families I have decided not to take this INSET Day. As a result, **the Academy will close for Christmas, as planned, on Friday 18 December 2020 at 3.00pm.**

The last day of term will also be a non-uniform day with a donation of £1.00. The money raised will be shared between Ollerton Community Action Response (CAR) project and the Mayor's Christmas Community Gift project.

We will be recognising the many achievements of our students during 'virtual' Celebration Assemblies during tutor time on Friday. In addition, the Perform Faculty have been busy preparing a 'virtual' Christmas Show, which will be shown to students during Period 1. We will also share the show, with you, on our YouTube channel via our Academy website.

Action for Advent Calendar

Thank you for your generosity to our Action for Advent Calendar project which has provided food for members of our local community who do not have enough food as a result of the COVID pandemic. This week we are aiming to add a little Christmas cheer by providing treats. Donations are being accepted during tutor time each day: Monday – crisps, Tuesday – cakes, Wednesday – biscuits, Thursday – sweets or chocolate, Friday – cordial or fizzy drinks. Any other donations are also welcome.

15 Mile Challenge

Last week saw the end of our annual 15 Mile Challenge. This event, which supports the development of physical and mental well-being, was a phenomenal success. Overall, 215 students and staff achieved at least 15 miles. They will receive their certificates, wristbands and recognition points this week. The winning female and male runner in each year group will also have a £10 shopping voucher presented to them. Year 9 were the top year group with a #TDAmazing 2049 miles, and 82 students running at least 15 miles. A brilliant effort. The staff competition was tight with the English Faculty narrowly beating the Admin/Office Team by 49.5 miles to 48.5 miles. The "Champion of Champions" this year was Ethan Day who ran a remarkable 42.5 miles.

I will write to you again before the end of term. In the meantime, you can keep up to date with everything going on at The Dukeries by following us on Twitter @DukeriesAcademy and on Facebook @dukeriesacademy.

Kind regards



Mr Ged Rae
Principal