

17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I thought I would drop you a brief few lines to wrap up what has been a unique term full of unprecedented challenges.

I would like to thank you all for your support in following the measures we have implemented at GTS to keep pupils, their families, the staff and the wider community safe. Overall, I have been very impressed by the way pupils have conducted themselves and I truly believe it has contributed to keeping the number of cases and absences to a minimum.

As you will be aware, the rationale for not having pupils in on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December was to minimise the risk of families having to isolate following positive cases and/ or any track and trace requirements. There is still the possibility that we will be contacted by NHS Track and Trace to inform us of positive cases within the school. Should this happen, we will contact you directly with any required actions. Similarly, I must ask you to contact the school if your child develops symptoms and/ or tests positive in the coming days.

There is a designated COVID-19 email listed below and guidelines for when you should contact the school.

#### Reporting a positive test for COVID-19 during the first 6 days of the Christmas holidays

If your son/daughter were to test positive for COVID-19, it is essential that you contact the school immediately to allow us to follow Public Health England advice. Based on recent guidance, the reporting of positive cases to school should continue into the Christmas holidays to allow us to identify close contacts during the infectious period. In the rare instance of this happening, you will be notified via school communication that your child needs to self-isolate for 10 days.

#### Below is a statement summarising recent government advice

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 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 NSH Test and Trace.

For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for 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.

# GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL

**Headteacher:** Andy Bloodworth BSc (Hons) NPQH

Calvesford Road, Great Torrington, Devon, EX38 7DJ Tel: (01805) 623531

Email: [admin@gts.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@gts.devon.sch.uk)

## **In summary**

**If your child tests positive for COVID-19 and developed symptoms before 4:00pm on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December, please contact the school via email on [covidcontact@gts.devon.sch.uk](mailto:covidcontact@gts.devon.sch.uk) If your child has been in close contact with another pupils who tests positive, we will contact you informing you that your child needs to self-isolate. We will not be contactable, or make contact after Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020, until the school reopens on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (training day).**

You may have heard in the media that from January, schools will be required to undertake testing of staff on a weekly basis and pupils as positive cases are identified. I will write to you with further details in January but wanted to assure you we are already starting to plan for the requirements of testing in a secondary school.

May I take this opportunity to publicly thank all the staff at GTS for their ongoing professionalism and resilience in these challenging times.

I would like to wish you all a happy Christmas and a healthy, and hopefully more normal New Year to come.

With best wishes,



Andy Bloodworth  
Headteacher

