



10<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parent and Carer,

Many of you will have heard of the Government and Public Health England's announcement late on Tuesday that strongly recommended schools close on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

The reasoning behind this recommendation is that it will allow schools a 6 day window from the last day students are on site for positive Covid-19 cases to be identified, and for close contacts to be traced and notified.

After close consideration, we are going to follow this recommendation to **close the College to students on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December for staff training.**

This means we will avoid the potential situation of students coming into close contact with positive cases on 18<sup>th</sup> December, and then being notified on Christmas Eve to have to begin a period of self-isolation. We are aware of the impact this could have, especially on families who may be meeting with relatives over the holiday period.

Please understand this decision has not been taken lightly. We are aware that it will inconvenience some families. We are also aware of the anxiety of missing school for our students, especially those facing public exams next summer in Y11 and Y13. Both national Headteacher unions have been lobbying the DfE since October on this issue, asking for schools to be given the freedom to apply their own measures for the period in the run up to Christmas, such as switching to online learning or creating rotas for students to attend on different days. Unfortunately, these representations have not been acted on. A Headteacher union has described the government's approach as "unacceptable," "heavy handed" and "out of its depth".

We will ensure that additional revision work is set for students in Y11 and Y13 who wish to access it via their google classrooms. The codes and links for these classrooms are all available on our website under "Remote Learning."

It remains extremely important that parents and carers continue to report to us as soon as possible any self-isolation, symptoms or positive results up to and including Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December by emailing [studentabsences@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk](mailto:studentabsences@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk).

We will also contact you all again next week to make sure you have clear instructions on **how to notify us of any students who test positive after we close to students** at the end of the day on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December. This will again be extremely important so that we can help you and our community stay as safe as possible over the holidays.

Thank you again for the all the positive feedback you have given to staff over this very difficult year on how they have supported your young people. Please rest assured we will continue these efforts over the next week and again when we return in the New Year.

Yours faithfully,

Alan Salt  
Principal