

December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

We are now approaching the Christmas break at the end of what has been an eventful term. At the beginning of the school year, we put in place very strict procedures to support us in preventing the spread of COVID-19 to both protect our community and to prevent further loss of learning for our children and young people. It has not been easy but these measures have meant that Appleton Academy has seen a much lower number of positive cases than might otherwise have been the case and has limited the impact of the virus. I know many of you have children who have been asked to self-isolate but Appleton has not been as badly affected as many schools across the district. This is a credit to everyone connected to our school, from parents to pupils to our hardworking staff. The site team and cleaners have done a fantastic job with constant cleaning and disinfecting of the building and this has helped reduce the number of school days lost.

Appleton Academy already had a training day identified on Friday 18 December 2020 so we do not need to make any changes to our term dates following the recent Government announcements that schools can close one day early before Christmas. The school was always due to be closed on Friday 18 December 2020 and it remains the case that the last day of term for all children and young people will take place on Thursday 17 December 2020.

The Government also announced last week that all schools are expected to support contact tracing of pupils in the lead up to Christmas. If your child does test positive for COVID-19 over the holiday period, please follow the process outlined below (depending on when symptoms start):

- Please report **all** positive test results received between 18 December and 5th January to us by sending the official notification you receive from the NHS, PHE etc., and the date of the first symptoms, to the following dedicated email address:

appletonpositive@appletonacademy.co.uk

- If your child is in school after Wednesday 16 December 2020 and develops symptoms between then and Saturday 19 December 2020, the Academy will be expected to contact trace pupils and staff who they may have been in close contact with.
- If your child develops symptoms after Saturday 19 December 2020, contact tracing will be the responsibility of Public Health England.
- Appleton staff will check the email address above on a daily basis up until the end of the day on Wednesday 23 December 2020 and will follow up cases where we need to trace close contacts and alert people to a positive case. Please note, the email address should be used only to notify us of a positive case of COVID-19. It will be specifically monitored only for this purpose and we will not accept responsibility for missed contact as a result of people using the email address for any other reason.



- If your child is identified as having been a close contact of a positive case in the period where we are responsible for contact tracing, we will send you a text to let you know and direct you to a letter that will be posted on our website with further details about the case and the dates of self-isolation.
- It is likely that we will identify all pupils within the bubble in Primary or the teaching group in Secondary as contacts where there is a positive test. Any pupil identified as a close contact will need to self-isolate for 10 days in line with official Government guidance. The 10 days will commence from the date that the positive case began displaying symptoms or, if they were asymptomatic, the date of their positive test. Our text and letter notifying you of a case if your child is a close contact will outline the dates, including when the period of self-isolation ends.
- Appleton Academy will only contact trace in positive cases, where the symptoms suggest that a pupil will have been in contact with the positive case during the infectious period and while the Academy was still open. Any results received after Wednesday 23 December 2020 should continue to be reported to school using the dedicated email address detailed in this letter. However, in these cases, the Academy will not be responsible for contact tracing and you should not expect further action to follow from the school, though PHE may discuss details with you and follow up these cases.

School re-opens on Tuesday 5 January 2021 and our COVID safe measures will remain in place well into the New Year. This will include the staggered start and finish times and limited access to the grounds. Please continue to respect our staff, pupils, other parents and our neighbours by maintaining social distancing when collecting and dropping off children, wearing face masks/coverings and not parking in permit bays, on double yellow lines or in a way that obstructs our neighbours or the highway.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for your continued support during this difficult period and for all of your efforts to follow the new rules this term to keep each other safe. I very much hope that all our pupils and families will enjoy a healthy, COVID free, Christmas period.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Helen Jones.' The signature is written in a cursive style.

Ms Helen Jones
Executive Headteacher