



Pucklechurch CE VC Primary School

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9th December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

No doubt many of you will have seen news reports about schools closing on Friday 18th December. I wanted to write to you to reassure you that Pucklechurch CEVC Primary will be open as normal on the last day of term – Friday 18th December. On 8th December, we received a suggestion from the DFE that schools could either move an inset day or change the focus of an inset day to mean that staff access training from home or that we teach children remotely from home instead for the 18th December.

The purpose of this was to reduce the number of days in the holidays that schools have to remain on call to deal with positive cases reported in the school community. We have to stay on call for 6 days, taking us up to Christmas Eve and it was suggested that this would be better for leaders if this became the 23rd December, hence making sure no-one had contact with anyone else on 18th December in school. This has been reported on the news so I felt it was important to explain the school's decision.

Whole school staff well-being is one of our main priorities, as is making sure that children are in school as much as possible and that parents and carers are able to work. It has been a challenge to decide what to do for the best but as a school we feel strongly that our last day of term should be a magical one filled with Christmas fun in school and this wouldn't be the same remotely. I have also been in discussion with other members of our Ignite hub to ensure a consistent decision is being made as well. We were also concerned that the added pressure of providing remote learning would actually have a negative impact on staff well-being along with the short notice of any changes to parents.

The DFE suggestion will not increase people's chances of visiting family members over Christmas as if someone had been a close contact to someone in school on Thursday 17th December they would still need to isolate until 31st December so this takes them past Christmas itself. Had this been something that would have had an impact on our families and staff meaning that it was guaranteed that they would be clear to visit vulnerable family members over Christmas then the decision may have been different.

Many parents have already contacted me to say they will not be sending their children to school for the last few days. Obviously this absence cannot be authorised but I do appreciate the honesty of the decisions you have made.

We hope that you welcome this news and that your children enjoy the last day of term in school.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Capel'.

Mrs Capel