



Circa 1492

Ermysted's Grammar School

Headmaster: Mr M J Evans

09 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

End of term and holiday arrangements

I hope that you are all well and looking forward to the festivities. I write today to update you on a number of matters concerning the end of term and arrangements for the Christmas holiday.

Term dates

You may have picked up in the news yesterday that the government has given schools permission to move an Inset day from later in the year to the end of term. The aim, I think, is to help school leaders avoid having to do contact tracing on Christmas Eve.

We will not be making any changes to our published term dates, however. The pupils will be dismissed as normal at midday on Friday, 18 December and the first day they are required back in school remains Tuesday, 5 January.

Contacting staff over the holiday

Where would we be without technology? This term it has become even more firmly embedded in school life and enabled so much of our provision. However, there are downsides. Left unchecked, technology can become rather invidious and damaging. We all need to switch off from time to time.

This has been a difficult term for everyone, not least the staff, who have taken to all the enforced changes without fuss or complaint. They have simply got on with the job. Delivering blended learning and moving constantly around the site has taken its toll, however, and the staff are tired and deserve a break. With this in mind, I would like to ask everyone to refrain from contacting the staff over the holiday. I will personally deal with any emergencies and all COVID-related correspondence (see below), but I ask for your support in ensuring staff are able to recuperate and enjoy undisturbed time with their families this Christmas.

I also believe the boys need time off too. We have noticed that some are messaging staff very late at night. A habit I am keen to change. When I arrived at Ermysted's, I instigated a rule where staff restrict work emails to the hours of 7am to 7pm, Monday to Friday. It has been very successful, I think, in helping staff maintain a healthy work life balance and I want the same for the boys. They have been spoken to this week about the matter, but I would be grateful if you would reinforce at home the importance of stepping away from the technology and including some downtime in their day.

COVID-notification

Having just asked you to avoid contacting my colleagues over the holiday, I need to stress that I remain available to deal with any emergencies and process any COVID-related responses over the holiday.

If your son develops symptoms of coronavirus **within 48 hours of his last day in school**, he should request a test and then self-isolate, along with the rest of the household, until he receives the results. If the test result is positive, please inform the School immediately via email (alert@ermysteds.n-yorks.sch.uk) or, failing that, by telephone on 07563 157150. I will pick up the message and begin the contact tracing process.



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If your son develops symptoms **more than 48 hours after** attending school, he should proceed as above to order a test, but you do **NOT** need to contact the school, please contact NHS Test and Trace instead. If your son is still self-isolating by the start of next term, please contact the School Office to let us know.

The alert@ermysteds.n-yorks.sch.uk email can also be used to contact me in a non-COVID-related emergency. Please ensure it is an emergency, however.

Non-uniform days

We will be holding a **Christmas jumper day** on **Thursday, 17 December**, which is also the Christmas dinner day at School, and a **non-uniform day** will be held on **Friday, 18 December**, the last day of term. The suggested voluntary donation is £2 (£1 for each event).

The money raised will go to two Skipton charities, the [Skipton Food Bank](#) and the [SELFA Children's Charity](#). To avoid handling cash on site, we are asking parents to make a **single** donation via Parent Pay. The donations are entirely voluntary, but I hope you will feel able to support these two very worthwhile causes.

And finally, we are not yet at the end of term, and I hesitate to tempt fate, but I think we can afford ourselves a brief moment of congratulation on what has been achieved to date. Further challenges await us next term but well done everyone on keeping the educational wheels turning. I salute you all.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Evans
Headmaster