

10th December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Friday 18 December 2020

Schools

- The Bicester School
 - Bicester Technology Studio
 - Theale Green School
 - UTC Heathrow
 - UTC Oxfordshire
 - UTC Reading
 - UTC Swindon
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You may well be aware that Nick Gibb, Minister for Education, announced on Tuesday that schools may wish to consider ending term for students on Thursday 17 December 2020.

In his statement he recognised that schools have played an important role in contact tracing, to help in the national effort to limit the spread of the virus, which has led additional work over weekends and holidays, including the impact to staff over the Christmas holiday.

Public Health England has agreed a six-day window after the final day of teaching in which schools are asked to remain contactable so they can assist with contact tracing where necessary. This will allow enough time for positive COVID-19 cases to be identified and confirmed by a test and for relevant contacts in the education setting to be traced.

Last night the Trust board considered this proposal and agreed that schools should close to pupils and staff from the end of the normal school day on Thursday 17 December 2020. This is to support the contact tracing required by Public Health England and to ensure that any isolation required from positive cases are confirmed to students, parents and staff by Wednesday 23 December (instead of Christmas Eve), also ensuring staff are able to begin their break, relax and spend time with their loved ones from 24 December 2020.

The Trust Board considered carefully the option to move an Inset day to Friday 18 December but felt this was not possible as all staff training is planned months in advance so that it has the desired impact on our school improvement priorities. The Trust Board therefore took the decision, to move to remote learning across all ALET schools on Friday 18 December 2020.

During the last week of term each school will communicate with you directly to inform you of the arrangements for remote learning on Friday 18 December and to ensure that you are fully aware of the process to follow should your child show symptoms or test positive for the virus.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support since the start of the pandemic and wish you and your families a happy and healthy Christmas holiday.

Yours sincerely,



Joanne Harper
CEO