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A Colfe's Associate School

10th December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Christmas at Conisborough College 7th – 18th December 2020

Since writing to you with arrangement for the last 2 weeks of term, we have now heard that the government have advised schools to close on Thursday 17th December. This is in line with government guidance and advice issued this week. It is to enable schools to continue to monitor and be the first contact point for parents and staff who develop Corona Virus symptoms and prove to be tested positive for the virus. Parents and staff affected will still need to contact the school and we will then provide the relevant advice and guidance which will be to self-isolate where necessary. Further information will be sent to you about how to contact the school during the Christmas closure should you have a case of Corona Virus from 17th December – Tuesday 5th January 2021. This will have an impact on the school community and could lead to periods of self-isolation at this time, which still have to be notified to parents, staff and the relevant authorities.

The plans for the last two weeks of term will remain unchanged and we will bring everything forward a day. As a way of celebrating this challenging year, we have a range of activities and festivities planned which all our students will be able to take part in.

Christmas Food Bank Donations: 7 – 15th December

As ever this year we are carrying out our annual collection for a local food bank. We are asking, families, students and staff to send donations for distribution to the local Catford community. We will be started our annual collection from Monday 7th December. We would like to ask you all to donate and send in non-perishable food items and toiletries which will be distributed before the end of term. We will be collecting until Tuesday 15th December. In previous years, we have been able to be generous with our donations and I hope we can continue with this as there is so much support needed after the challenges of this year. We will be supporting the Kings Church Food Bank this winter.

A donation box will be held in the Reception Area and on both of our main teaching floors (situated next to the Year 11 and 10 Heads of Years office).

Your school, Your time, Your future

Every day people in the UK go hungry for many reasons, but just a small box of food can make a big difference, particularly at this time of year. Foodbanks provide emergency food to people in crisis and their need is increasingly important during the winter period and because of the impact of Covid-19 on local families. Kings Church Food Bank and its wonderful volunteers work to tackle food poverty and hunger locally across Lewisham.

It really would be appreciated if you could donate non-perishable* food items. The list is below to help you.

Suggested food items (please make sure they are all in date)

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|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| • Tinned tomatoes | Tinned vegetables | Tinned pulses |
| • Tinned meat | Tinned fish | Noodles |
| • Instant mashed potato | Long life juice / Squash | Tinned fruit |
| • Milk (UHT / Dried) | Rice | Pulses |
| • Dried Pasta | Dried Fruits | Biscuits |
| • Nuts | Chocolate | Crackers |

The following items should not be sent in please:

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| • Fresh meat | Fresh vegetables | Fresh fruit Sweets |
| • Pastries | Fresh pasta and Bread | Items in glass jars |
| • Bags of flour | | |

We appreciate your help and support with this.

A Sustainable Christmas

From the 7th December, tutor time will focus on the Sustainability of Christmas. Students will need to bring in anything which might count as 'rubbish' from 9th December, they will build Christmas objects that will form part of an art installation for 'The Big Green Draw.' Students will build their objects during tutor time in the last week of term and the installation will be set-up on the last day of term. Useful items would be empty milk cartons, boxes, bags, cardboard tubes, plastic lids. For safety reasons, please do not bring in anything dirty or made of glass. Items will be collected by form tutors and placed in plastic bags for 72 hours before being used to ensure all items are safe to use. All items must be brought in by Monday 14th December.

Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Lunch: Tuesday 15th December

On the 15th December, students will be able to wear a Christmas Jumper to raise money for the charity, Save the Children. A £1 donation made through Parent Pay would be appreciated for allowing your child to wear the jumper and to support this important charity. Other than wearing a festive jumper, normal Conisborough College uniform expectations apply for the entire day. If your child is wearing a Christmas Jumper, they do not need to wear their blazer that day. We thank you in advance for supporting this event and the Save the Children Charity.

Christmas Lunch

On 15th December will be serving a traditional Christmas dinner at lunchtime for students on site. This will be paid for by Parent Pay. The cost will be deducted from your child's Cashless Catering card in the usual way from their Parent Pay account. This will be the only meal served that day and there will be a vegetarian option.

There will not be any other food served. Packed lunches will be eaten in the Hall or Canteen as usual.

Christmas Musical Showcase

If you missed our Summer Musical Showcase, make sure you tune into our Christmas Show (to be uploaded on the school website in the last week of term), as we see our students show off their talents and join in with singing a few carols.

Something Mysterious: Friday 18th December

On the last day of term, Thursday 17th December, students will be dismissed from 12.15pm. The day will mark the end of 2020 for Conisborough College and we have some other surprises up our sleeves to make sure that we all finish this year positively.

We look forward to celebrating a Conisborough Christmas with you and thank you for your continued support throughout this year.

Sadly, at the time of writing, 7T and Years 9 and 11 will not be on site and we look forward to welcoming them back to school on Tuesday 5th January when we return after the Christmas closure. This is due to these students being affected by Corona Virus cases. In addition to this, we also have some members of staff affected by the self-isolating of these student groups.

End of term: Thursday 17th December

This is the last day of the Autumn Term and students on site will be dismissed from 12.15pm onwards. This will be a phased dismissal and Year 7 and 8 will leave from the front gate as usual and year 10 will leave from the back gate as usual. It is normal school uniform on 17th December.

Our Out of Hour Covid-19 service will be operational during the school Christmas Closure. This is so that staff and parents can report any case of Corona Virus to us. We will then carry out the risk assessment and alert all relevant people to the case and what it means for self-isolation. In the event of a case we will notify parents by letter and text as to what you need to do and how long any period of self-isolation is going to be. We are obviously hoping that there will not be any further cases, however, if there are, schools have a responsibility to let you know so that the appropriate actions are taken by everyone concerned. This is all being supported by public Health and the Local Authority as well as the Department for Education. There will be a letter coming out next week to you with details of this service during the Christmas closure. We will give you the monitored telephone number and email address for you to contact. This will run from Friday 18th December.

We return to school on Tuesday 5th January. We re-open at the usual time and we start with a normal school day.

Dates of the rest of the academic year

Spring Term

Tuesday 5th January – Wednesday 31st March

Half-term closure: 15th – 19th February

Summer Term

Monday 19th April – Friday 22nd July

Half-term closure: 31st May – 4th June

Forthcoming events Spring Term 2021

Thursday 7th January:	Year 11 Parents Evening – mock exam results
Thursday 28th January:	Year 9 Options Evening 1
Thursday 11th March:	Year 6 Parents’ Evening 1
Thursday 18th March:	Year 9 Options Evening 2
Monday 15th Friday - 26th March:	Year 11 Mock exams

Corona Virus

As parents of 7T, Years 9 and 11 are aware we have taken precautionary measures in line with Public Health advice with the current self-isolation of these groups of students. The decision to ask students to remain at home and self-isolate is never taken lightly as we are only too aware of the impact it will have on family routines and work arranges for parents/carers, as well as risks it may bring.

In assessing the risks to the school and the wider community, we always follow the national guidance and have identified that across the groups affected at any time, there would be a significant number of students potentially affected by any current reported case.

We made a very good start to the school year and we had a high level of compliance and understanding from students as to why they must keep to social distancing, wear face coverings and use hand sanitiser – Hands – Face – Space. Most of our students continue to do this and to follow the Safe-on-Site directions. Wearing their lanyards is very important and we do ask that you make sure that your daughter/son leaves home with on in the mornings. Replacement lanyards are £1 each from the Student Services.

We expect all our young people to behave responsibly and safely unorder to protect families, friends and the whole school community. The relentlessness of it is challenging and the need to be consistent with everything is demanding for everyone. However, taking short cuts and disregarding the guidance is proving costly in so many ways.

We have experienced students on site with symptoms which is a significant hazard all round. We do ask you as parents/carers of the school to not send your child in if they are unwell especially with corona virus symptoms. We have been more than happy to help with access to test kits but the quickest way to get a test is to book one on line or by ringing 119. We are always happy to give help and advice over the phone. Thank you for appreciating that it is not always possible to meet you face to face although we have done this with appropriate measures in place in some cases.

So, Corona Virus has been and continues to be a challenging adventure for us all, but we are all in this together and working as a community on preventing transmission of the virus is so crucial if we are going to reduce risk and anxiety. Sadly, as the term has progressed, we have seen some student behaviour become less self-managed and seen breaches of the lock down and the current Tier 2 restrictions. This has added to the possible transmission risk and has not helped our ability to prevent the spreading of the virus.

Please as parents and carers, make sure that your child does follow the self-isolation expectations if applicable, that they remain in doors and that your child does keep to social distancing at all time. They must always behave safely to not just protect you as families but also the rest of the school community – their teachers and staff of the school and other students. We do not want to see anyone at further risk especially as we lead up to the Christmas season.

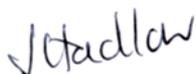
It is the risk associated with not keeping to these expectations which results in enforced periods of self-isolation and of equal seriousness, the impact on their learning. This in turn then affects future life chances.

All our students are all aware of how often we repeatedly remind them, indeed nag them, about the importance of keeping to all the routines we have in place for social distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and no physical contact. This is very important, and we urge parents to reinforce this with their child. We must all do our bit to contain the virus in every way possible. All students must come to school with a supply of masks and follow all expectations of safe behaviour as outlined in the Staying Safe Onsite document. I cannot reinforce strongly enough the need for responsible behaviour at this time.

The staff of the school have worked tirelessly this term to make sure that your child's learning has not been disadvantaged any further. Thank you for your continued support of your child's learning at what is so often described a challenging, unprecedented and strange time. With Christmas ahead, and the chance for some much-needed rest, I hope that you and your family have a safe and restful time. We will see everyone back in January, hopefully fit, healthy and well.

Best wishes, a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday to you all.

Yours sincerely



Mrs J Hadlow
Headteacher