

18th December 2020

Merry Christmas Everyone!

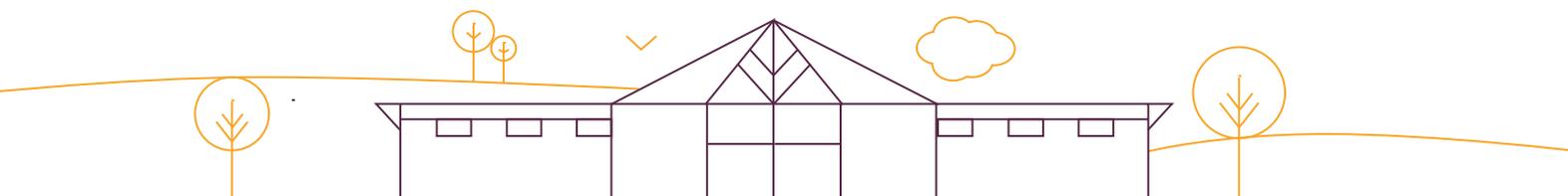
It is with the deepest heartfelt hope for a wonderful break for you all, that we say Merry Christmas from everyone at Berrywood. The special excitement that this time brings for children most probably needs to be shared amongst adults too, after what has been a horribly troubling year. May I also say a massive thank you to the entire Berrywood community – children, parents, members of staff and Governors – for the ways in which we have all rallied, supported and overcome many of the challenges thrown at us. In some ways the heartbeat of normal school life has been taken from us. For example, the lack of contact for parents with teachers, the loss of extra-curricular activities, no live performances to enjoy and the removal of audiences from project celebrations. Despite this, there endures enough of a community feel in school for us to know, with some confidence, that we can and will come back stronger once restrictions are removed.

Our focus in school has rightly concentrated on seeking to catch up for lost learning during the periods of school closure and partial openings. Thankfully we have enjoyed higher levels of attendance this autumn than in previous years (in your face Coronavirus!) We had to regrettably close one of our Year 6 bubbles, but this is a lot less impact than has been experienced in many other schools. Our members of staff have worked so hard to meet the children's learning needs. They've massively adapted routines in order to adhere to increased safety measures and spent much longer hours than normal in direct supervision of our children. My special thanks goes to them for so willingly contributing to such a monumental effort.

Despite this being the last day, the reality of test, track and trace is that this term is not yet over for any of us. There are scenarios in which it may be necessary for school to contact you in the coming six days to inform you of a positive test result and therefore the legal requirement for your child to isolate. The prospect of potentially having to do this at this moment in time is probably the least pleasant duty I may ever undertake as headteacher. It is clearly our hope that none of the circumstances described below actually occur: -

- Someone testing positive for Coronavirus is deemed by Public Health England to have been potentially infectious for the 48-hour period prior to becoming symptomatic. So if a Berrywood child becomes symptomatic as late as Sunday 20th December and then subsequently tests positive, for test track and trace purposes they will be deemed to have been infectious on Friday 18th December. If they were in school on that day, the strong likelihood is that the children and staff in that particular bubble will be required to isolate for 10 days.
- Because of the process associated with testing (and especially the period of time between testing and receiving the result), it may not be until Thursday 24th December that this situation is known. Public Health England have asked that school staff be available to respond to track and trace requirements for the six days after term finishes. So if a scenario such as this does unfold, it will be either myself or Mrs Ainsworth who will contact you.

Please use office@berrywoodprimary.co.uk to alert us to any Covid19 related circumstances. Although this could probably be left unsaid, we very much hope that we will not be contacting you during the holiday.



Sad Farewells and a Welcoming Hello

Mr Nick Hutton is leaving Berrywood at the end of this term to pursue a new venture as the local School Games Coordinator. He will also continue in his current role as a lecturer at Winchester University. We wish Mr Hutton well and thank him for establishing such a wide ranging package of sporting and extra-curricular opportunities at Berrywood. As those of you who were associated with Berrywood at the time when Nick joined us may recall, his arrival initiated a massive boost in competitive sporting activities. His legacy in this regard is one that has touched upon so many children over the years. Have no fear, Mr Hutton's departure will not signal an end to our sporting ambitions, we hope to unveil the next phase in our development shortly into the new year.

Mrs Nicky Gosling is also leaving her role as an LSA after 10 years of association with Berrywood. Nicky is of course known to many in the parent community as a local resident with children having gone through our school and now into Wildern and beyond. Nicky will be greatly missed for her effervescence and enthusiasm, never short of an idea and always wanting to support and be there for her colleagues. Nicky too has an exciting new venture in commerce that she wishes to pursue and we know that she will be an asset to the team of people she has joined. Laura Morris will be starting in January in GL2 as the replacement. Laura is equally as enthusiastic and has a professional background in the performing arts that is very exciting!

E-safety Reminder

Please do keep your children safe online during the holiday period. This is the number one concern for many families as the prevalence of devices and screen time rises amongst ever younger generations. Our advice is always to be that inquisitive parent who checks in regularly to find how your child interacts digitally with others. As a parent I fully recognise how difficult and challenging this can be, but by the same token, I never want to be that parent that left things too late.

Christmas Cantata

The link for our Christmas Cantata performances is attached. We very much hope that you are able to enjoy them and that they bring some seasonal cheer. **It is very important that these are not shared on social media.** It would be very sad and regrettable if we were unable to provide items such as these in the future, due to them being inappropriately posted. The link is secure and cannot be searched for.

<https://youtu.be/W3JK15z3dtY>

INSET day Monday 4th January

A reminder that the first day of term for the children is Tuesday 5th January due to us taking an INSET day on the 4th. Hopefully see you all safe and well in 2021!!!