

# King Edwin Primary School

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Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## No extra INSET day planned

Dear parent or carer,

You will no doubt have seen or heard reports in the news and social media about schools having an option to close a day earlier this term if they wish to take one of their INSET days. This announcement comes at not only very short notice but in my personal opinion it causes great confusion for parents, staff and general members of the public. Hopefully the contents of this letter will help clear up some of the discussions being had and explain why some schools are remaining open as planned.

I have chosen to **keep King Edwin Primary School open as planned** until the end of our scheduled term date Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December for the following reasons:

- we only have one more INSET day to take and it is planned at the end of the academic year (parents may already have planned holidays on this date)
- the INSET day mentioned in the news is not additional to the 5 days we had planned or have taken already due to issues with the new building at KEPS
- we feel that announcing an INSET day at such short notice is very unhelpful to working parents that have already been significantly impacted by isolating or the various other disruptions this year
- for many parents, an unplanned INSET day could cost them valuable holiday time or even lost income
- closing school on the Friday would theoretically fail to prevent any 'Christmas isolation' if a bubble was to close earlier in the week and is therefore quite useless in many respects

It appears that a 'possible' INSET day addition that has been discussed by the government is aimed at ensuring school leaders don't potentially have to be on duty for track and trace cases on Christmas Eve. In all honesty, this is such a tokenistic gesture and has very little benefit to any school leader as they are still expected to support track and trace up to the 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

Let's be clear that only a complete closure for the proposed final week of term would have saved all families from possible isolation this Christmas. That being said, such a closure is not only illegal but it's also not at all helpful to the children as in my opinion....KingEdwiner children on the whole love being here!

Childcare is a clear driver in my decision to keep the school open as planned however, it must be noted that my staff may have children in schools which could now opt to have an INSET day on the Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December. This predicament is not a great one to be in and my staff will now have to react by perhaps having to arrange their own childcare at late notice.

It's difficult to hide my frustration in writing this explanatory letter to KEPS parents. It very much feels like we have been forced into an impossible position - we are damned if we do and damned if we don't. Ultimately, our decision is based in the best interests of all KingEdwiners and if...perhaps this decision doesn't suit you personally.... we are very sorry.

Thanks again in advance for being as understanding as ever. I sincerely hope that this communication has at least cleared up some of the uncertainties floating around after today's late announcement.

Kind regards,

Mr Callaghan-Wetton

