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Dear Parents/Carers,

As so many of you have contacted me about keeping your child off school next week, I thought I should explain that both the central government and KCC will not allow schools to close unless there are exceptional circumstances (severe staff shortages, or several pupils testing positive). I fully understand and sympathise with anyone who chooses to keep their child at home but they will be missing out on quite a few fun activities next week. You will not be fined but please do not expect the teachers to provide bespoke school work for your child. They cannot be teaching in the classroom and setting work on Seesaw as some of you have requested. Please refer to the home-learning information letter on the class page if you would like your child to do some learning. Work may be posted on Seesaw.

The media has made much of the government's announcement this week that schools are going to be allowed to close to pupils on Friday 18th December and have an inset day instead. As we have organised activities for the children and are mindful of the fact that some of you are key workers or have to take unpaid leave to look after your children, we will remain open as planned.

Parent Groups/Social Media

I always end my emails and letters urging you to contact me if you would like clarification or further information about an incident so it is disappointing to find out that parents are speculating or repeating claims made by children that are inaccurate. This causes unnecessary anxiety and has a ripple effect of reaching other parents in other year groups. As I made clear in my letter to Year 6 parents, the sports coach's symptoms started on Sunday NOT during the lesson.

Parents have also questioned why he did not wear a mask. The sports coaches don't wear masks as they are either in the hall or outside. Nobody can hear you if you use a face shield/mask in the hall because of the high ceilings and terrible acoustics (as anyone who comes to celebration assembly when the mic drops, will know). I have tried myself but nobody could hear me. We wear masks/face shields in communal areas and it's optional for teachers in the classroom. Most teachers choose not to. The coaches keep their distance as much as possible and they are generally walking around or demonstrating rather than talking in front of the children like you would in a classroom. In future, please ask me for the facts if you want more information.

The school staff continue to follow the detailed and regularly reviewed Coronavirus risk assessment measures we have in place. Rest assured, the school continues to be as safe an environment as we can possibly make it for the children and staff.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Al Higgins'.

Alison Higgins

