



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential

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Dear parents/carers,

'Christmas Bubble' and The Government's Winter Plan

I am writing to you today with a similar letter that has been sent out from Hurstmere school and Sherwood Park school. As Head Teachers of the three schools, we met two weeks ago with the local health protection team and we met again last week to think about the issues we are presently facing in the local area. You will have seen the leaflet that was sent out. We agreed that we would write to you, at this time, to show our continued support for the local community and for families, many of whom we share, at this challenging time. The purpose of this letter is to also update you on the latest guidance.

As you will have seen in the news last week, the Government have published a plan to enable friends and family to spend time together over the Christmas holiday after what has been an incredibly difficult year. For 5 days over the festive period they will be changing some social contact restrictions and allowing households to create a 'Christmas Bubble'. For your information I have included the main details below but you can see the full guidance at;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family/making-achristmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family>

Making a Christmas Bubble with friends and family

Between 23rd and 27th December:

- ***you can form an exclusive 'Christmas bubble' composed of people from no more than three households***
- ***you can only be in one Christmas bubble***
- ***you cannot change your Christmas bubble***
- ***you can travel between tiers and UK nations for the purposes of meeting your Christmas bubble***
- ***you can only meet your Christmas bubble in private homes or in your garden, places of worship, or public outdoor spaces***
- ***you can continue to meet people who are not in your Christmas bubble outside your home according to the rules in the tier where you are staying***
- ***you cannot meet someone in a private dwelling who is not part of your household or Christmas bubble***

The Government have also announced the restrictions that will be in place when the current national 'Lockdown' ends on the 2nd December. Here in Bexley, we will be in Tier 2 until the end of March 2021 unless the number of confirmed cases rises or falls and the borough is moved into another Tier. Again, I



have included the main points below but full guidance can be found at;

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/937529/COVID-19 Winter Plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/937529/COVID-19_Winter_Plan.pdf)

Tier 2 Restrictions

- **Mixing of households indoors will be banned and the rule-of-six for social gatherings applies for outdoors.**
- **Shops, gyms, hairdressers, beauty salons and leisure centres will be open.**
- **Pubs and restaurants can open but alcohol can only be served with a substantial meal, with the same opening times restriction as in tier 1.**
- **Collective worship and weddings can take place, with a maximum of 15 guests.**
- **Outdoor sports can take place but there is a maximum crowd of 50% of overall capacity or 2,000, whichever is smaller.**
- **Indoor sport can take place with a maximum of 1,000 spectators.**
- **People should work from home where possible.**

These restrictions are intended to reduce contact between people as the more contact people have with each other, the greater the risk you will catch or spread Covid-19. Government advice is that in the two weeks before you form and meet with your Christmas bubble you should reduce unnecessary contact with people you do not live with as much as possible. Obviously, there are circumstances under which this is unavoidable, for example if you cannot work from home or in the case of children attending school.

We need to do all we can in the coming weeks to reduce the possibility of you or your families contracting the virus and subsequently being required to self-isolate over the Christmas period, especially with the five-day window where the government are changing some social contact restrictions and allowing households to create a 'Christmas Bubble'. The rules on self-isolation will still apply and I do not want to be in the position of making 'that' call to families during the holiday period. Therefore, on behalf of our whole school community, I ask again, that you do not send your son/daughter to school if he/she or anyone in your household is unwell with symptoms of Covid-19 and that you notify us at your earliest opportunity.

On behalf of all staff, I would like to thank you for your emails of appreciation and feedback and look forward to your continuing support during a very challenging time.

Yours sincerely,



Matthew Brown
Head Teacher

