

Dear Parents / Carers

Staggered start to the new term

We have been advised that only Years 11 & 13 are to return to school on Tuesday 5th January, and all others are to return on Monday 11th January. During that time those pupils in KS3 will either be set work online, or will be taught live on Teams. We are asking staff, wherever possible, to teach their Year 10 & 12 classes live on Teams, but be aware that might not always be possible. Staff will contact their classes through their school email addresses, with instructions. I have attached a document I sent you recently, which is a student guide to using Teams, which you might find useful.

We appreciate that some pupils may not have a suitable computer for live teaching, although surveys we carried out in the first national lockdown suggests this is only a very small number of pupils. If this is the case, as we are only talking four school days, we hope mobile phones can be used. We recommend that everyone downloads the **Teams App** rather than use the online version.

Children of Critical Workers

We will be able to have your child attend school if you are a Critical Worker, you cannot make an alternative arrangement and their being at home will stop you from going to work. As we are a secondary school we do not anticipate this affecting many of you. If this is the case though please send your child in, but please email us to let us know this will be the case on office@reephamhigh.com, with a subject '**Critical worker - child to attend school**'. Please do this on Monday 4th January.

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable young people are described by the government are those who:

- Are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child.
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- Have been identified as otherwise vulnerable including:
 - Adopted children or children on a special guardianship order.
 - Those living in temporary accommodation.
 - Those who are young carers.
 - Those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example, due to a lack of devices).
 - Care leavers.

If your child falls into the above categories and you would like them to attend from Tuesday 5th onwards, please email us on 4th January, as per the instructions above for Children of Critical Workers. They will be very welcome.

Rapid testing

We have also, quite amazingly, been told that we must turn the school into a coronavirus testing centre for staff and pupils in the new year. I have little detail as yet but will keep you informed. I am keen on regular testing for the school community, am just unclear as to how we might deliver this at this point!

Goodbye to the old term

Thank you for your support over the last term. It would appear that the light is at the end of the tunnel now and we all hope we are on the 'last lap' of life with Covid19. We'll keep our fingers crossed that this is in fact the case, and look ahead positively to a return to a more normal life at school, as well as generally.

I hear the national average secondary school attendance for the last term is approximately 80%. We are proud that at RHSC it is well over 90%, reflecting a low numbers of positive cases and a commitment from our parents to their children's education; we have tried to make things as normal and routine as possible for the pupils, and we feel they have received an almost completely normal education in terms of work set and achieved.

Can I ask that over the break you ensure **your child's uniform is completely in line with school expectations** in time for the return next term. The single biggest area that I feel needs attention is girls' trousers; there are simply too many girls who are being sent to school with almost **skin tight trousers** that are often too short, and these are not in line with what we ask for. Can I also ask that you send your children to school in **shoes and not trainers**, as these have crept back in slightly over the last weeks. Parent support for our uniform is always appreciated, and one thing you can do as parents to support the school and work in partnership with us is to support our uniform.

Finally can I just wish you all a peaceful and enjoyable Christmas break, as we all do our best to stick to the distancing guidelines to keep each other safe, and to prevent a new year wave of infections.

Seasonal regards

Tim Gibbs and all the staff at RHSC

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