

Dear Parents / Carers

Thank you for your support over the last term. It has been another tough one; we hoped the effects of covid upon the school would gradually diminish, but as we know, this has not been to the extent we might have hoped for. We all hope the latest variant is contained effectively and that we are able to continue the school year as close to normally as we can, including actual exams for Year 11 in the summer. We are also starting to plan for trips and visits that have simply not been possible recently, which we hope will bring further balance and enjoyment to our pupils' school experience. It would be great to think the wearing of face coverings will be able to be ended at some point too. We'll see. I have to congratulate the pupils for just getting on with it positively and cooperatively throughout the term, and I hope they enjoy a proper rest between terms. They have retained their energy and enthusiasm for which they deserve real credit.

As I write it seems that the latest variant is spreading quickly. I hope this is contained and that we return to school as normal. If this proves not to be the case you know we are ready to deliver live online lessons through Teams as we did last year. If your child is in Year 7 and is unsure of how this all works, we will make sure you receive full instructions. But, of course, let's hope it doesn't happen and we open as normal!

Can I please ask for your support in a few matters in the new year.

### High School Testing

Although we will carry out LFTs on all pupils for whom we have consent upon our return in January, please continue to conduct these twice weekly at home. It is crucial these are a part of your routine if we are to stand the very best chance we can in keeping the school and its wider community as infection free as we can. We will use the consent you gave previously, but if you wish to either give consent or withdraw consent for your child to be LFT tested upon their return, please contact us at school. Please remember that testing is completely consensual, and that no pupil has to be tested if their parents do not want it to happen.

### College Testing

College students are all old enough to provide their own consent for testing. For that reason we strongly encourage College students take a LFT prior to the start of term and inform College reception if this is positive. If this is the case they will be required to take a PCR test and inform us of the result. However, we will also offer any College student who wants it the chance to be tested on site, as we have done before. So, no College student is obliged to consent to on site testing, but the opportunity is there if they choose to do this.

### Staggered start to term

Due to the testing, we will have to stagger the start of term slightly, as follows -

**Wednesday 5th January - Years 7,11,12 and those Year 13s doing their first mock exam on this day**

**Thursday 6th January - Years 8,9,10 and the Year 13s doing their first mock exam on this day.**

### Uniform

The standard of uniform in the High School has been generally good throughout the term, thank you. This has also definitely been the case with following the dress code in the College too. Can I ask that we continue to send pupils and students to school and College dressed in line with the College dress code and the school's uniform expectations in the new year.

### Equipment

Although most pupils are well equipped, some are attending each day without the equipment required. Please send your child to school with a full pencil case, and use the holiday to replace anything that might not be in it. This is part of being organised, and a full pencil case means your child doesn't disturb their own or others' learning by having to source what they need from others each lesson.

### Buses

Disappointingly, we have received several complaints about the conduct of pupils whilst travelling to and from school. If poor behaviour is reported to us we will look into it fully. If we feel anyone is acting in an anti-social way we may ask the Transport Unit to issue a warning letter and if the poor behaviour continues pupils may face a ban from the bus. If that is the case parents are legally responsible for transporting their children to and from school, which can present enormous inconvenience. Please talk to your child to make sure they are conducting themselves properly on school buses. Additionally, please tell your child to ensure they wear their face covering whilst on the bus.

All at RHSC wish you an enjoyable and restful end of term break, and look forward to starting the new year with fresh optimism and energy.

Regards

Tim Gibbs