

Dear Parents / Carers

Happy new year to everyone! Let's keep everything crossed that we continue throughout the rest of the year with schools open and operating as close to fully as possible. I am concerned about how the most recent virus strain might reduce our staff in number to the point we have to consider how best to deliver the education our pupils fully deserve, especially as it seems almost impossible to find additional supply staff when needed. I'll keep you posted as required, but let's stay positive! We will make decisions about any school events such as Parents' Evenings as we go and will continually balance the safety of the community with the need to provide the best service to pupils and parents as we can. Please read the following items carefully and contact us at school or the College if any clarification is required.

Testing

Please be reminded that pupils return over the next two days to allow us to test them once, as per government instruction -

- Wednesday Years 7,11,12 and those Year 13s sitting their first mock exam.
- Thursday Years 8, 9 & 10 and those Year 13s sitting their first mock exam.

As already communicated we will use previous consent unless you have let us know of changes to that previous consent. I'd also like to pass on a huge public thank you to the small group of parents who effectively form our testing team along with some staff who we are able to free up. We are all in their debt, especially as they are now on their third lot of testing. We are very grateful.

Face masks

All College students and high school pupils are now required to wear face coverings in classrooms as well as communal areas as we previously requested. If your child is exempt, can I ask that you provide them with a recognised 'exemption' lanyard so that they are not constantly spoken to by staff who are unaware of their exemption. We have no problem with pupils who might be exempt from wearing a mask, and think it is a reasonable request that parents provide such a lanyard. This rule is in place in the first instance until 26th January, when it will be reviewed.

Online safety

Please do not become complacent or allow your children to become complacent regarding personal online safety. Sadly, I have to report that there have been very recent malicious online threats to and harassment of local families, from a source a long way from Norfolk. This has included the creation of false accounts and the posting of untrue, highly contentious material, all of which appears to be genuine. The police are involved and are taking this very seriously. As always, we should do all we can to protect ourselves from harm, so please contact us at school should you want any advice on how to keep safe online, including the use of personal security settings on various devices.

Isolation period shortens

If your child has to isolate, they can now return after a shorter isolation period. New guidelines say that a LFT can be taken on the 6th day after the onset of symptoms or the positive result of a test if asymptomatic. If that 6th day test is negative this can be followed up with a 7th day test. If that is also negative a pupil can return to school on the 8th day. If however, the 6th day test is positive, the process should be restarted on the 7th day and repeated until a negative test is returned.

Uniform

As per my email at the end of last term, please ensure your children come to RHSC in line with school and the College expectations.

Yours sincerely

Tim Gibbs