



Re-founded 1555

Ripon Grammar School

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5 January 2021

Dear Parents

In light of the Prime Minister's announcement last night, please be assured that we will be doing all we can to ensure that education continues as seamlessly as possible. We will be working through the government's guidance and advice as it is released to us and I will endeavour to keep you all up to date on all current educational matters. In the meantime the following points I think can be made:

- We remain open as a school to children who are classed as vulnerable [this also includes those who have problems accessing remote education from home] as well as those who are children of critical workers. We will do all we can to facilitate their remote learning while in school. Catering will be provided for those who require it. Please continue to fill in the online form to allow us to assess demand for this service. There will be a new one for next week circulated soon.
- Remote learning will continue during this period of lockdown with a mixture of live lessons and work set via Teams. There will also be some live pastoral meetings. The learning strategy was devised for short periods of self-isolation and we will appraise its operations. If any changes and adaptations are made, I will communicate these as soon as possible.
- In terms of this summer's public examinations, the message of the Prime Minister was that these would not go ahead 'as normal'. At present, and in spite of some media speculation, this is not quite the same thing as saying there will be a full cancellation of examinations. We will await further direction on this matter from Ofqual and, again, I will be in touch as soon as we have any updates. Needless to say I know that our examination years will be upset about the news of a possible cancellation of examinations and extremely unsure as to what the alternative might be. It is important at this point in time therefore to stress that their education should continue as normal, albeit remotely, and that they continue to work as hard as they can in the meantime. We will give careful consideration to the administration of remote testing of mock examinations and further details will be out soon. My view is that it is important to proceed on the basis that some form of public testing will take place this summer and I would urge students to continue to enjoy the delivery of new curriculum content rather than worry about current speculation about what will happen this summer.
- Boarding houses are now shut until further notice and I will be in touch separately with boarding parents.
- As yet there is limited information about the programme of covid testing which was due to start next week in school. Thank you to those parents who had kindly volunteered to help. We may proceed with the training aspects so that when students return, and if they are required to be tested, we can put the plan into operation as quickly as possible.

Once again, may I wish you all a very happy New Year and I do hope that we can all, at least, utilise some of this time to enjoy the natural beauty of the Ripon catchment!

Best wishes

Jonathan Webb
Headmaster