



Re-founded 1555

Ripon Grammar School

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From the Headmaster

20 March 2020

Dear Parents

It is with great sadness that I can confirm that Ripon Grammar School will be closing at 4pm this afternoon to all students, with the exception, from Monday, of those children of essential key workers who require urgent support from the school's services. A separate communication has been sent out concerning our organisation of the school from Monday onwards and this will run until further notice.

The coming weeks will no doubt be a difficult time for all concerned. Please be assured that we will continue to work, as best we can, to support our students in their academic work, safeguard their wellbeing and support the transition back to normality when it comes. The future does indeed look uncertain but we are clear that we need to face it with calmness and forbearance. I am sure that we will have the support and confidence of the parental body to ensure this.

The decision to close the school by the government, while it has been predicted and is understandable, has nevertheless come as a shock to students, parents and staff alike. Of particular concern for us has been for our Year 11 and 13 who have worked so hard towards their GCSEs and A Levels and yet will not be able to validate that effort and achievement through a formal examination. We also feel that several weeks of their great company has been stolen from us! I hope they will take great pride in what they have achieved and learnt so far and reflect on the fact that a good education is not just about examinations.

Once we have clarity from the government on the awarding of grades this summer, then we will consider what we can do to support our students in their transition to university or A Level study, either here or elsewhere. Our key priority will be to ensure that they achieve the grades they very much deserve. Hopefully today our leavers depart happy and confident that the school has done its very best, and will continue to do its best, to support them for the future. We are very much here to help beyond today and we wish them the very best for the future.

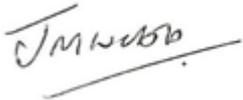
During the period of closure the teaching staff who are fit and well will continue to provide work for students via online learning. This may take different formats but students need to get into a pattern and routine of work at home and your support, where possible, in organising good working practices would be appreciated. The Office 365 platform should be a student's first port of call, though individual staff may choose to send work via email also. Ideally work will be set for one or two weeks duration, but some subjects may choose to set individual lesson by lesson work. This will vary depending on the subject. Individual staff will be able to respond to email requests from students or parents but an instant response cannot be guaranteed.

Work will be expected to be handed in on return to school but individual staff may request that work is emailed back to reduce any backlog. Form tutors will also look to be in touch on a weekly basis. In most cases students will not need to respond if all is well but the tutor does remain a key point of contact if students are worried or concerned about a matter. Further information about working online and pastoral support will be sent by Miss Murray [Deputy Head] soon.

I would like to thank parents who have communicated with the school and offered kind words of support in the last few days. I would reiterate again that we are here to try, as best we can, to offer as seamless as possible an education and the weeks following the return to work in school will be as important as the weeks away. As updates become available I will be sending out further communications too.

Finally I would like to personally thank all the staff at RGS who have kept calm and carried on and no doubt will continue to meet any of the challenges that may lie ahead with good humour and perseverance.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J M Webb', with a horizontal line underneath.

Jonathan M Webb
Headmaster