

# RIPON GRAMMAR SCHOOL



**SIXTH FORM HANDBOOK 2025**

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## **1. WELCOME**

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the sixth form at Ripon Grammar school.

The next two years are going to be an incredibly busy, demanding and exciting time, during which you will make probably the first truly life-defining decisions that are yours to take alone, as well as making the final preparations for the routes and careers that will take you far beyond this school. The time will flash by, and opportunities and choices will come thick and fast. My advice is that, whilst you need to be very serious and focused upon your studies, you must also make the most of all the support, guidance and opportunities that are on offer here. These days only come once.

In choosing to come to Ripon Grammar School, you have made a conscious decision to join a strong school community, rather than an institution that is purely a sixth form environment. With this in mind, you are regarded as part of this community, and expected to play a strong and positive role within it. You are role models from your very first day, and we anticipate that you will set an outstanding example to younger year groups, and that you will willingly take on roles and responsibilities that will allow you to work with and support younger students.

It is also important to know that our sixth form has an outstanding reputation as a welcoming, kind, enthusiastic community, where students are encouraged to develop and to fulfil their talents. That reputation is now in your hands, and I know that you will enhance it. Be enthusiastic, curious, wholehearted and committed, and success will follow.

I hope that you thoroughly enjoy the next two years, and that they provide you both with success, and with very happy memories.

**Mr T. Fell**  
**Head of Sixth Form**

## **2. WELCOME FROM HEAD BOY & HEAD GIRL**

As head boy and head girl we are excited by the prospect of a new sixth form year group and hope that you see the school in the positive light that we do. The sixth form is a brilliant and rewarding place to be and is at the heart of the Ripon Grammar School community.

Enthusiastic and passionate staff underpin the excellence of the school as they support an ambitious student body to create an outstanding environment. You take control of your own future in the sixth form as your subject choices are aligned with your personal interests and career goals in mind. The ethos of hard work and desire for excellence amongst sixth form students allows them to be treated like the young adults that they are by staff, while receiving support and drawing on their expertise. The RGS facilities are of the highest standard, and this is especially true in the sixth form where the study spaces facilitate a range of learning styles and the art studio, engineering suites, and science laboratories are state of the art to allow students to flourish in these subjects.

The academic driving-force of RGS is the quality of teaching, along with support from staff in pastoral and coordination roles. These staff members are passionate about their respective roles within the school and are friendly and approachable, which makes student life more pleasant. Additionally, teaching staff are knowledgeable on student potential and create an atmosphere where this potential can be reached and often exceeded. Our Sixth Form Team are integral to the success of the RGS sixth form as they provide essential guidance and support for all dimensions of sixth form life. Post 18 choices are central areas of focus for the sixth form team and regular and targeted support is given on personal statements, applications, apprenticeships, and gap years, while it is reiterated that the process is strictly personal to the student. The careers department are a constant source of support for all students with queries about future plans and the department is especially valuable for sixth form students as they prepare for life beyond school.

Unlike most other schools the sixth form at RGS is not a separate entity but central to the community and there are plenty of opportunities to become involved with the wider school. The multifaceted extracurricular calendar means that there is an activity for all students and the possibility for new activities is never ignored. The sporting traditions of the school are evident in the fantastic facilities that include a 3G all-weather pitch, AstroTurf, tennis courts, a swimming pool and a sports hall with a climbing wall. For students with a musical interest, there are a wide range of student ensembles which accommodate all musicians, and these ensembles are ever-present at school events. Wednesday afternoon Enrichment sessions encourage students to broaden their interests from the purely academic as various sports and recreational activities are available. All students are part of a timetabled Societies session, joining or forming one that interests them, encouraging wider research and creating inquisitive and passionate students. Schemes such as Duke of Edinburgh, Bar Mock trial, and Young Enterprise are also popular amongst students.

Leadership is championed in the sixth form at RGS, and countless opportunities are available for sixth form students. These roles include School Officers, School Prefects, Pastoral Prefects, Sports Captains, as well as the School Council roles and Sixth Form Committee. Students who are a part of the Plus-One program are encouraged to volunteer within school in classroom settings, or in the local community, and this allows for cohesion between the main school body and the sixth

form. The House system is central to the rounded education offered by RGS, and events like swimming, drama, and singing are highly regarded by students.

Academia is embedded in the makeup of the school and students are proud of the school's reputation for excellence. Students are aware of our motto: 'eager to learn and seek after righteousness' and the desire to learn and become intellectually enriched is a shared virtue. The academic environment allows students to be challenged and to gain qualifications that are invaluable to them, and this prepares them for the reality of a competitive and ever-changing world. Alongside the academic success, RGS equips students with the means to be caring, vibrant, and well-rounded people and we hope you will contribute to our positive community.

The RGS community is friendly and welcoming, and it is this atmosphere that will quickly enable you to transition into sixth form life. The varied range of opportunities, including clubs and societies, at RGS means there is always a place for you to fit in no matter what. Although this next step of your education is a challenging one, you will always be supported by staff, upper sixth students and ourselves. In particular, we hope that you always feel able to come up to us and talk through your concerns.

Finally, we have loved our time at RGS, and we are confident that you will too; we urge that you work hard and balance this by making the most of the recreational opportunities granted by our fantastic school. The sixth form at RGS is what you make of it, so we encourage you to get involved at every opportunity and forge new friendships. Have no regrets! We look forward to meeting you and welcoming you personally into the sixth form.

### **3. A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A GIRL BOARDER**

I have been a boarder at RGS for around six months now, and it has helped me balance independence, academics, and the opportunity to build many friendships. Our day starts at 7:45 with registration, after which we join the boy boarders for breakfast in the main hall. Breakfast offers a wide variety of both continental and cooked options, and after enjoying our meal, we have time to get ready before heading off to school at 8:40.

Boarding doesn't just restrict itself within the house but extends into our school life. Boarders optimise their time in school to develop their relationships with day pupils and boarders alike, which increases the sense of belonging that has remains prominent throughout the boarding setting. Our free time after school gives us the opportunity to participate in a wide range of sporting and music extracurriculars throughout the year but also provides time to relax, go to town or the gym. You have access to the school's many facilities such as the sports hall, gym, music block and 3G throughout the day as well as the library and learning centre. Dinner is at 5:45 for all boarders in the hall, this gives the opportunity to build long term, personal relationships between both houses. Tea offers a wide range of dishes and choices per day providing for all dietary requirements as requested.

Prep time runs from 18:30 to 20:00; however, as sixth form boarders, we are allowed to organise our own study schedules around our day. This gives us the freedom to take responsibility for our revision and helps prepare us for life after school, where self-discipline becomes essential. We have access to common rooms, computers, the library, or the option to work in our own rooms. From 20:00 to 20:50, we have activity time, where we can take part in optional activities ranging from sports and swimming to crafts, quizzes, or movie nights. Bedtimes vary and get later as we move up the school. For sixth formers, it's 11:00 pm, but we are free to go to bed earlier—especially during exam season.

As a termly boarder, I stay at school during weekends, where regular trips are arranged for us. For example, Mrs Mac loves taking us to the York Designer Outlet for some shopping, while Mr Saxon enjoys leading walking trips around picturesque villages like Pateley Bridge. Every half term includes something for everyone to enjoy, and boarders are regularly invited to suggest new ideas and outings.

At first, I found boarding quite challenging; however, I've come to realise it's where many of my most enjoyable memories are being made. It fosters lasting friendships, supported by a dedicated team of staff who are always there to help. All these elements come together to make boarding at RGS feel like a warm, welcoming home away from home.

#### **4. A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A BOY BOARDER**

I have been boarding at Ripon Grammar School for almost a year now. The structure that boarding gives you is quite special, whether it be friendship, routine or a home away from home. We usually wake up around 7:30am ready for roll call at 7:45am. Breakfast for sixth formers is straight after roll call and it's usually a cooked breakfast or cereal, there is plenty of choice and we eat in the main hall with the girls.

During the day if you're lucky with your classes you'll have other boarders in your lessons so you can collaborate academically as well as socially, but you will also make friends with the day students in your lessons. After school, free time from 4.00-6.00pm gives us opportunities to attend a wide range of extra-curricular activities or meet friends. We eat dinner at around 6.00pm where we eat with the girl boarders again over a wide selection of meals, with dietary requirements catered for.

After dinner we can do what we please until prep, as sixth formers prep is done unsupervised in our rooms or in the library. During the evening the older students are encouraged to join in with lower school activities, ranging from table tennis competitions to cricket sessions. Bedtimes range depending on your age, for sixth formers it is 11.00pm; however, during exam season many of the boarders are in bed before this time!

Weekly boarders leave the house on a Friday night and return on Sunday evenings/Monday mornings. Termly boarders who stay over the weekends can enjoy trips out to York or Leeds. At least once a term there is a School House trip e.g. pizza or movie nights or the occasional quiz.

These are great fun! If you are able to drive, you may come and go as you please on the weekends as long as you let the staff know. I have enjoyed my time as a boarder and now share memories with many different people that I would have previously not have met. Boarding has not only increased my independence, but also my confidence.

## **5. STARTING AS A NEW STUDENT**

Having been a new student myself, I can confidently say that joining RGS was the best decision I have ever made. The transition was incredibly smooth, largely due to the wide range of opportunities available, both academic and extracurricular, that allowed me to meet like-minded people and explore new interests. That said, it is understandable for any new beginning to feel daunting. However, I am certain that the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere at RGS will allow you to settle in quickly, particularly given the substantial number of new students who join the Sixth Form each year. You certainly will not be alone.

One of the most rewarding aspects of joining RGS was having access to a team of experienced and highly knowledgeable teachers, each offering fresh and engaging perspectives on their subjects. In addition to this academic support, RGS provides a structured programme of Societies and Enrichment. Societies are student-led groups that meet to explore shared interests, often related to academic, cultural, or political themes. Enrichment refers to physical or creative activities that promote personal development and balance alongside academic study. For example, you might take part in the Debating Society or join Enrichment options such as football or badminton. These opportunities are excellent for making new friends and getting involved in school life. There is something for everyone, and if you have an idea for a new group or activity, you are welcome to propose and establish it. Enrichment activities, along with societies, are integrated into the timetable, providing a welcome break from your A-level subjects and enabling you to develop a broader range of skills.

Before long, you will have the opportunity to apply for leadership roles, such as School Officers, for instance. These roles are intended to help you build confidence and take on additional responsibilities as you transition from Year 12 to Year 13, which comes around more quickly than you might anticipate.

It is safe to say that Ripon Grammar School offers one of the most enriching and supportive Sixth Form environments available. I am positive that every new student will quickly find their place and become a valued member of the school community. Please do not hesitate to speak to the Sixth Form Team, your teachers, or any Year 13 students. The RGS environment is focused, professional, and full of opportunity, and I am sure you will feel at home here.



## 6. COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS

*"There's a real community feel, everyone knows each other in the year group"*

*"The facilities in the sixth form centre and learning centre are excellent"*

*"We are treated like young adults and have brilliant staff-students relationships"*

*"A fun, vibrant & inspiring community. The sixth form team are outstanding and are always there for support and guidance and to provide a friendly face when needed"*

*"Independence and freedom is given to students along with a wide range of opportunities"*

*"There are loads of opportunities to investigate your chosen subjects further and expand your learning"*

*"Thank you! The transition from my old school to Ripon Grammar School was made so much easier with all of the support I was given"*

## 7. HOUSE CAPTAINS

Our house system is an important part of our school community. We have 4 houses, De Grey, Hutton, Porteus and Holland. As house captains we are keen to get as much involvement as possible! The house system is one of the best ways in the school that we build up inter-year group relationships, whether that be during rehearsals for house music or working as a team during a sporting event or through a friendly rivalry at one of our solo events. This year particularly, we're focussed on involvement and inclusivity, through getting more exciting house events with opportunities for everyone to take part, along with recognising exceptional achievements beyond the house system.

**8. SIXTH FORM TEAM**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Position &amp; Contact details</u></b>
Mr T Fell	Head of Sixth Form <a href="mailto:fellt@ripongrammar.com">fellt@ripongrammar.com</a>
Mrs L Lyons	Deputy Head of Sixth Form <a href="mailto:lyonsl@ripongrammar.com">lyonsl@ripongrammar.com</a>
Mrs H Nelson	Deputy Head of Sixth Form and Plus One Co-ordinator <a href="mailto:nelsonh@ripongrammar.com">nelsonh@ripongrammar.com</a>
Mrs. Feingold	Sixth Form Co-ordinator <a href="mailto:feingoldk@ripongrammar.com">feingoldk@ripongrammar.com</a>
School website	<a href="https://www.ripongrammar.co.uk/">https://www.ripongrammar.co.uk/</a>

**9. SIXTH FORM CENTRE**

The Sixth Form Centre is a fantastic facility with the sixth form team all based there.

**Making the most of the Sixth Form Centre****Study Rooms**

These two areas can be found downstairs in the Sixth Form Centre and are the ideal study spaces for group work. Drinks and snacks are allowed here, and there is a dedicated Sixth Form café providing food and drinks, from breakfast until the end of lunchtime. You can also use the drinks vending machines, bring your own supplies to make your own drinks, use the fridge, toaster and microwave here but please remember to respect the property of others and wash up afterwards!

There is an additional small study space in the link corridor of the Humanities Block that is set aside for sixth form students.

There are no computers available downstairs, but you may use your own laptop here.

There is also an outside seating area which the sixth form can use during break or lunch.

### **Learning Centre**

The Learning Centre is based upstairs, and this is a silent working area, food and drinks (other than bottled water) are not permitted. This is a study, library and resource area dedicated to sixth form students. Here you can make use of a variety of resources available to help you have a successful time at school and equip you with the skills need for further education as well as a very helpful librarian. You will find:

- PC's to work on or bring your own laptops
- A Level textbooks
- EPQ information
- bag storage shelves on arrival
- phones permitted for work use only – please do not watch YouTube, social media, etc – save this for 'social spaces' in the Sixth Form Centre!
- You may listen to music quietly with headphones

The study books, periodicals & UCAS resources can be used in the Learning Centre but cannot be booked out.

## **10. THE FIRST FEW MONTHS**

### **Parents' Tea**

In September, all lower sixth students and their parents are invited to join us at the end of a school day for a brief presentation by the sixth form team. There is then an informal opportunity to meet and chat to the sixth form team, form tutors as well as some subject staff. We hope that you will join us for this event.

### **Reports**

There are three sixth form reports produced during the course of the year, keeping parents and students up to date with their progress as well as a Parents' Evening. Where students may need support or guidance, the sixth form office team and form tutors will meet with them to discuss this. Parents will be informed in any cases where there are particular concerns.

The sixth form team will also meet with all new students joining the school to talk about how they have found the transition and discuss any issues. However, if any student or parent has any concerns, please do contact a member of the team to discuss these further.

## **11. BUDDIES**

All new students to Ripon Grammar School will be allocated a buddy to help you through the first few weeks of term, whether it is making new friends or finding your way around school.

Your buddy will be a member of your year group who will be in the same form as you and also in some of your lessons. The whole year group will be moved into new forms, we have 7 forms per year in the sixth form. Your buddy will be with you during the induction and transition days and

will meet you on the first day of term in the sixth form centre, when all new students will find out their forms, form tutor and form room.

## **12. ENRICHMENT AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Enrichment is a compulsory part of the Sixth Form curriculum and is designed to complement the students' A level studies, offering an opportunity to do something different from their academic choices. Enrichment is held on a Wednesday afternoon (Co-Curricular) and Personal Development on a Friday morning (Academic).

These sessions enable students to develop other skills such as presentation and study skills. Students are also offered the opportunity to undertake extra qualifications e.g. Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) or an OU course. Enrichment activities will be a combination of teacher-led and student-led options with all students in the sixth form are timetabled to do 4 periods a week of enrichment.

### **Co-Curricular enrichment (Wednesday)**

This session is a compulsory part of your timetable, activities are for all sixth form students and are non-academic enrichment. There are a variety of physical activities offered including dance, Zumba, football, netball, hockey, rugby, rock climbing, fitness and badminton. We also hold music, board games and art sessions. We welcome suggestions from students regarding different activities! Many students want to get involved with volunteering in the local community and this can be arranged also, with opportunities available in working with the elderly, young adults with disabilities, in schools, museums to name a few.

### **Academic Personal Development (Friday)**

These sessions cover academic and personal enrichment. Sessions are provided on a huge range of topics. These will include health and wellbeing, university choices, gap years, apprenticeships, study abroad, talks from the blood service, guest speakers, alternatives to university, driving awareness and finance. We also work hard to cover current news topics, raise awareness and challenge ideas around racism, gender bias, misogyny and disability.

## **13. STUDENT SOCIETIES**

Students form their own societies which meet for a timetabled session once a week. These societies are student led and cover a range of topics e.g. medicine, music, health care, eco, PPE, law, drama. Students will organise their own discussions and arrange for external speakers to come in if necessary.

#### **14. PRIVATE STUDY**

Private study is a compulsory timetabled session and is important as you learn to manage your new workload and develop independent learning skills. You will need to learn these skills for in preparation for higher education and it provides the opportunity to get extra work done in school rather than leaving it for home.

Private Study is compulsory for all sixth form students and is for silent independent work, the session is supervised and registered by staff. The three periods of private study will be allocated onto your timetable.

#### **15. CO- CURRICULAR**

There are a broad range of co-curricular activities and opportunities throughout the school available to students, ranging from house drama and music to sport and debating; from sports leaders to school council, the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, or supporting younger students in the classroom. There is a strong House system, and sixth form students in particular will take the lead in organising and running teams for a variety of activities.

Many of our students volunteer in the local community and there are also opportunities to undertake work experience and careers-related lectures and workshops, as well as The Prince's Trust and Young Enterprise competitions.

There are a variety of opportunities for travel with school through subject-based visits. These have included World Challenge, Greece, USA and Paris.

As part of the enrichment and Post School Planning programme, students will have the opportunity to visit the UCAS Conference and the Newcastle and Northumbria university open days, as well as attending the Oxford and Cambridge residential open days if applicable.

This is a busy and vibrant environment, and students are encouraged to undertake activities beyond the classroom to develop and enhance their outlook and experience. There is certainly something to suit everyone.

#### **16. WORK EXPERIENCE**

All sixth formers are given the invaluable opportunity to undertake a week of work experience in the summer term. The purpose of this week is to enable students to broaden their experience and to obtain placements that will enrich their university applications in the autumn term, or their CVs for future employment, and all students are expected to undertake work-experience at this time.

It is also significant that both universities and employers are increasingly clear that their ideal candidates will already have a range of work experience under their belt.

The aims and objectives of work experience will be explained to all of lower sixth students nearer the time. The value of the placement is enhanced when students take as much responsibility as possible for planning and finding their own placements. It is vital that students start organising their placements immediately as explained below.

Competition for work placements has become quite fierce, as many employers are reducing their commitment and offering fewer placements, it is therefore vitally important that the search for a work placement begins in earnest this half term. Larger employers, such as Rolls Royce and Harrogate Hospital, organise all of their placements this term. Many employers are only taking one student a year and places are soon snapped up. In addition many local schools are also sending their students out in July.

Students will have sessions on CV writing and letters of application as part of their Friday enrichment

## **17. CAREERS**

The Careers department staff are responsible for the provision of impartial careers advice and guidance centred on the individual needs of our students and a comprehensive careers education programme across all year groups.

We have a well-resourced careers library and sixth form students are encouraged to use the resources and to arrange individual guidance appointments during free periods, lunchtime or after school. Appointments can be arranged for students to meet with careers staff, parents most welcome to accompany them to the appointments.

The aims of the department are to:

- equip students with the knowledge and skills that they need to make realistic and informed decisions about their learning and work through a programme of careers education; and
- provide impartial careers advice and guidance to students on the range of options available to them at times which best meet the needs of the student.

A number of events are organised throughout the year for our sixth form students including higher education evenings, careers fairs and interview practice sessions, introducing the wide range of options available to our students. There are also a wide range of helpful websites and resources on the Careers section of our website.

## 18. 16 – 19 BURSARY FUND

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is designed to help students who are in full time education and need financial support during their time at school.

The Bursary can pay for a variety of things, e.g.

- Any essential course trips that students must attend.
- Any equipment or books students need to assist with their course.
- Any other costs that may apply e.g. uniform, transport, meals.

The school is required by law to assess who is eligible, and **if you apply for funding you will need to provide evidence to the school of your family's financial position**. We are usually able to provide financial assistance to those who have a total household income of under £35,000 per year. The bursary is subject to attendance, behaviour and performance which will be monitored throughout the year, please see enclosure for further information.

If you think that you may be eligible for funding, please contact the finance office in the new academic year. All information provided is treated with the utmost confidence.

## 19. SIXTH FORM ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Attendance:

Attendance is a legal requirement at:

- Morning registration at 8.45am
- All timetabled lessons
- Lessons or on-site registration at 1.45pm

### Absences:

The school must be notified of all absences as soon as possible at [absence@ripongrammar.com](mailto:absence@ripongrammar.com)

1. In the case of planned absences please email the school **in advance** of the absence to obtain authorisation e.g. urgent doctor appointments, hospital appointment, open days, etc.
2. In the case of unforeseen absences, the school should be contacted by phone or email on the morning of the absence.

Absences which **can** be foreseen:

- Medical (excluding routine appointments which can be scheduled outside of school day)
- Caring for family members
- Religious holidays
- University interviews
- Significant participation in an extra-curricular activity
- Funerals/Court appearances/Driving test/Moving house/Severe travel disruption

Absences which **cannot** be foreseen:

- Bereavement
- Emergency
- Transport difficulties
- Sickness

Students **will not** be authorised to miss school due to the following reasons:

- Holidays during term time
- Social/leisure activities
- Paid employment
- Driving lessons or theory tests
- Routine medical appointments
- Catching up with schoolwork

**All sixth form students are permitted to leave school at lunchtime only – they may NOT leave during morning break or any free periods.**

## **20. THE FIRST DAY**

All students should arrive at the Sixth Form Centre for 8.45am to meet buddies, find out their new form and form room.

Students should bring the following on the first day:

- Writing materials – pen, pencils and a rubber
- A strong bag - Please make sure that the bag is distinctive in some way, and that all possessions and equipment are clearly named.
- Lunch money or a packed lunch



**21. DAILY TIMETABLE**

School is open from 8.30am, and students must be in school by 8.45am to register at 8.50am promptly. We take lateness seriously and this will be monitored closely.

**The school day ends at 14.55 (Monday).**

Morning Registration	08:45 – 08:55
Lesson 1	08:55 – 09:30
Lesson 2	09:30 – 10:05
Lesson 3	10:05 – 10:40
Lesson 4	10:40 – 11:15
Morning Break	11.15 – 11.35
Lesson 5	11:35 – 12:10
Lesson 6	12:10 – 12:45
Lunch	12:45 – 13:40
Lesson 6/Registration	13:40 – 13:45
Lesson 7	13:45 – 14:20
Lesson 8	14:20 – 14:55
Staff Development	14:55 – 15:55

**The school day ends at 15.55 (Tuesday to Friday).**

Morning Registration	08:45 – 08:50
Morning Assembly	08:50 – 09:15
Lesson 1	09:15 – 09:50
Lesson 2	09:50 – 10:30
Lesson 3	10:30 – 11:10
Morning Break	11.10 – 11.30
Lesson 4	11:25 – 12:05
Lesson 5	12:05 – 12:50
Lunch	12:50 – 13:50
Lesson 6/Registration	13:55 – 14:35
Lesson 7	14:35 – 15:15
Lesson 8	15:15 – 15:55

## 22. TRAVEL TO SCHOOL

- Walk: Students who walk to school via Clothierholme Road, should make sure that they use the footpath alongside the main drive or the main entrance to reception. There is also access to school via the footpath from Kirkby Road through the allotments but please note this gate locks at 8.45am and entry will only be via video key access to main reception after this time.
- Cycle: If cycling into school, students can park their bike on the racks near the music block. Cycles must be completely roadworthy, and have lights for winter, and a good lock.
- Car: Parents and students are not permitted to drive onto the school site to drop off or collect students at the start or end of the day (unless there is a medical reason approved prior), but must drop them on the bus park via the patrolled system. Similarly, please collect children at a safe distance from the school drive at end of school. Please do not park on the yellow lines or across the school drive. There is a clear system for use of the bus park opposite the school site and students are directed to use the crossing.
- Student cars – please see the information regarding the use of cars by sixth form students.
- Bus: Students will be dropped off and collected from the bus park opposite the school. They will use the crossing to go directly to school.

## 23. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Home to school transport is arranged by North Yorkshire Council who are committed to raising the standard of home to school transport throughout the county in order to ensure that all journeys to and from school are both safe and reliable. All vehicles are subject to regular inspections through their various licensing authorities.

The School Transport Team, based at County Hall, Northallerton, works closely with schools and operators to provide safe and reliable transport for students.

Bus passes are distributed by the Authority and you should direct any questions to them regarding these. Information about bus routes and contact numbers can be found on our website at [www.ripongrammar.co.uk/parent-info/transport/](http://www.ripongrammar.co.uk/parent-info/transport/)

If you have any queries please contact the School Transport Team or visit the website [www.nyschoolbus.info](http://www.nyschoolbus.info) Tel: 08458 727374 Email: [schooltransport.services@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransport.services@northyorks.gov.uk)

## 24. LUNCH ARRANGEMENTS

Our school caterers provide a variety of hot and cold food, salads and sandwiches in the main cafeteria. Sixth form students may also bring a packed lunch, use the sixth form café or sign out to go into town at lunch only.

We operate a biometric cashless catering system and you can top-up via ParentPay or your child can deposit cash via a biometric machine. On the first day of term, your child will have a fingerprint image scanned to register them on the system. (The actual fingerprint image **is not retained** but is converted to a number which the system recognises).

## 25. NUT AND OTHER FOOD ALLERGIES

Ripon Grammar School is a nut free school, we have an increasing number of students at Ripon Grammar School who suffer from a severe allergy to nuts in particular and food allergies in general. For some students, coming into contact with nuts causes a potentially life-threatening anaphylactic reaction. This reaction can be induced by smell, touch or ingestion of nuts.

In order for us to reduce the risk of an anaphylactic reaction occurring at school, **we do not allow** students to bring into school nuts for consumption at break or lunch time, or in birthday cakes, etc. which are sometimes brought into school. This is not always convenient but to ensure that those students with allergies are able to attend school with confidence, this would be appreciated both by the school and the students' parents.

The school kitchen does not use nuts or nut oil in any of their food, which is prepared freshly each day. However, as with all foodstuffs, traces of nuts may be present in some ingredients. The school as a whole does everything possible to respect the needs of students, and staff, with food allergies but we cannot guarantee a completely nut-free environment. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

## 26. PARENTPAY

By the start of term you will receive a username and password for your child and all the information that you will need to set up an account with ParentPay. This account can be used for canteen payments and also for school trips and other items. If you already have a child at the school using ParentPay you can merge their accounts using the new username and password. If you have been using ParentPay at your child's previous school, you will need to set up a new account.

## 27. SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar is available to view on our website and is regularly updated with forthcoming events, term dates and holidays etc.

## 28. NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Please see above section

## 29. REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

The Department for Education states that Parents/Carers do not have a right to take their children out of educational provision during term-time.

The Headteacher can no longer allow any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, for which verification will be requested. This means that holidays in term time will not be authorised and will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Unauthorised absence (totalling 10 sessions or more) owing to leave taken during term-time, will result in a Penalty Notice being issued per parent per child. Payment of a Penalty Notice if paid within 21 days is £60. Should you be unable to pay within 21 days, the Penalty Notice increases to £120 with a further 7 days to submit full payment.

Non-payment of a £120.00 Penalty Notice within the total 28-day period could result in the commencement of criminal proceedings in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444 of the Education Act (1996).

An exceptional leave of absence application form for parents to complete and return to the headmaster, is available to download from the school website should parents need to request leave of absence during term time. **Please do not use this form for educational courses, open days, taster days, etc you must contact Mr Fell directly regarding these.**

Thank you for your cooperation. However, I am sure you will appreciate that this is in the best interest of all students, and it will also help the school to manage its record of student attendance.

Ripon Grammar School enjoys exceptionally high attendance rates, which reflect the students' enjoyment of coming to school.

### **30. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

Communicating with parents is essential to keep you updated regarding school events as well as the progress of your child. The traditional method of sending out letters has been replaced by email and all letters also appear on the website under '**Parents – Notices & Letters Home**'. Some parents may not have an e-mail address and accordingly letters will be posted to those parents if e-mail becomes the only method of communication for letters. Please advise us if your e-mail address changes at any time throughout the school year.

The school's management information system which holds all our students' personal, assessment and attendance data will be accessible from home. You will be able to access the information the school holds on your child with a username and password will be issued to you in September (new parents).

### **31. TEXT MESSAGING SERVICE**

The school will send a text message to your mobile phone e.g. school closure, an important school meetings, parents' evenings, etc. It can also be used to remind parents about events which are happening, as well as conveying a change in the start time for a school event and it will be used to notify parents when your child is absent from school if a reason has not been given for a particular absence.

It is vital that the school has your up-to-date mobile telephone number, and if you change it please inform the school as soon as possible. The text will be sent to the first contact provided by you on the Entry Form.

### **32. MUSIC TUITION & CHORAL GROUPS**

Ripon Grammar School has an exciting and vibrant music department. This is evident in our curriculum, our ensembles and choirs and also our wide range of instrumental tuition. We offer instrumental tuition through North Yorkshire Music Service and private teachers.

**Piano – Clarinet – Flute – Oboe – Saxophone – 'Cello – Double Bass**

**Piano – Violin – Viola – All Brass instruments – Guitar and Bass – Percussion (kit) – Voice**

Lessons costs vary between teachers but an individual 30-minute lesson cost between £12-15 or paired lesson £8-11. The school is able to loan a limited number of instruments free of charge to those students who learn an instrument in school, please contact Mr Barker for more information.

Lessons are taught during the school day and instrumental timetables will rotate so students do not miss the same lesson each week. The music department and instrumental teachers will monitor progress closely and report regularly to parents. In order to maximise progression students will be expected to participate in at least one school ensemble relating to their instrument. If you would like your child to have instrumental lessons in school please complete and return the enclosed Instrumental Lesson Form.

### **33. RESPONSIBLE INTERNET USE**

The school offers students supervised internet access in the library, sixth form centre and in the computer rooms, enabling them to extend their learning in lessons and in private study.

Although internet use is supervised in our school, there are limits to the extent of our supervision. Despite our efforts, some students may encounter or seek to find ways to gain access to material which is inaccurate, defamatory, illegal or potentially offensive to others. If this were to happen, we would respond appropriately in accordance with our pastoral and disciplinary procedures.

In school, teachers will guide students towards appropriate materials. However, we recognise that away from school parents and guardians are responsible for establishing the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. It is our hope that we can work together to ensure that access to the internet can be both safe and educationally worthwhile.

It is important for there to be an agreement with parents and students about the responsible use of the internet and would ask you to give permission for your child to use the internet in school in an appropriate way.

### **34. PHOTOGRAPHS AND IMAGES**

Increasingly, computers and related technology are making it easier to use pictures and images in printed materials or on websites. As more and more people now have home computers, we need to take steps to prevent photographs and images being wrongly used. We take the issue of child safety very seriously and will not use an image of your child without your prior consent. We would ask you to sign the general consent form to enable the school, official County Council photographers or authorised press photographers to take and use photographs of your child individually, or in a group. There may be occasions when it is intended to use a photograph or image that identifies your child by name e.g. as part of a newspaper article, or is to be used in a particular context. In these instances, you can indicate whether you would be happy for the head teacher to use his/her discretion in the matter or whether you require the school to seek your specific permission.

### 35. UNIFORM AND REGULATIONS

All students are required to wear the school uniform and to provide themselves with the items on the uniform list. **Sixth Form do not need a games kit** unless they decide to join a school team.

Parents are advised to shop at the school suppliers listed below.

Rawcliffe's Schoolwear Centre Rawcliffes Corner East Parade Harrogate Tel: 01423 504130	The Ripon Uniform Shop 64 Blossomgate Ripon Tel: 01765 692233
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#### 35.1 Uniform and Appearance

The school uniform as on the approved uniform list must be complete and worn with pride. Students may be sent home if they arrive at school incorrectly dressed and parental co-operation in the enforcement of these standards is sought. No deviation from the school uniform will be allowed, and we regard sixth form students as the role models of the school. We do have sanctions for sixth form students if the uniform rules are not followed but we hope that we do not have to use them.

The uniform lists can be found here: <https://www.ripongrammar.co.uk/parent-info/school-uniform/>

### 36. FRIENDS OF RIPON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

FRGS are a group of parents who volunteer to raise funds to provide students with additional equipment and facilities that are not supplied by funding from the government. The committee meets regularly to plan and discuss fundraising as well as organising social events for parents, e.g. Burns' night, wine tastings, Christmas fair, cookery demonstrations and quiz nights. The committee needs the support of all parents by giving up some of their time or supporting the events organised. Please complete and return the enclosed form if you able to help.

All information is available under the 'Parents' section of the website, Facebook, and through regular emailed updates and texts, or please contact them at [friends@ripongrammar.com](mailto:friends@ripongrammar.com)

### 37. POLICIES

All school policies and guidance can be found on our website under the 'About Us – Policies' section. <https://www.ripongrammar.co.uk/about/school-policies/>