



Re-founded 1555

# Ripon Grammar School

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14 July 2021

Dear Parents

Gov.uk recently issued new operational Covid-19 guidance to schools for Step 4 which is meant to start on 19 July. In summary, the guidance allows for the lifting of year group 'bubbles' and the removal of the recommendation to wear face masks for the final week of term. While self-isolation rules on close contacts remain until 16 August at least, the suggestion is that close contacts will be identified by the NHS Test and Trace service and not by schools from next Monday also.

However, the prevalence of the delta variant in the Harrogate and Ripon area, and the tendency in recent days for students to congregate outside of school in larger numbers has led to a rise in positive cases and the need for greater numbers of students self-isolating and not attending school. This has been the case across all secondary schools in the district.

Therefore, we have decided that until the end of term we will be retaining all our current Covid measures which includes year groupings and a recommendation that students continue to wear face masks in corridors and communal areas unless seated in assembly or for break/lunch. If a positive case is identified we will continue to work with PHE and, if needs be, support the test and trace process.

If proposed guidance for September remains in place we are hopeful that we can return to most of our normal routines such as year group mixing, end to one-way systems, a normal timetable etc. From 16 August self-isolation of close contacts will also come to an end. However, those with symptoms will be required to either stay at home or go home after being isolated in school first. Face masks will be optional.

It is likely nevertheless that some control measures will remain in September – emphasis on hand washing, open windows, hand sanitiser stations etc. It also looks likely that we will be required to administer at the start of term 2 in-school LF tests, 3-5 days apart, to all students. We will be exploring how we can administer these tests in as non-disruptive a way as possible.

Of course, all the above may be subject to change and I will do my best to keep parents up to date on the latest guidance if it changes.

Yours sincerely

**Jonathan M Webb**  
Headmaster

