



Re-founded 1555

# Ripon Grammar School

*Helping shape the future since 1555*



22 September 2022

Dear Parents

Term is now well under way as we approach the end of week three. Our new students predominantly in Years 7, 9 and 12 have settled in well and I do hope they have all enjoyed their start with us. Our boarding community – now a record 10.5% of the school - have also made an excellent start. News over the last few weeks has of course been dominated by the death of Queen Elizabeth II. We spent time in assemblies, form time and in lessons, reflecting on the life and times of our late Queen. No doubt, further conversations will be woven into citizenship, history and other lessons about the significance of the event and wider constitutional matters.

As term progresses I would like to draw your attention to a number of items:

## **Friends Renaissance Ball, Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate, on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

Thank you to the Friends for the *huge amount* of work they have undertaken to put on this ball which aims to raise much-needed funds for school and in particular fulfil our longer-term desires to establish a fitness suite at the school. Tickets are still on sale and the Friends would very much value your support. Deadline for ticket sales is Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October. Please email [friends@ripongrammar.com](mailto:friends@ripongrammar.com) to enquire. You can either reserve a table [10-12] or just come individually, as a couple or in a small group. It should prove to be a memorable evening in support of a worthwhile cause of course!

In support of this event there is also a raffle and auction with a large number of great prizes to be won. Students will be bringing raffle tickets and a letter home with them tomorrow. We would very much value your support in selling tickets, completing counterfoils & returning monies or unsold tickets to school reception by Friday 18 November at the very latest.

## **Relationships and Sex Education**

This is a statutory component of our curriculum - see [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) At RGS, we deliver age-appropriate aspects of this as part of PSHCE lessons in the summer term of Year 9 and throughout Years 10 and 11; it is taught by RGS staff, using carefully researched materials which meet government guidelines. The relevant school policies can be found here: [Policies - Ripon Grammar School](#) Any queries can be sent to Mrs Mars, Head of PSHCE at [marsh@ripongrammar.com](mailto:marsh@ripongrammar.com)

## **Students' late arrival to school**

We are determined to maintain good attendance at RGS and in particular to ensure no students arrive late on site. This is part of our wider aim to instil good habits and a business-like approach to lessons. However, there remain a number of students who are persistently late each day. I would be grateful if parents could continue to ensure that their sons/daughters arrive on school site by 8:45 at the latest so that registration can be taken promptly in form rooms at 8:50. Overall attendance is very good and higher than national rates, as we would expect. Well done to Year 7 and 12 whose attendance remains the highest in the school at 99.5%.

### **Vaping materials and other banned items**

Recent reports suggest that there has been a worrying uptake in the number of young people experimenting with vaping, particularly in the 16-18 age range. While it is not illegal to smoke or vape under the age of 18, it is illegal to sell such products to under 18s. We know also that labelling, sweet flavours and colours are designed to entice younger people to experiment. When vapes are found in school, we do try to ascertain where they have been purchased in order to report the matter to police.

It is a clear contravention of school rules to bring vapes onto the school site and we reserve the right to search students suspected of carrying such materials. We are in the process of reviewing our policies and procedures with regards to vapes [and other smoking products] but in the meantime I would be grateful if parents could ensure their sons and daughters do not bring vapes onto the school site as a considerable amount of time is being wasted dealing with this problem. Similarly, chewing gum - a persistent and perennial problem we are trying to address - should not be brought on to the site.

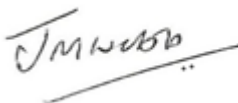
### **Uniform**

Overall students have made a great start in terms of overall appearance. There remain some persistent issues and I would be grateful if parents could continue to ensure students depart for the day in the correct uniform.

There are lots of things to look forward to this term such as our house competitions, sporting events and of course our music concerts. Before half term we have our annual charity week - this year in support of WaterAid - a very worthy cause considering the issues facing countries such as Pakistan at the moment. The October edition of RGS News will be out soon, containing its usual mix of stories - not just individual success stories but also tales of ordinary school life which I hope captures the essence of the school and the efforts of a large number of our students. Mrs Savage remains keen as ever to hear from students who would like to write something for RGS News, either student blogs or about their hobbies or interests outside RGS - open to everyone!

And finally... while our flowerbeds struggle to retain their summer glory into September, RGS was delighted to be awarded a 'gold' merit award from Ripon In Bloom. We await to see whether we are given 'best in show', but judges were impressed by our range of formal and informal planting, commitment to hedgerow and tree planting, wildflower meadows and orchards. Thank you to all involved, and we look forward to developing new beds and greater plant diversity as the years progress.

Best wishes



**Jonathan M Webb**  
Headmaster