



Dear Parents,

I hope you have had a restful weekend and, with the new week underway, I wanted to send an update from school.

The first thing I should mention is that unfortunately I had a cycling accident over the weekend which led to a broken collarbone, which requires surgery later this week. There are some things I can do remotely from home in the meantime, but I have been warned not to expect to do too much in the days after the operation. Those who know me will appreciate that I am not fond of being away from school. However, I am very confident in the strength of the team at the RGS and Mr Keenan is more than capable of deputising in my absence.

In terms of Covid-19-related developments, over the weekend and this morning, we have been informed of three further positive Covid-19 test results. One in Y9, one in Y11 and one in Y12. This takes the current totals to three students in Y9, six in Y11, one in Y12 and three Senior School staff. Given earlier measures already in place, I am pleased to report that these latest cases have led to only a small number of additional students being asked to self-isolate, following consultation with the local Public Health Protection Team. In all cases we are in touch with the individuals concerned to offer support.

As we informed you at the end of last week, Y11 students are currently working from home and I am pleased to report that the teachers in school were quickly able to swing into action providing remote lessons to those students. As we learnt from our last experience of running remote working, it is really important for the well-being of students that they do their best to involve themselves in lessons and school activities rather than just observing. This includes turning cameras on where internet connection allows, in order to provide more of that sense of human interaction. It is also important that they do not spend the whole day in front of a computer screen but should consciously take time to get some fresh air and exercise where they can. Please do get in touch if you have any concerns about the transition to remote learning for your child.

I should remind at this point that our remote learning provision is only available to students who we have agreed need to self-isolate due to Covid-19 precautions. For students absent for other reasons the first priority is to rest and recover, and then to catch up on their return to school as usual. They should not be attempting to attend lessons when off school unwell.

At this point it is perhaps worth highlighting a few pieces of helpful information including the following [video](#), which is helpful in establishing the difference between cold, flu and Covid-19. There is also some useful information in this [Q&A from Newcastle City Council specifically aimed at parents](#). I expect that many of you are aware of the new [NHS Covid-19 app](#) which is aimed at those aged over 16 and there is [Government guidance about use of the app in schools](#). We would encourage students and parents to use the app, although of course this is not mandatory in school. Finally, in case you have missed anything that has come out from the RGS, there is an ever-increasing collection of communications that have been added to [back to school page](#).

We are very conscious that this remains a fast paced and changing environment and we have very much valued your support of the measures we have in place to protect our community. We remain committed to keeping you informed and would encourage you to also keep us in touch with us via the usual contact: communications@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk.

With best wishes to you all for the new week,
Geoffrey Stanford

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