

Dear Parents,

I hope that you all enjoyed a good weekend; Saturday's rain seemed to be balanced by the sunshine on Sunday. I hope that many of you got to enjoy some time outdoors, despite the various restrictions currently in place around the region.

A brief update on Covid-19 related developments. I'm afraid that one more member of our community tested positive for Covid-19, late on Friday. This was one of our regular Visiting Music Teachers who was in school for one day last week, and the very small number of students taught by them have already been contacted.

Related to this, we have been reflecting on the different ways in which we can, as far as possible, minimise the number of students who test positive in the - I'm afraid inevitable - scenario that we have another confirmed case within school. We have taken the decision to introduce one new practice to help with this, and are currently looking at a second option:

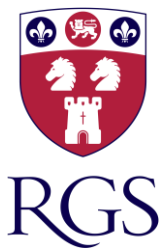
- The first is that I will be announcing in Senior School Assembly on Wednesday, that all Year 7 to Upper Sixth students will need to wear face coverings in **non-teaching time** in classrooms. This includes break times, and indoor lunchtimes (of course, not while students are eating). In practice this will mean a limited change for students, some are already choosing to wear their face coverings in these non-teaching/more social times in classrooms. We hope that this measure will enable students to safely speak with their peers, in non-teaching times, when they are therefore not in their strict forward-facing seating arrangements. I mention this now so that you can make sure that your child has an adequate supply each day to manage this increased use.
- The second is going to take a little more time to put in place, but we are considering the introduction of coloured lanyards, unique to each bubble of students, and further signage in school signposting the outer perimeter of bubbles. For example, Year 7 students may wear purple lanyards and Year 8 yellow lanyards. It will be clear in the building where the purple zone ends and the yellow zone begins. We hope that this measure will help students avoid wandering into other year group bubbles. Should we go ahead, we will be supplying these coloured lanyards, so there is no action for parents to take, though we would appreciate you giving these a wash, as you would with any other item of uniform or face coverings.

Lastly on Covid matters, [this link](#) will give you access to an excerpt of an assembly put together by the Senior Prefects, who wanted to share some very personal reasons for their peers, and students in younger year groups, to help to keep us all safe in school. The clip I am sending here includes reflections from one student on how Covid-19 has had such a troubling and life changing effect on his family. This is such an important thing for the student body to reflect upon and justifies just why all the measures we have in place are so important.

Thank you for your continued best wishes to Geoffrey Stanford. I am pleased to report that he continues to make a good recovery and is now working from home through the initial phase of his recuperation. He is very much looking forward to being back in school later this week.

Finally, I wanted to let you know that our new Director of Finance and Operations, Rachel Amey, started with us this week. This is a fundamental role for the school and her expertise will be invaluable to the school going forwards; she is looking forward to getting to know parents in time. Rachel is taking over from Mike Pitkethly who retires as Bursar at the end of this month. For your information her contact email address is: dfo@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk.

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As ever, please do keep in touch via communications@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk, we very much appreciate your ideas and thoughts.

Best Wishes,

Tom Keenan

Deputy Head

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