

Dear Parents,

I trust this finds you all well. It has, meanwhile, been another busy week at RGS and I wanted to drop a brief note about a few matters.

Virtual Open Morning

I hope that you enjoyed watching the wide range of films that were created for the Virtual Open Morning on Saturday and circulated to you by Tom Keenan. In case you have yet to see them, they can be found [here](#). We also held a separate Sixth Form information evening on Monday and that content can be found [here](#). This might be especially interesting for Year 11 students and parents or indeed even younger students looking ahead and getting excited about A Level options. I am, of course, grateful to the staff who created the material in-house and put the event together. I am also especially proud of the students who represented RGS so well. If you have any feedback on what you think worked well or what could be improved on any of this content then, as ever, please do email: communications@rgs.newcastle.sch.uk.

Covid-19 cases

I am afraid that since my last letter four more students have tested positive for Covid-19; one in Year 8, one in Year 10, and two in Upper Sixth. In three of these cases the students were already isolating and/or were not in school in the crucial infectious period, so these cases have not led to anyone else self-isolating. As inevitable, an increasing number of our community have been contacted by track and trace, which means we do have a number of students and staff operating from home. While it continues to be a challenging time for all, we are keeping going with school-life as close to normality as we can.

Year 8 & Year 9 reports

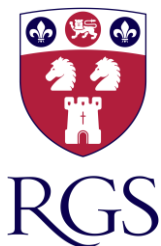
This term Year 8 and Year 9 parents were due to receive a full report, including comments from individual teachers, plus a summary from Form Supervisors and Tutors.

Given my desire to prioritise everyone's wellbeing, we have decided that we will replace the report due at the end of this term with a grades sheet which will contain teacher grades together with a student reflection on how they feel they have been progressing this term. There will also be a summary comment by the Form Supervisor who has seen your son/daughter daily. Crucially the grades sheet will still leave an opportunity for teachers to share any concerns and the sheets will be available before term finishes to allow any necessary follow-up to occur in good time before the Christmas break.

This slightly reduced reporting will alleviate enormous pressure in the school, compounded by the lockdown, and enable our – admittedly stretched – teachers to focus on inspiring our students. Next term, as planned, these year groups will have grades at half term and again at the end of the Spring term plus a Parents' Conference in early March. Following this, there will be a full report at the end of the Summer term.

I recognise that this is a change from the schedule sent to you by Roger Loxley earlier this term, but I trust that you will understand that the circumstances this term are exceptional and require exceptional measures.

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Covid-19 risk assessment

I wanted to highlight that the school's Covid-19 risk assessment has been updated on the 5th November, it is available [here](#).

PlayerLayer

Finally, I know that some school sports kit did not arrive in time for the beginning of term. I hope that all this has now arrived and I would be grateful to parents checking that children do have the right RGS kit for sports activities so that we can maintain a consistent approach. In case anyone needs to replenish any kit, it is perhaps worth highlighting that [PlayerLayer are currently offering a 25% discount](#), which may be of interest to some families. Once we come out of the current period of lockdown, it should also be possible for families to access the second-hand Threadaware stock that is sold in aid of the Bursary Campaign.

Thank you for all of your donations of food towards our Feeding Families food parcel appeal, which supports families in need (including bursary families). Thank you also for all of your messages of support; your continued appreciation that the school is continuing to operate as near to normality as possible, despite the lockdown, means a great deal to the staff here.

With all good wishes,

Geoffrey Stanford
Headmaster