

11th February 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians

As we draw to the end of an exceptionally busy half term, I would like to start by thanking all members of our community for the support over the past few weeks. Students and staff have coped incredibly well with the uncertainty created by COVID, particularly the issues we have, on occasion, faced with staffing as a number of teaching staff tested positive last week. I joined their ranks and tested positive on Tuesday evening; I would like to thank all staff for their extra support during my self-isolation period and I look forward to returning to school after the half-term break.

Advance information - exams summer 2022

The awarding bodies announced the advance information earlier this week and this has been shared with students in lessons and through subject Google Classrooms. Please click [here](#) for more information from the Department for Education and click [here](#) for a letter to students from the chief regulator of Ofqual.

Please click [here](#) to read the Making the Grade booklet that was shared with Year 11 parents and guardians separately and which includes details of advance information and revision strategies for each subject. A separate booklet will be shared for Year 13 students next half term.

Internal assessments

Students in Year 9 will sit internal assessments in lessons during the week commencing 28th February 2022. Please click [here](#) for more information, including topics to support students' revision.

Year 10 pre-public examinations (PPEs) will be taking place 18th-23rd March 2022. Please click [here](#) for revision resources including the PPE timetable.

I know students in key stage 4 and 5 are all working incredibly hard in preparation for external and internal examinations, and I would like to thank parents and guardians who I am sure are working equally hard to provide support at home.

Year 13 university applications

The Year 13 UCAS application process has been completed and I am delighted that the Sixth Form team has sent off a record 105 applications. 87% of Year 13 applied to university and the vast majority of those students are already in receipt of offers, including three students who have received offers from Oxford or Cambridge. I am also pleased that a number of students are being supported to follow apprenticeship pathways. Our Sixth Form has always been characterised by the individual support we give to our students, and I am sure all parents and guardians will join me in congratulating Year 13 students and families, and the Sixth Form team for this fantastic news.

Exceptional leave

The school has received an increased number of exceptional leave requests this term. I do realise that it has been all but impossible for families to take overseas holidays over the past two years but I have to stress that statutory

guidance makes clear that, as Headteacher, I may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. I do believe that leave during term time can significantly impact on overall attainment and should be avoided if at all possible. The school understands that there may be exceptional reasons why a parent requests leave of absence during term time and, although each case will be individually reviewed, I wanted to clarify that holidays should not be considered as exceptional leave.

COVID updates

I am sure that many parents and guardians will have heard the Prime Minister's announcement earlier this week regarding potentially lifting self-isolation rules. The strategy for living with COVID is due to be presented shortly after we return from the half-term break and I will update parents and guardians on the implications for the school in due course.

I would like to remind families that students aged 12-15 will be able to receive their first or second dose of the COVID-19 vaccination at school on Friday 4th March 2022. Should families prefer to use the half-term break to organise vaccination, please click [here](#) for information about the vaccine and links to booking.

VLT Photography Competition

The Vanguard Learning Trust photography competition is focused on the theme of 'happiness'. Please click [here](#) for more information and I look forward to seeing the photos submitted by students and staff. There is no requirement to have any specialist equipment and students can use phones or tablets to capture what happiness means to them.

Safer internet week

This week, students have taken part in a range of activities as part of safer internet week, including assemblies from the student digital leaders and talks from the company BeSecureOnline. I would like to thank Mrs Carstens and Mrs Poddar for organising the activities, and the students who led the assemblies.

World Book Day - Thursday 3rd March 2022

World Book Day takes place on Thursday 3rd March 2022 and parents/guardians may be equally pleased and disappointed to hear that we will not be asking students to dress up for the day. The day will focus on sharing great reads and students in Years 7-9 will be asked to share their favourite book over the course of the day, with prizes on offer for the best presentations.

Cucina

After half term, the amount students will be able to spend at Cucina will be increased from £5 to £6. Should parents/guardians wish to reduce this amount, please contact Ms Kettle via office@ruisliphigh.org.uk.

Key dates for next half term

Please note that some of these dates are dependent on government guidelines regarding COVID-19 safety measures and are therefore subject to change.

Monday 21st February 2022: Half term begins
Wednesday 23rd February 2022 - Thursday 24th February 2022: Year 10 Art PPE
Thursday 24th February 2022: Year 12 Parliament trip
Friday 25th February 2022: Student Leadership Team applications close
Monday 28th February 2022 - 4th March 2022: Year 9 Assessment Week
Wednesday 2nd March 2022: Year 13 English conference trip
Wednesday 2nd March 2022: Year 13 PPE results day
Wednesday 2nd March 2022: Parent Voice meeting (6pm - 7pm)
Thursday 3rd March 2022: World Book Day
Friday 4th March 2022: COVID vaccinations (Year 7 - Year 11)
Monday 7th March 2022 - Friday 11th March 2022: Careers Week
Tuesday 8th March 2022: Sixth Form Interview Day
Wednesday 9th March 2022: Year 9 immunisations
Thursday 10th March 2022: Year 13 Parents' Evening (4:30pm - 7pm)
Monday 14th March 2022: External Sixth Form interviews (3:30pm - 5:30pm)
Tuesday 15th March 2022: Year 12 Post-18 Options Evening
Tuesday 15th March 2022 - Wednesday 16th March 2022: Year 12 Art PPE
Thursday 17th March 2022: Year 11 music theatre trip (4pm - 11:30pm)
Friday 18th March 2022 - Friday 25th March 2022: Year 10 PPE week
Monday 21st March 2022 - Friday 25th March 2022: Safeguarding Week
Thursday 24th March 2022: Year 8 immunisations
Thursday 24th March 2022: Year 9 Options Evening
Monday 28th March 2022: Easter Egg Hunt (3:15pm - 4:15pm)
Wednesday 30th March 2022 - Thursday 31st March 2022: School panto (5:30pm - 7:30pm)
Friday 1st April 2022 - Monday 4th April 2022: Year 12 PGL trip
Friday 1st April 2022: Term ends (leave time from 12pm-12:15pm)

Finally, I would like to wish all of the community a restful half-term break and I look forward to seeing all students back on Monday 21st February 2022.

Yours sincerely



Gareth Davies
Headteacher