

16th December 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians

I am writing whilst still full of Christmas cheer following the winter showcase that took place over the past two evenings. The students' performances were incredible and the students impressive both in terms of their talent and their professionalism. On Wednesday evening, the students performed not just to parents, students and staff, but also to senior citizens from our local community, who enjoyed a Christmas party hosted by the students from the Sixth Form before the concert. It was a delight to be able to have such an event once again, and I would like to thank all of the students and staff involved who made the Winter Showcase such a success.

On Tuesday a large proportion of the school community sat down to enjoy Christmas dinner and the atmosphere was definitely festive. Our catering provider, Cucina, has asked me to share a Christmas message with parents/guardians; please click [here](#).

Weather conditions

This week has felt like Christmas, and not just because of the weather conditions. The cold conditions did mean students remained inside the building during social times and student behaviour was exemplary.

Following the tragic events in Solihull earlier this week, I would also like to remind parents/guardians to speak to your children about winter safety and the dangers of frozen water. I was notified by local residents yesterday afternoon of a small number of students playing on the frozen water near the Jim O'Neil Walk behind the school. School staff attended immediately and the students concerned have been spoken to and their parents have been contacted directly. We have also made the local authority aware of the situation on their land. Please click [here](#) to see advice from the Drowning Prevention Charity about how to stay safe this winter.

January 2023 - staffing update

Parents/guardians will be aware that there are some staffing changes in the new year. Mr Alexander, Head of Drama and Year 11, is leaving Ruislip High School after seven years and Mrs Woodall, Head of History, is leaving after five years. Both members of staff are leaving to take up positions closer to where they live, and they will be much missed by the school community. Parents/guardians of students in Year 11 will know that Mr Sills is joining the school as Head of Year 11 and will be teaching most of Mrs Woodall's History classes. Mr Randall, who is currently Head of Year 8, will be Head of Drama from January 2023, and I am pleased to share that we have recruited Mr Joseph who, like Mr Sills, is an experienced teacher and head of year, as Head of Year 8. Year 8 students met Mr Joseph for the first time in celebration assembly on Wednesday and I am also pleased to share with parents that Mr Joseph is the first Ruislip High School member of staff with a Commonwealth Games Gold medal to his name.

VLT updates

I am pleased to share with parents the newsletter from the Vanguard Learning Trust for this term (click [here](#)) and a letter from Peter Davies, Chair of Trustees, and Martina Lecky, CEO, (click [here](#)) which includes a link to the annual dividend report which explains the benefits of our Trust.

Parent governor

Next term we will be inviting nominations from parents/guardians who are keen to make a positive contribution to our school by becoming a parent governor on our local governing body. Maria Faley, Senior Clerk, will write to parents/guardians in January 2023 with full details.

Holiday and Food programme

I have been asked to share with families that there are spaces available on the Holiday and Food programme which runs from Monday 19th December to Thursday 22nd December 2022, 11.30am to 3.30pm, for students in Years 7-11 who are in receipt of free school meals. The programme is free and young people will be provided with a hot meal each day as well as engaging in a range of activities including sports, arts, dance and cooking. To book a space, please click [here](#). For any further details, please contact Dettie Quirke (dquirke@hillingdon.gov.uk or 07958 121115).

I would also like to share a letter from Kelly O'Neill, Director of Public Health, London Borough of Hillingdon, which outlines support available for families over the Christmas holidays (click [here](#)).

Finally, I am delighted to share with you the latest edition of the [Ruislip Eye](#) which is once more a great read and exemplifies what our students are capable of. I also attach the school's winter [newsletter](#) which I believe really does highlight just how much goes on at RHS over the course of a term and how we really are a school both in, and for, the community. I would like to thank parents/guardians for your support during 2022 and wish all of our community a peaceful Christmas and a happy new year.

Yours sincerely



Gareth Davies
Headteacher

Key dates for next half term

Please see below a list of key dates for next half term. Please note that, following parent feedback, the date for Year 9 options evening has changed and will now take place on the earlier date of Thursday 2nd March 2023.

- Tuesday 3rd January 2023: INSET day
- Wednesday 4th January 2023: Term begins
- Thursday 12th January 2023: Year 10 parents' evening (remote) - 4:30pm - 7pm
- Tuesday 17th January 2023 - Monday 23rd January 2023: Year 13 PPE week
- Thursday 26th January 2023: Year 11 parents' evening (in person) - 4:30pm - 7pm
- Wednesday 1st February 2023 - Tuesday 28th February 2023: LGBTQ+ month
- Wednesday 1st February 2023: Berlin trip meeting - 6pm - 7pm
- Thursday 2nd February 2023: Year 10 & Year 11 theatre trip - 5:15pm - 10:30pm
- Friday 3rd February 2023: Winter reward trip from 1:45pm
- Monday 6th February 2023 - Friday 10th February 2023: Safer internet week
- Tuesday 7th February 2023: Parent Voice meeting - 6pm - 7pm
- Wednesday 8th February 2023: Year 8 immunisations
- Thursday 9th February 2023: Year 8 parents' evening - 2:30pm-7pm (early finish for students - KS3 students will be dismissed at 1.45pm, KS4 and KS5 students at 1:10pm)
- Friday 10th February 2023: Half term ends