

25th February 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians

I would like to start by saying that it has been a delight to welcome all students back this week following the half-term break and to say how proud I am of the excellent attitudes to learning I have seen across the school this week.

COVID-19

As I am sure that parents/guardians are aware, on Monday 21st February 2022 the Prime Minister set out the next phase of the government's COVID-19 response and the Department for Education (DfE) has shared guidance with schools (click [here](#)). The key points relate to self-isolation and testing.

Self-isolation

From Monday 21st February 2022, the government has removed the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. However, anyone testing positive is advised to stay at home and avoid contact with others for at least five full days, and to follow the guidance until they have received two negative test results on consecutive days. Contacts are no longer legally required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests, and contact tracing has ended.

The guidance states that, whilst there is no longer a legal requirement to self-isolate, schools can refuse to allow staff or students who have tested positive to attend the site as this would be deemed to be a health and safety matter. The mindset has moved from pandemic to endemic and a focus on dealing with infectious diseases: for example, a student with chickenpox would remain at home until they were no longer infectious.

As per this guidance, staff and students who test positive must not attend school until they have self-isolated for at least five full days, and received two negative test results on consecutive days. I am grateful that I can expect parents/guardians not to knowingly send their child to school if they had either tested positive for COVID-19 or are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

Testing

Anyone with symptoms should take a PCR test. With immediate effect, the government has removed the guidance for staff and students to undertake twice-weekly asymptomatic testing. However, tests are still available at local pharmacies and online (click [here](#)). Alternatively, the school can supply a box of seven self-test kits whilst we still have means to do so.

From 1st April 2022, the government will no longer provide free-to-order universal testing for the general public. The government will update guidance on the steps that people with COVID-19 should take to minimise contact with others accordingly.

I am fully aware that some members of our community will have concerns about this next phase whilst others will welcome the changes. We will continue to follow the guidance related to good hygiene and ventilation and will continue to update our school risk assessment. Furthermore, staff and students can continue to wear face coverings should they wish to do so. I am hopeful that we are beginning to emerge from the pandemic but I am

also conscious that we will have to learn to live with COVID-19 both within school and in our wider lives. I would like to thank parents/guardians for the support in terms of adhering to the measures put in place over the course of the pandemic and for the support going forward. I will continue to provide updates as the situation changes.

COVID-19 vaccinations

As I wrote to parents/guardians yesterday, the School Aged Immunisations Service will be able to offer students a vaccine against COVID-19 on Friday 4th March 2022. Please click [here](#) for the letter sent yesterday which includes details of which students are eligible and a link to the consent form that must be completed by 4pm on Wednesday 2nd March 2022.

Assessments

Students in Year 9 will be completing assessments next week during their lessons (click [here](#) for the information previously shared with parents) and Year 10 students start their pre-public examinations (PPEs) on Friday 18th March 2022 (click [here](#) for the booklet previously shared).

For students due to sit examinations this summer, assessments will take place during the last two weeks of this term. Whilst I am conscious that the build up to examination periods can be stressful, I would like to reassure parents/guardians that these assessments are no different from the sorts of exam practice that students would always be asked to complete as part of preparing for exams; the only difference is that these assessments will be used as evidence should examinations be cancelled this summer and schools asked to determine teacher assessed grades. The majority of assessments will take place in lessons but some assessments will take place in the hall to provide students with the opportunity to practise formal exam conditions whilst not taking too much curriculum time from students.

Finally, I am aware that a number of our students have commented that they have found the events of the past couple of days in Ukraine both shocking and disconcerting. Should any families be directly or indirectly affected by the events in Ukraine, please do not hesitate to contact the school and we will support in any way we can. I am sure the thoughts of the entire Ruislip High School community are with those affected by this conflict.

Yours sincerely



Gareth Davies
Headteacher