

3rd November 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians

Students returned after the half-term break this week and have shown both exemplary behaviour and excellent attitudes to learning, which is particularly impressive given the inclement weather we have seen this week. There was further work on the school building taking place over the half term including updates to our broadband provider and I am grateful to the premises and IT teams for ensuring the school was ready on Monday.

Events

The first week back has seen a range of events take place including Year 8 African drumming workshops, which were enthusiastically received by the Year 8 students, and there are two trips taking place today: an English trip for Year 13 students to the British Library to take part in a workshop developing writing, and this evening's trip to watch the London Lions basketball match at the Copper Box arena in Stratford. I know that students value and enjoy these experiences and I would like to thank Ms Nastou for organising the drumming workshops, Ms Bhudia for organising the trip to the British Library and Mr Joseph for organising the trip to the basketball.

Our Year 7 cohort have settled in well and I met a number of parents/guardians of Year 7 students yesterday during Year 7 tutor evening and was pleased to hear the positive feedback. I would like to thank Ms Loizou, Head of Year 7, for organising the evening and thank the Friends of Ruislip High School who organised the pre-loved school uniform sale that also ran yesterday evening, raising over £150. Should parents/guardians have uniform that your child has outgrown, please donate via the school office.

Presentation Evening - Thursday 9th November 2023

Next Thursday 9th November is our annual presentation evening, which is a highlight of the year as we celebrate the achievement of our students. The theme for this year's presentation evening is respect and our guest speakers are Margaret and Barry Mizen. As parents/guardians will be aware, the Mizens lost their son in an unprovoked attack in 2008 and have previously visited the school to share with our students their message of forgiveness, peace and hope.

Examinations

Students in Year 11 will sit their pre-public examinations (PPEs) next month with students in Year 10 also sitting their Citizenship PPE. These are important for students to practise the routines of public examinations and to identify areas that require further revision. Please click [here](#) for the booklet which has been shared with Year 11 students through Google Classroom and includes the PPE timetable and revision resources and click [here](#) for the booklet for Year 10 students.

Examinations can be a stressful time for students, and for parents/guardians, and Ofqual, who regulate the awarding bodies, have produced a guide to dealing with exam pressure for students (click [here](#)). Should parents/guardians have any questions about examinations, please contact Mr Hankin, Assistant Headteacher, via the main school office.

Sixth Form Open Evening - Wednesday 15th November 2023

Our Sixth Form Open Evening takes place on Wednesday 15th November from 5pm-7.30pm and we look forward to welcoming our Year 11 students, accompanied by parents/guardians, to the event. There will be talks from Mr Peacock, Head of Year 12 and me, and information about each of the A-level and Level 3 BTEC subjects we offer, as well as information about the support available in the Sixth Form. Please click [here](#) for more information about the evening. Please complete and return the reply form [here](#) by Wednesday 8th November 2023 to confirm attendance.

In addition, please be aware that the Sixth Form is now accepting early applications from students already studying at Ruislip High School. This application form is exclusively open to current students and will enable them to reserve their place at the Sixth Form before external applications open; it is strongly advised that your child reserves their place now. This place is conditional; to take up the place students must achieve at least five GCSEs at grade 4 or above in summer 2024. The form can be accessed via your child's Google Classroom, or at the link [here](#).

Should parents/guardians have any questions about Sixth Form Open Evening, please contact Ms Horton, Assistant Headteacher and Mr Peacock, Head of Year 12, via the main school office.

Remembrance Day

Next week Year 9 ambassadors will be selling poppies as part of the national Poppy Appeal to symbolise remembrance and hope for a peaceful future. Should your child wish to support this, please ask them to bring in a donation next week. Poppies will be available at the start of school and during tutorial time.

On Friday 10th November 2023, the entire school will pause for two minutes to pay our respects to the armed forces community, emergency services and families, and those affected by conflict and acts of terrorism.

Attendance

The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, published her report this week: Missing Children, Missing Grades (click [here](#)), following the rates of children missing school more than doubling since the pandemic. The report also shows the significant link between attendance and results, with 78% of children with rare absences passing five GCSEs, compared with only 36% of persistently absent students, and 5% of severely absent students.

One of the important findings is that students whose absence improved achieved higher than students whose absence continued to be a concern, reinforcing that it is never too late to see the benefits of improving attendance. The Commissioner also reminds us that attending school is vital for social and emotional development, as well as for academic benefits.

I would like to remind parents and guardians that we expect students to attend school every day. Whilst we recognise that there are of course times when we feel unwell, the expectation is to attend unless a student feels too ill to do so, in which case parents/guardians should notify the school via ClassCharts.

Parent workshops

The Ben Kinsella Trust has released new dates for their free online workshop where parents and guardians can learn more about what is regular teenage behaviour and what are the signs that a young person is being groomed or exploited. The workshop is available to anyone; click [here](#) for more information.

Finally, I would like to wish all members of the school community a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



Gareth Davies
Headteacher