

OUR REF: APN/XHT

14 July 2021



RIDGEWOOD
SCHOOL

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Dear parent/carer

Although we have not yet reached the end of term, I wanted to inform you of some important updates, particularly in relation to the start of the new term in September.

Covid Update

As you will be aware the number of positive cases is rising nationally and locally and this trend has been seen in school. We have had several positive cases recently which has resulted in the whole of Year 10 working remotely, one half of Year 9 and small groups in other year groups self-isolating. Please remind your son/daughter of the importance of social distancing, hand hygiene and wearing a mask in small enclosed spaces, where a safe distance cannot be maintained.

You may have seen the announcement from Gavin Williamson (Secretary of State for Education) that the requirement for close contacts to self-isolate will be removed from 16 August. This means that only the student who has tested positive will have to isolate. We welcome this move, as it will enable us to keep more of our students in school. Although we now have an excellent remote learning offer, it is not the same as face-to-face teaching.

If your child is still attending Ridgewood School and tests positive on a PCR test in the first week of the summer holiday, please inform us using the 'contact us' facility, on the school website, as we are still obliged to track and trace any contacts in the 48 hours before symptoms began.

September 2021

Mr Williamson has also announced that schools should carry out two lateral flow tests on students on their return to school in September. Therefore, we have had to adapt our plans for the start of the new term. We will stagger the return of students to allow us to test them once on the day of their return. We will then test them a second time between 3 and 5 days later.

Year 7

The official start of term for Year 7 is 8.40am on Thursday 2 September and full school uniform must be worn. This day will be used to carry out the first lateral flow test, for the students where consent has been given, and a range of induction activities. On Friday 3 September normal lessons will begin from 8.40am.

Year 12

Year 12 students who have consent to have a lateral flow test must attend school at 1.00pm on Thursday 2 September. Once their test has been carried out they will be expected to leave the school site. All Year 12 students will then officially begin the new term at 8.40am on Friday 3 September, which will be an induction day. Business dress must be worn on this day. Normal lessons will begin on Monday 6 September.

Years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13

The official start of term for these students will be Tuesday 7 September. However, they will all receive an appointment time to attend school for their first lateral flow test on either Friday 3 or Monday 6 September. On the day of their appointment they will arrive at school at their allocated time, take the test and return home. Students do not need to wear uniform on the day of their lateral flow test appointment but full school uniform must be worn from Tuesday 7 September.



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We will not carry out a lateral flow test on any student who does not have parental consent. For all current students, we will use the consent that was initially provided in March. If you want to change your consent, or your child is new to Ridgewood, please follow the link below to provide your consent by Friday 30 July. Appointment times will be sent out via an InTouch message in August. If you have not provided consent, your child returns to school on the official return date as stated above.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/September2021LFTconsent/>

With the rapidly changing nature of the pandemic, these plans may need to change. If this is the case, we will communicate any changes to parents/carers as soon as we know ourselves.

Standards and Expectations Years 7-11

Uniform

Please ensure that students are fully prepared for their return in September. This includes having the full school uniform. Recently, we have allowed a small number of students to wear non-regulation items (particularly footwear) due to damage or growing out of their uniform. We have done this because we understand how difficult it has been to replace items of uniform under current restrictions. However, with the government's announcement that all restrictions will be lifted from 19 July we will not accept students wearing any clothing that does not meet our uniform expectations in September.

Piercings

There seems to have been an increase in the number of students who have had their nose pierced. The school rule is that no piercings are allowed. Students who return to school in September with piercings will be expected to remove them. Failure to do so will result in sanctions being put in place.

Mobile Phones

There has been a lot of publicity in the media about the use of mobile phones in schools. Our position remains the same: they are not allowed in school other than switched off and out of sight. Any student caught using their mobile on site will have it confiscated.

Please support us by reinforcing these expectations with your son/daughter in readiness for the new school year.

The standards and expectations for Sixth Form will be communicated with students and parent/carers prior to the start of the new academic year, by the Post-16 Year Leader.

I want to thank all parents/carers for their support and patience when having to deal with children who have been asked to isolate and access remote learning. The resilience that our students have shown in this disrupted year has been remarkable.

I hope you have a restful summer.

Yours faithfully,



A Peirson
Headteacher