

Wednesday, 09 December 2020

Moving to Remote Learning Programme

Dear Parents,

As we approach the Christmas holidays, I am writing to update you with some very recent changes and some important decisions we have had to make regarding arrangements for the end of term.

You will be aware that we have experienced a number of Covid-19-related issues which have had an impact on the level of staffing and supervision in the school. To reduce the impact on staffing and critical to ensure we have adequate supervision of students during the school day, as well as to ensure all families can be healthy for the holiday season, we have moved to our emergency plan and have taken the decision to move our students to a remote learning programme from Monday 14th December.

Students will begin to use the remote learning programme from the following dates:

- Monday 14th December Years 8 and 9 *(final day in school – Friday 11th December)*
- Wednesday 16th December Year 10 *(final day in school – Tuesday 15th December)*
- Thursday 17th December Years 7 and 11 *(final day in school – Wednesday 16th December)*

If students have an examination they are expected to attend every exam up until Friday 18th December.

This means students do not need to travel to school for lessons but will need to log into our virtual platform, Microsoft Teams, to access lessons and learning materials.

We recognise that this alters the way we would have done things for students at the end of term and we have therefore allowed for each year group to have a small end of term celebration in class groups.

We do expect every student to engage in the Remote Learning programme.

This decision has not been taken lightly. We have taken this decision after an analysis of our context, consultation with the Local Authority and Public Health England and as part of our emergency planning protocols. These arrangements are put in place to ensure continued learning in the absence of staff.

We have decided that it would be in the student's best interests to ensure that the students are able to engage successfully in lessons with their allocated teachers and use the time at home without any further disruption to the quality of their lessons and their day.

If your child is in receipt of free school meals, we will provide you with a voucher to allow you funds to access one lunch meal per day.

To arrive at this decision, we have considered how we best deploy the staff available to enable them to deliver the curriculum to examination groups whilst at the same time ensuring there is minimal impact on the quality of the curriculum delivery to our younger year groups.

One advantage to this is that, our students will be taught simultaneously in their class groups, allowing for a subject expert to deliver lessons remotely. We are confident that our parent community will support us to ensure that all students demonstrate maturity and keenness to engage in their classes remotely with our tried and tested virtual platform. Students are able to access work set using Microsoft Teams as well as communicate with their teachers. Some of these lessons will be 'live lessons.'

If your child does not have access to a device at home or faces any difficulties, please let us know and we will do our best to help.

This year continues to be very challenging for staff, families and for schools. COVID-19 has meant disruption to student's education and significant changes to how we are running the school. Despite this, staff and students continue to do exceptionally well in adapting to the changes.

As we approach the holiday season, may I take the opportunity once again to include information about the eventuality of anyone displaying Covid-19 symptoms.

Please look out for symptoms of Covid-19 in your child if they are isolating (a high temperature, a new persistent cough or loss of, or change to, sense of taste or smell). If they develop any of these symptoms please inform the school and keep your child at home. We rely on parents contacting us to let us know of any cases of Covid-19 so we can act quickly. If your child does develop symptoms, we would strongly advise you to get a test as soon as they are symptomatic. Tests are available online from <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school at contactus@rooksheath.harrow.sch.uk or by calling the school on 0208 422 4675.

A number of schools are currently dealing with positive Covid-19 cases so please understand that like many schools we are acting in the best interests of the school community; we understand that the situation may cause some anxiety. Therefore, it is very important that we continue to work together as partners – your child's Head of Year and the team of form tutors are there to help in any way they can.

Please remember to look at our website to see information on our dedicated Covid-19 page. ([Covid-19 page on website.](#))

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID-19

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should remain at home for at least 10 days from the date when their symptoms appeared.

All other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days.

The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.

Household members should not go to work, school or public areas and exercise should be taken within the home.

Household members staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

If you are able, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period.

Symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

If your child or anyone in the household does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/> or by phoning 111.

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19.

Hands

- Wash your hands regularly and for at least 20 seconds.

Face

- Cover your face in enclosed spaces, especially where social distancing may be difficult and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet.
- It is now compulsory to wear cloth face coverings on public transport, shops and several other indoor settings.

Space

- Stay 2 metres apart where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place.
- Keep your distance from people who are outside your household or support bubble.
- Limit social gatherings (including abiding by the 'rule of 6') and avoid crowded places.

Further Information

Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

If anyone does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/> or by phoning 111.

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19.

Do

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards

Further Information

Further Information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Finally, I wish to thank every parent and carer for their dedication, support and encouragement during what has been a very challenging term. I want to also congratulate the students who have been remarkable during this time of rapid change and uncertainty.

May I wish you all a lovely festive season and a happy new year when it arrives. Please keep safe and well.

Yours sincerely



Mrs M Manderson
Headteacher