



22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

## Principal's Update – Spring Term 3

Thank you to parents and students who responded to our request for feedback on what was going well and how things might be improved with regards to Remote Learning. As a result, Miss Bigden, Head of Teaching & Learning, wrote to parents this morning to outline [some changes](#) to our provision from next week, including an increase in the number of synchronous (live) lessons. Most students will now have approximately 40% of their lessons delivered as synchronous lessons, with the remainder being delivered as asynchronous lessons. This increase will mean that some synchronous lessons will need to take place during Period 7 – this includes some lessons for Years 7-9 which were originally scheduled during Period 1. For clarity, synchronous lessons will take place according to the following timetable:

9.15am – 9.30am	Tutor Period (Monday & Thursday)
9.30am – 10.10am	Period 2
10.40am – 11.20am	Period 3
11.30am – 12.10pm	Period 4
12.50pm – 1.30pm	Period 5
1.40pm – 2.20pm	Period 6
2.30pm – 3.10pm	Period 7 (=Period 1 for Years 7-9)

As before, not all lessons will be synchronous and so students should work on asynchronous lessons at other times. As before, all work for asynchronous lessons will be uploaded to Google Classroom by 8.30am. Students' revised timetables, indicating which lessons will be synchronous, will be updated today and can be checked in [Parent Portal](#) and will also be emailed directly to students and parents. Attendance and engagement are being monitored and any concerns are communicated to parents on a daily basis. Parents may find it useful to refer to this [advice](#) on how you can support your child at home.

### *College VI Guidance Interviews*

As some Year 11 students may now have a synchronous lesson Period 7, the [College VI](#) Guidance Interviews will now start a little later than originally planned. Students should have received their appointment time for 26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 together with details of how the online guidance interview will be conducted. Please ask your Tutor if you have any queries.

### *Year 10 GCSE RE*

I wrote to Year 11 and Year 13 students and their parents earlier this week with details of the [consultation](#) which closes next Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Whilst the consultation does not specifically mention early entry, we are expecting confirmation of whether or not our Year 10 students, who were due to take GCSE RE this summer, will still be able to be entered and subsequently receive an award. We shall confirm as soon as possible. In the meantime, teachers are looking forward to meeting with Year 10 students and their parents at the virtual Parents Evening next Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021, 5-8pm.

### *On Site Provision & Asymptomatic Testing*

We continue to support vulnerable students and the children of key workers on site. If your child is eligible and you wish for them to attend, please contact [fiona.langan@riddlesdown.org](mailto:fiona.langan@riddlesdown.org). From Monday, students will be dismissed slightly later at 3.10pm to allow for any synchronous lessons during Period 7 and also to ensure that students have five hours of learning time in school. Asymptomatic testing for all those who are continuing to work on site regularly (and who have consented) has now commenced and will continue on a weekly basis. However, the government has advised that serial testing for those who may be identified as close contacts should be paused and, therefore, self-isolation in such cases will still be necessary. With significantly reduced numbers of students and staff on site, this is less likely to be an issue currently.

### *In the news...*

I felt a sense of déjà-vu this week, with the level of speculation in the media about when lockdown might end and when schools might reopen – it was like being back in May 2020! We are now half way through this half term and we understand that schools will be given two weeks' notice before reopening. Of course, we want to return to face-to-face work as soon as it is considered appropriate to do so, but we have now established ways of working which will support our community effectively over a longer period of time, if necessary – always monitoring, reviewing and adjusting our approaches as we go. It is a challenge, but I remain grateful for the support of parents and proud of our students and staff. Together, we are continuing to achieve.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Dey  
Principal