



10 December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we approach the end of the first term of the academic year, I wanted to thank you for your ongoing support for the school. Our students continue to impress us with their hard work and positive attitudes to learning and it has been great to see the return of extra-curricular events that form an important part of life at The Joseph Rowntree School. We will be sending out the first edition of our new termly newsletter 'The Rowntree Reporter' next week. I hope you and your child enjoy this overview of some of the key events of the term.

Updated Department for Education guidance

Following the announcement by the Government that further restrictions would be put in place under 'Plan B' we have received updated guidance from the Department for Education. We were pleased to see that this guidance states that face to face teaching should continue in schools and the directive to work from home does not apply to teachers or students. School will therefore remain open as normal. We have been asked to minimise the number of visitors that come onto the school site and will therefore be reviewing our planned calendar of events for next term and will update you about these in January. We will also be continuing to wear facemasks in communal areas in school.

Secondary Schools have been asked to test students for COVID-19 on their return to school in January. The York Public Health team have organised for these tests to be carried out at the community testing sites to minimise disruption to the start of term. Please take your child for a test in the last few days of the holiday to help reduce the chance of transmission of COVID-19.

Christmas Concert

Tickets are available for our online Christmas Concert through ParentPay. This will be recorded in school on Monday 13 December, with a link to the recording released to those parents/carers who have purchased a ticket on Tuesday 14 December. We hope that you are able to be part of this festive occasion and enjoy what promises to be a fabulous display of our students' talents.

Sixth Form University applications

Our Sixth Formers who are applying for university places have been busy finalising their UCAS applications over the last few weeks. Students are applying for a wide range of courses including Diagnostic Radiography, English Literature, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Fine Art, Law and Interior Design and Architecture. It is lovely to see students aspiring to continue their studies in so many different areas.

Eight of our students have applied to Oxford or Cambridge this term, navigating a challenging application process which included a range of assessments. In the last two weeks of term seven of these students have undertaken further interviews. All eight of these students are outstanding individuals with fantastic academic prospects and are a credit to the Sixth Form and the wider school as a whole.

Emergency Lockdown Drill

During Form Time next week, we will be briefing students on our emergency lockdown procedures and how they would be communicated to them, in the event that we need to use these. These procedures would be implemented if we had to lockdown the school building because of an incident of dangerous air pollution in the local area or an intruder being on site. This is nothing to be worried about and is just part of our normal risk assessment procedures, similar to our regular fire drills.

Parent/Carer Forum

We have gathered some very positive feedback from Year 7 and Year 9 parents following on from their parent/carers evenings and we will do this for each year group throughout the year. I would also like to establish a Forum where parents/carers can help us to shape the work of the school further. I will send some more information out about this after the holiday but hope that some of you will be able to join this group so that we can look at particular aspects of the school's work and get some more detailed feedback from you.

Haxby Railway Crossing

We have had a few reports of some students standing too close to the railway crossing when the barriers are down. We will continue to remind students about the importance of them behaving in a safe manner whilst they are travelling to and from school, but please reinforce this message at home as well.

End of term

Please remember that we will be dismissing students from school from 12.15pm on Friday 17 December for the start of the Christmas holiday. We are raising money for Arc Light on this day by holding a non-uniform/Christmas Jumper day. We ask that students who choose to wear non-uniform/Christmas Jumper bring a £1 voluntary donation in to school on the day. Also for Arc Light any donations of food and toiletries can be brought by your child to the main school reception every day next week. Thank you in advance for your support for this worthy charity.

Monday 3 January is a Bank Holiday and Tuesday 4 January is a Training Day, so all students should return to school at the normal time on Wednesday 5 January.

Best wishes for a happy and peaceful Christmas holiday.

Yours sincerely



Dave Hewitt