



ROUNDHAY SCHOOL

EST. 1903

KS3 NEWSLETTER

8 January 2021

IMPORTANT UPDATE - we apologise for the volume of information

I doubt that there has ever been a time when we have had to write so many communications to parents / carers. However, we feel that it is important to share the ever-changing information as soon as we become aware and have had the opportunity to put new plans in place. There has been a huge amount to consider and this is particularly complex given the size of our School, so planning has taken a considerable amount of time. Yet again, your patience and understanding is appreciated; all of this places huge pressure on families and schools, so we certainly share your frustration!

The government announcement at 8pm on Monday evening, means that some of the information in our recent letter no longer applies. You will be aware that, given the alarming rise in rates of Covid-19 nationally, the government has made the decision that the majority of pupils should move to remote learning. This is part of a wider package of measures to curb the spread of the virus, and protect the community and the NHS.

What this means for Roundhay School

- **All pupils will carry out their learning online**

We will continue to do *'whatever it takes'* to ensure that all Roundhay pupils secure quality learning from our experienced teaching staff and continue to progress in their learning. We have therefore made the decision that we will move to providing more 'live' lessons. Given the improved safety features of online platforms such as Zoom and Teams, and investment in appropriate technology, we now feel much more comfortable about this approach to remote learning. This does not mean that all lessons will be 'live' or that pupils will be expected to sit through five hours of teachers talking at them through a device. The learning will be a blend of 'live' taught elements, independent tasks and appropriate activities such as those that are currently within Teams. We felt that this was more appropriate given the age of pupils within Key Stage 3, and feedback we have received from parents and pupils (particularly around managing pupil 'workload' and the impact it has on families).

- **The children of critical workers and vulnerable children will continue to attend school**

The families of these children have already been informed. They will follow the same online learning content as their peers.

HEADTEACHER
Matthew Partington

HEAD OF SECONDARY
Jenny Hogarth

DEPUTY HEADTEACHER
John Mattinson

- **These arrangements are likely to remain until February half-term**

However, we do suspect that government decisions to return to face-to-face teaching will depend on the latest scientific information at the time. **We cannot predict, at this stage, if schools will definitely be back in February.**

In due course, we will communicate more detail regarding the provision for all year groups. In the meantime, pupils should continue working on Teams.

Online or Remote Learning is one area which will require patience from everyone. We know that with the use of technology things can go wrong. Sometimes the equipment will not work as we want it to, there are sometimes software issues or Wi-Fi can slow things down. Whilst we will work hard to overcome these issues, there can be problems that are out of our control, particularly with such a high number of users. This is another area where we appreciate your patience.

Mobile Data

The Department for Education has negotiated an offer with some mobile networks to increase the data allowances of households who do not have access to a fixed broadband connection and cannot afford additional data for their devices. If you meet the criteria and have a device on one of the participating networks, we can submit a request on your behalf. More information, and an application form, is available at <https://tinyurl.com/y4m6yr44>.

Laptops and Devices

We recognise that remote learning is a challenge for many families. Whilst we have received some devices from the Department for Education, the number only represents a small fraction of our primary, secondary and sixth form pupil numbers. Sadly we are not going to be able to fulfil all the requests we have received, and we are therefore having to prioritise the allocation of the available devices.

Support from School

We know from the previous lockdown, that many of our pupils found it very difficult not being able to attend school. Even though things will be very different, we are still here to help and support whenever we can. If you have any concerns about any aspects of wellbeing, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head of Year - we will always try to support if we can. Similarly, if you have any concerns about any aspect of online learning, please contact either the subject teacher (if it is specific to their subject) or your child's Form Tutor.

We may also contact your child from time to time to discuss work, ask how they are doing or just keep in touch. Additionally, Key Stage Three pupils will now have a 'live' session with their form tutor each Monday during Period One (08.25-09.30). This will provide students with updates relevant to the week ahead as well as a regular opportunity for a check-in with the Roundhay community. Links for these lessons will be sent to each child's school email address in advance of the lesson and in line with school policy.

Roundhay School will continue to support families throughout the current lockdown:

1. If your child receives free school meals you must complete the new FSM 2021 form by following the link below to update our delivery register. This will ensure you receive a twice weekly delivery of packed lunches until February half term.
https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=AGjwZ02h6kaxMymswYgsV2VckpW_D9NGhmCxFBhjd19UMFZaNUk0VVRWMkM2V1dBRDFCSktMUDA0Mi4u
2. If you need additional support (food or fuel) during the school closure, please contact the Additional Support / Welfare Advice Team to make a referral on behalf of the family. Contact them on 0113 376 0330.
3. If you have any other concerns regarding your child please contact the Head of Year or email wearelistening@roundhayschool.com and include your child's name and form. Someone will get back in touch with you and we will do our best to help.

Free School Meals

Provision for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers

Following the additional announcement of 4 January, we recognise more families may now need to access the in school provision for vulnerable children and the children of key workers. The government criteria for this provision is set out at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>. If you and / or your child meet the government's criteria then please complete the online form available at: <https://tinyurl.com/y337x9yd>. The form must be completed for each qualifying child. Please do not send your child to school until you have received confirmation that we can accommodate them. We may also need to contact you to request further information to confirm your eligibility.

Testing

You may be aware that the government has asked schools to carry out mass Covid-19 testing of pupils and staff, using Lateral Flow Testing, which is obviously a huge undertaking in such a large school. We are currently putting plans in place and undergoing training from the Department for Education. More details will follow but I would like to take this opportunity to **reassure you that no tests will take place without your prior consent.**

Year 9 Parents' Evening

The online Year 9 Parents' Evening is taking place between **15:15 and 18:30 on Tuesday 12 January 2021**. Thank you to everyone who has made appointments already; there are still appointments slots available if you are yet to do so. Please remember to log-in on time as the system is automatic and ends appointments at the end of the given time slot.

Please note that all the above information is current at the time of sending but, as we know from previous experience, this may change with very little notice. We will continue to update with any new information as it is received.

Please look out for text messages, emails or information posted online ('COVID Update' on our website and twitter @RoundhayHead @RoundhaySchool). Emails may come from a roundhayschool.com email address, or our InTouch email system (3834063@capita-intouch.co.uk) – please ensure you check junk / spam folders to ensure you do not miss important information.

We wish you all the very best over the coming weeks and months. It is more important than ever to follow the government guidance to keep everyone safe. Recent events have shown the Roundhay Community at its very best, and we know that we can continue to rely on your trust, patience and support as we move into a new chapter. Stay well and stay safe.

The Roundhay Team