



8<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Dear Parent, Carer

A very warm welcome back to our students in Years 8-13 and we are delighted to welcome Year 7 to KES. I trust you have all had a good summer. We have congratulated many students who achieved amazing results with their A Levels and GCSEs. It is wonderful to see so many of our Sixth Formers going onto top universities and many of last year's Year 11 students returning to continue their studies with us. Our results, overall, have taken a dip this year after two years of good progress and we will be working even harder to ensure that results improve significantly in 2018. I am very confident they will.

### **Priorities**

We are totally focused on continuing our journey of further improvement in 2017-18. Nothing is more important than giving your children the very best education possible and ensuring they achieve the best academic results and personal development. Our Ofsted report at the end of last term confirmed that there are many things we are doing well and improving on, but also that we still need to progress in a number of areas. Our priorities now for rapid improvement are:

1. Ensuring teaching is always good so that all groups of students and individuals achieve their very best in **all** year groups
2. Ensuring there is no disruption to learning through any poor behaviour
3. Ensuring attendance improves even further

Our professional development programme will continue to improve teaching so that the classroom experience for students is consistently excellent. Training is ongoing through the week for staff with breakfast and lunchtime sessions to further develop practice. We have further training in department meetings and whole staff sessions on particular aspects of classroom work. Can I please urge you to support your child's learning by talking to them regularly about their work in school and looking at their homework, set online through Show My homework. There is plenty of information on our website ([kesacademy.co.uk](http://kesacademy.co.uk)) about the curriculum in the Current Parents area. If you click on there, you will see another tab with Subject areas which shows what students study in their subjects year by year. This should help inform your conversations at home about learning. If you have any concerns about your child's progress, please email the subject teacher if there appears to be an issue about an individual subject. You can see email addresses by clicking on Contact us and then Contact staff members. If there are more general queries, please contact the Head of Year. You can of course phone the school if you prefer.

With regard to our second priority, any student behaviour that disrupts learning will be dealt with immediately. We surveyed students and parents in July and the theme of poor behaviour amongst a small number of students did come up. The easiest way to sum up the views of students, parents and staff is that no-one wants learning to be disrupted and if it happens, it must be immediately stopped. Our sanctions on this, already firm last year, are now firmer. If a student interrupts learning, they will be warned by the teacher, but if there is any continuation, the student will be removed from the lesson to work elsewhere and have a long detention after school that day where she/he will be studying and improving their own work. Parents will be informed of course if a student has to stay after school and I would anticipate that very few students will have to be removed and stay behind. However, nothing is more important than learning and we cannot compromise on that.

## *King Edward VII Academy*

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I would urge you to read our sanctions on the academy website because there are other changes from last year as well. The changes have already been explained to students **and if you would like to discuss these changes in person, do make an appointment to see me through Mrs Harvey [Sandra.Harvey@kesacademy.co.uk](mailto:Sandra.Harvey@kesacademy.co.uk)** .

Our attendance improved by around 1% last year and that is a good increase to make in a school during a year. We are still below the national average though and we must improve our figure. The most obvious reason to do so is because of the impact that attendance has on student achievement. The numbers are truly startling when one examines GCSE results linked to attendance. Those who come to school at least 95% of the time generally achieve well. Those who have an attendance around 90% or lower generally do not gain good results at the end of Year 11 and the consequences of not achieving one's potential because of poor attendance could be very far-reaching for career prospects. In terms of days' absence, a student with 90% attendance misses about 20 days of school, which is 4 weeks. While work is caught up, this absence rate is bound to have an effect on academic performance. Overall, the more you are absent, the less chance you have of doing well at school. I am therefore asking parents to speak to your children about the importance of full attendance and always being on time. Please make sure too that your child arrives by 8.35am. Lessons start at 8.45am but students must be on site 10 minutes before to get themselves ready for learning.

#### **Mobile phones and headphones**

At present, students are allowed to bring mobile phones and headphones to school and to use them at break and lunchtime but phones cannot be used to take photographs. At any other time, phones and headphones cannot be visible. Phones must be switched off in lessons and between lessons. Students who break this rule will have phones and headphones confiscated until the end of the day and have a long detention after school. We want to make it absolutely clear to students with these sanctions that phones can be extremely distracting for learning and we do not want teachers or other students to be interrupted by them. Can I please also stress that if parents have any concerns during the day that school need to be aware of, please contact reception rather than ringing or texting the child's mobile.

#### **Uniform and Equipment**

I wrote to all parents about our very high expectations on uniform last term. I made particular reference, amongst other things, to the importance of having traditional school wear trousers. We do not accept school wear from fashion shops and there are some inappropriate trousers in the schoolwear sections of local supermarkets. We also require students to be in formal shoes, not crossover trainer/shoe footwear. Hoodies are not allowed in school unless they are KES PE ones which are only visible in PE lessons. On any rare occasion when a student can't wear a particular item of uniform for a good reason, she/he must bring a note in from home on the day and show it to all members of staff on request. We would generally expect the issue to be resolved the next day. If a student has incorrect uniform and no parent note, she/he will work out of lessons until we have been able to contact parents and the correct item(s) brought in.

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Uniform really does set the standard for our school. The standard is high but we require perfect uniform so that teachers can continue to concentrate solely on your child's learning. Any conversation about uniform, or indeed behaviour, is time lost and we have the expectation that learning is our focus.

Students are very good at bringing in the correct equipment for school to make the day run smoothly. We ask them to bring in at least two pens, a pencil, a ruler, a pencil sharpener and a compass all in a pencil case and a calculator.

### **Half-termly Challenges**

We have a set of challenges for students to achieve in September and October and you can see those on our website. The challenges are firmly linked to Our Ethos and the challenge to gain at least 320 achievement points is a very tough one, particularly in a relatively short half term. Please do encourage your child to try and meet as many of these challenges as possible so that we can celebrate their achievements at the end of October.

### **Open Evening Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September Early Closure 2.10pm**

We have our Open Evening for Year 6 parents and students on 18<sup>th</sup> September and we are closing at 2.10pm to allow staff time to prepare for the evening. Bus companies have been informed and if you would like your child to stay in school until 3pm, we will of course supervise them. Can you please contact school if you would like this to happen.

I am very much looking forward to working with you in 2017-18 and students and staff have returned extremely positively for the new year. Your support, as ever, is much appreciated and we will be working closely with parents, inviting comment on our progress through the year. If you would like to come in to visit us or talk to me about our work, it would be splendid to see you. Please make an appointment through Mrs Harvey.

Kind regards

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'L. Brown'.

Lloyd Brown  
Acting Principal

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