



Serva Fidem

Headmaster: Mr. Duncan Murphy BA (Hons), MEd, FRSA
Member of IAPS & Society of Heads

Friday 4th September 2020

Dear Parents

I trust you enjoyed a relaxing and enjoyable summer holiday, notwithstanding the travel restrictions in place - welcome to the start of the autumn term at Kingswood House and the 'new normal'!

In this letter, I will concentrate on day-to-day, non-Covid related details - but it is obviously essential that you read with great care the information that was sent out in August and ensure that your son is well-prepared for a return to the school on Monday.

Since the latest government guidance was released over the recent Bank Holiday weekend, the school has formulated a clear plan in the event of a Tier 2 'rota' system for secondary aged pupils; these details will be sent out to you in due course but will, of course, only become operational as strictly necessary. If you have any queries at all, please contact your form teacher in the first instance.

GCSE

It is with great pride that I congratulate our second cohort of Year 11 leavers who secured a brilliant set of GCSE results with 100% of grades 9-4 (A**- C) and 52% of grades 9-6 (A**- B). Importantly, and in keeping with our reputation as a holistic school, we have delivered excellent after-care during the holiday and all students have moved on to sixth forms of choice for the next phase of their educational career. The boys truly personified our KHS values during a most exacting term and it was rewarding to see them achieve their full potential when it mattered most.

Summer Works

A lot of work has been undertaken on the school site over recent weeks in preparation for a safe return to school for children and staff alike. I should like to thank Sally Witts, as well as Paul and Ron from the estates team, for their time and effort in this respect. Amongst many other things, a new boiler and ceiling heating system has been installed in the Peter Brooks building, the DT studio has been significantly extended to create extra working space and additional astroturf has been laid next to the Willow Village to enhance the play area.

The KHS Way

It is my expectation that the boys will revisit the importance of listening carefully, trying their hardest in all aspects of school life and treating others as they would wish to be treated. In addition to the Kingswood House Way, I believe that these values are the platform for a convivial, purposeful and supportive environment where each child can achieve their potential and grow in self-esteem. I should be grateful if you were to reinforce these precepts at home in order for there to be a consistency of approach, which will be a significant benefit to us all, not least the boys. The core value of the Kingswood House Way for this term is *RESPECT* and it will be explored and reinforced during Form Time, PSHE and Online Assemblies by the Divisional Heads and myself. Subject Enrichment will be English in the first half of term followed by mathematics in the second half of term, details of which will be circulated shortly.

Future Schools

I continue to network with a wide range of prestigious senior schools as well as independent and maintained sixth form colleges; you can be assured that our teachers will ensure that pupils are well-prepared to meet the demands of admissions, as appropriate. With the highly successful evolution of our own Senior Years, you are able to consider the next step carefully – secure in the knowledge that we offer an excellent pathway for the boys through to GCSE and beyond.

I am always prepared to meet with KHS families to listen, give advice and act accordingly in their child's best interests. As such, I invite parents in Year 7 and Year 8 who are yet to commit to our Senior Years to make an appointment to meet with me this term or next. If you have already paid your son's deposit for the Senior Years (Year 9 upwards) and are committed to him staying at KHS then this is not necessary but if you have yet to make up your mind, please note that there is considerable pressure on numbers in 2021 – places are not retained automatically.

Pupil Appointments

I extend a warm welcome to the new pupils who start at Kingswood House today; I feel very sure, given the friendly nature of the school, that they will all settle in quickly. Additionally, I should like to congratulate Freddie Harrison (Senior Head Boy), Jack Leonard (Deputy Head Boy), Hasan Jaffri, Edward Monk, Toby Reed and Arad Rezavandi (Senior Prefects), Ben Hubber (Upper Prep Head Boy), Edward Bunyer-Ames (Upper Prep Deputy Head Boy) as well as James Carr, Ben Choy, Stuart Coleman, Alex Hill, Charles Leonard, Archie Spick and Tharani Vengahachalam (Upper Prep Prefects) upon their appointments. Well done also to Cameron Edwards and Fraser Schmitt who are this term's Lower Prep monitors. They will, I am certain, be fine ambassadors for Kingswood House. There will be plenty of other positions of responsibility in due course for other boys to aspire to and I trust that they will put themselves forward for consideration accordingly.

Staff Appointments

Yesterday was the first school day at Kingswood House for a healthy number of new staff and I am delighted with the depth and strength of our growing team: Mrs Julie Haunstetter (History & HPQ), Miss Nikki Patel (Science & Duke of Edinburgh), Mrs Belinda Horley (Drama), Mrs Monica Wraith (Art & Kingswood House Way), Miss Kim Foster (Music), Ms Angela Liu (Admissions & Marketing), Mrs Lorraine Morgan (Exams & Compliance), Mr George Mitchell (Graduate Assistant) and Mr Jeremy Westcott (Graduate Assistant).

In the Study Centre, we also welcomed Mrs Emma Ibbotson (Assistant SENCo), Mrs Tessa Curnin (LSA), Mrs Sandra O'Shea (LSA), Miss Julie Smith (LSA), Ms Chantelle Martins (LSA) and Mrs Heather Jones (LSA). I am sure you will join me in wishing our new staff a long and successful association with Kingswood House.

Communication

I am grateful to Ian Mitchell for his work on the timetable over the summer. It is our busiest, and most fruitful, on record with bountiful opportunities for exciting teaching and learning!

In terms of channels of communication, please kindly note the following: Mr Ian Mitchell, as Deputy Head, has whole school responsibility for all operational matters and will be in charge on a day to day basis as and when I am away on school business. Likewise, Mr James March, as Director of Studies, has whole school responsibility for all aspects of academic management and pupils' progress. The Divisional Heads are Mrs Nicki Lambert (Lower Prep Rec-Y4), Mr Liam Clarke (Upper Prep Y5-8) and Mr Sachin Sukhdeo (Seniors Y9-11). Please note that your first port of call should very much remain your child's form teacher on a day to day basis but you are invited to raise any query with the appropriate Divisional Head, as needed.

All teaching staff are contactable via their school email addresses but please note that we believe pastoral matters are better addressed in a meeting rather than in writing, the following standards are a basic premise:

- i. Email contact with staff should be on a 'needs must' professional basis and is expected to be polite and respectful in tone at all times in keeping with our values.
- ii. Teachers spend most of their time in direct contact with the boys – as such, please do not expect an immediate reply - but staff have been asked to check emails daily and you can anticipate a timely response.
- iii. Urgent emails should always be sent to the school office with the form teacher copied in.
- iv. In the event of a query, email should be used as a precursor to a telephone conversation or a meeting – not as a replacement.

There will always be plenty of informal opportunities to speak with staff throughout the term, even if online at the moment, and a proud 'open door' culture exists at Kingswood House. Consequently, you are welcome to meet with any member of staff at mutual convenience to discuss your son throughout the year - it is not necessary to wait for a parents' evening.

Drop off, Pick up & Parking

Please request a KHS car sticker from the front office if you do not have one already. These should be displayed clearly in your windscreen to assist with safety at pick up times. If you would prefer your son to bring one home, please liaise with their form teacher. At the start of term especially, there will be some pressure on parking in and around the school. Do use the drop-off points responsibly and with consideration for other drivers as well as our neighbours. A member of staff will be on duty from 8.15am. A reminder, please, that your child should arrive for the start of the school day in good time for registration - but no boy should be in school before this time unless they are booked in to Breakfast Club, which commences at 7.30am. A reminder that these places are limited and must be secured in advance via the school office – the same applies to After School Club, which runs until 6.00pm.

Any child coming in to school significantly after 8.45am will be marked as 'late' on the register. The provision of effective registration is a statutory requirement and I would appreciate your support in making it as easy and accurate a procedure for us to apply as possible.

Equally, the light is already fading in the evenings and it will not be long before autumn draws in and summer becomes a distant memory. For the safety of the boys, please ensure you arrive promptly at the end of the school day and that you are visible to the member of staff on duty. This is especially important after the clocks change because it will be dark at the end of the school day.

Calendar Events

It is my strong recommendation that all parents attend the Divisional Information Meetings at the start of the academic year, which will necessarily be held via MS Teams at the current time. It is a great opportunity to hear from key staff, glean useful information and ask any questions you may have. Invitations and access details will be sent out by the Divisional Heads for you to join the meeting remotely.

Seniors (Y9-11):	Monday 7 September
Upper Prep (Y5-8):	Tuesday 8 September
Lower Prep (Y1-Y4):	Thursday 10 September

In spite of our informed restrictions on fixtures and trips, which will be reviewed in line with government guidance, there are plenty of exciting activities taking place in the coming weeks so please refer to the calendar in the newsletter each week to check specific updates throughout the term. We are currently planning provision for online Harvest Festival, Remembrance and Christmas celebrations. Any changes will also be posted on the website; you can also receive regular updates throughout the term on Twitter by following @KingswoodHouse and @KHSPrep as well as on Instagram by tuning in to @kingswood_house.

Open Morning

Our first Open Morning will take place on Saturday 19th September. Due to the unprecedented situation, no boys will be requested to attend this event except for Senior and Upper Prep Prefects as well as Lower Prep monitors, all of whom should confirm attendance with their Divisional Head and report to them at 8.45am in uniform on the day, please.

The Kingswood House Association

The Kingswood House Association (KHA) is a source of valuable information and I know that any parents who are keen to get involved would be most welcome; if you would like to assist, please let Lisa Reece or Sally Witts know and attend the AGM on Monday 21 September. Whilst events will be limited this year, creative ideas and practical help will be welcome!

Finally, I am looking forward to seeing the school back in full flow this term – our key words will be kindness and patience as we seek to help the boys settle back in quickly whilst learning new procedures and routines. As ever, your ongoing patience, support and understanding will be invaluable.

Yours sincerely



Duncan A I Murphy
Headmaster