

Newsletter – 18th September 2020

Message from Mr McKenzie:



It has been a fantastic start to the new academic year, with students and staff settling quickly into the different systems we have in place this term. We have been pleased with the excellent work ethic and behaviour shown by students and the mature way in which they have approached the term.

Our new Year 7 students have quickly become part of the Kings' community and have approached their learning with vigour, enthusiasm and good humour. We welcomed three new teachers and two trainee teachers. All have quickly formed positive relationships with their tutor groups and classes and demonstrated the level of skilled instruction that defines the classroom experience at Kings.

This term is, however, a little different to usual. As you will have seen in the press, or experienced through yourself, the testing process where people show symptoms linked to coronavirus has been strained. At this stage, we have had no one test positive at Kings, but we have had some students who have felt unwell and have been collected by parents to try and get a test. For those families who must self-isolate, our online curriculum is now published on our website to allow students to keep up with their studies.

As well as the difficulty experienced by students in getting tests, our staff have found it challenging for themselves or their dependents to get the tests that, when negative, would allow them to return to work. Teachers have been fantastic at covering for absent colleagues so far, but, like all schools, we must brace ourselves for difficult decisions should we reach a tipping point that means we cannot staff lessons for all year groups. Should we reach this stage, I feel it is important that you know how we would manage this within school. With the exception of Year 11, who have already seen their GCSE courses impacted by a break from school, each year group would have a day working remotely in rotation.

Whilst this is not ideal, I feel it would be a better solution than closing a whole bubble. We would communicate any changes as early as is possible, and ensure we are signposting students to our Student Learning Environment.

Our hope is that we never reach that stage and that the testing process will match the ambitions set out by Government.

I would like to thank the administrative and reception team for the amount of support they have offered us all as we welcome children and families back into the Kings community. It is quite a change to the manner in which we normally work, with parents asked only to enter by appointment and to ensure they are wearing a mask, just as we would in a shop. This has taken a little getting used to and I would ask parents to be patient here. Some students have found getting themselves organised to be a little more challenging and we have had to try and deliver forgotten books, homework, equipment, and PE kits to students far more than we would usually do. This has added a little more strain to the system and it would be great if students get into the habit of double checking their books before heading into school.

I am sure you will join me in thanking our team for their efforts in making the site as safe as possible, ensuring all surfaces are cleaned regularly throughout the day and in delivering an excellent learning experience for our students.

Football Boots Loan Scheme



We are pleased to announce that we can loan football boots out for anyone who has been unable to get a pair. There will be a deposit of £5 which will be refunded when the boots are returned. Students can also change their boots for a larger size if needed.

We will be down in PE on Tuesday after school for anyone who would like to leave a deposit and take a pair of boots. Any questions please see Miss Hamilton.

Update from Mr Ferguson on behaviour and remote learning:

A Positive Return

I am pleased to report that students have returned to school happy, looking smart and prepared to get back to their normal learning routines. Students' behaviour and attitudes both in lessons and around the school have been exemplary and they've settled quickly into their new 'bubble' areas of the school. They're happy to be back and we are delighted to have them.



A Slight Tweak

We are making a minor update to our behaviour system. From this point forward, if a student picks up more than one minor behaviour log in a day (e.g. an equipment log and a uniform log), their 15 minute detentions will be served consecutively after school (30 minutes) rather than concurrently at lunchtime. This is to support a small number of children from picking up multiple behaviour logs in a day. Similarly, should a student miss more than one piece of homework in a day, their homework detentions will also be served consecutively after school (e.g. two missed pieces of homework will mean an hour detention to complete both pieces). This update will affect only a very small minority of students as almost all students are keeping up with all of their work and behaving positively.

Remote Learning for Students Isolating

We know that these are trying times for many families and inevitably some students will be asked to self-isolate at home for up to 14 days in line with government guidance. With this in mind, we have aligned the Oak National Academy's remote learning provision with the Kings Curriculum to offer all isolating students recorded lessons to complete from home. Links to recorded lessons that isolating students should complete can be found via the Student Hub on the Kings College website (Student Hub > Isolating Students>select year group). Students should complete lessons in line with their normal lesson timetable.