July 2020

Dear parent/carer

*‘Sometimes we are tested not to show our weaknesses but to discover our strengths’*

The quote above encompasses the work of both the school and the wider community. As this summer term ends, I wanted to write to all parents to thank you and your child for the tremendous support given to the school since March. The pandemic has been a crisis that we tackled with positivity and a mindset of “can do”. I sincerely believe as a school community we have built stronger relationships which will only benefit your child and their experience of learning at Kenton School. As I have said frequently to staff, the crisis has brought the best out in everybody, the sense of care and compassion has permeated through every aspect of Kenton School and our community.

I want to reassure all parents the safety of your child is paramount to all plans. Through close collaboration with parents this half term we were able to invite Y10s and Y12s on site to have face to face sessions and a small number of Y6, 7, 8 and 9 students joined the process in the final week of term. This has been done, safely, compassionately and without issue.

Our planning is now with September firmly in our sights. Thank you to parents and students who completed the online questionnaire with your concerns. We know that by consulting with you we are able to elicit your views and plan accordingly.

In terms of communicating plans for September we are aiming for three key posting dates:

1. **Last week of term/ first week of the summer holiday- initial plans**
2. **Mid-summer break- post out further information**
3. **W/C August 31st - final guidelines**

Each posting we will duplicate all information on the Kenton School Facebook page and signpost where you can feedback your queries.

As both the Principal and a mother of a daughter due to return to her school in September, rest assured I do appreciate you will have mixed emotions about the return to school, but I can’t emphasise enough the return will be done safely and with due consideration given to the needs of your child.

**Other key dates for summer**

A Level Results Day: Thursday 13th August 2020

GCSE Results Day: Thursday 20th August 2020

I will be writing to parents of both Y13 and Y11 in due course regarding the process of collecting the results and an overview of the process in lieu of sitting external public exams.

I wanted to reiterate information that will remain a constant in these changing times:

**Basic Equipment**

Please ensure that your child has a school bag and that they have a pencil case containing pens, pencils, a ruler and a scientific calculator so that they are ready to learn. This is even more important now we face the aftermath of Covid 19 and try to avoid a second spike. Your child will be provided with a student planner during their first form time lesson in September.

**School Uniform**

Please read the guidance carefully and if you are unsure of any aspect please ring the school and leave a message for your child's Year Leader. This is particularly important if you had to make an additional purchase last year. Common errors are;

* Purchasing Lycra skirts
* Skirts that are not knee length
* Jeggings or leggings
* Shoes with non-black adorations such as bows, buckles and brand names
* Boots not shoes
* Non-natural dyed hair
* Wearing jewellery

Please find enclosed a poster showing clearly what uniform is expected, including some information on school skirts. We need to make it clear, lycra miniskirts and any other mini type skirt is not school uniform. We have enclosed a flyer of appropriate school uniform skirt styles and need to be clear the length should be no shorter than just at/above the knee.

Kenton School uniform consists of a blazer, white collared shirt (short or long sleeved) and tie. The blazer badge and tie colour represents your child’s year group. In addition, school trousers and skirts must be black. Jeans, leggings and jeggings are not acceptable.

Any uniform issues will result in isolation we and would rather you worked with us to ensure your child has the correct uniform. Can I please insist you familiarise yourself with the uniform code to avoid any unnecessary confusion in September.

In particular, please note that shoes (not trainers or sports shoes) must be completely black with no branding or decoration in other colours. We must also stress that boots are not permitted. The change of school shoe policy occurred as a result of feedback from students about the pressure to wear certain types of “fashionable” shoe. We really appreciate your support when selecting appropriate school shoes for your child.

Hair should be of a natural colour and should be cut in a sensible style. Apart from a stud in each ear and a wristwatch, the wearing of jewellery is not allowed and will be removed and confiscated. We cannot accept any liability for any loss or damage of confiscated items. Facial piercings are not allowed for health and safety reasons. False nails of any type are not allowed.

Students who are not dressed appropriately should expect to be isolated. We would rather work together with parents and students to avoid this.

**PE Kit**

All pupils are expected to have a polo shirt adorned with the Kenton logo (Boys navy blue, girls sapphire blue) navy blue/black shorts, navy blue/black leggings or navy blue/black tracksuit bottoms, navy blue socks and trainers. If a student is not in the correct kit then they will be issued with a detention.

Uniform, including PE kit, is available from Top Class Uniforms shops at either:

Blakelaw Shopping Centre 45 Arlington Avenue

4 Moulton Place Montague Estate

Newcastle upon Tyne Newcastle upon Tyne

NE5 3RL NE3 4TS

Both TCU Group shops are open to the public currently with the reduced hours of 10am - 2pm. The opening times will be reviewed with the continued easing of lockdown restrictions. Social distancing measures are in place in store with only one customer or family allowed entry at any one time. A Perspex screen is in place along the counter and anti-bacterial gel available at the shop door. Changing rooms are closed to the public therefore they have extended their returns policy to 30 days so long as items are returned with the tags intact and without customisation.

Despite the measures that Top Class Uniform are taking, we would encourage you to purchase uniform online where possible. Their website, <https://www.tcuniforms.co.uk/> is in the process of being updated to include in-depth size guides for each item to make distanced ordering and sizing easier for all.

Usually there are long queues daily throughout the school holidays at the shops, even more so during the last two weeks before school starts. This year the following ordering methods will be available:

* Telephone with an online payment link sent by text during the call
* Facebook using the private message function, again an online payment link will be sent during the conversation.
* Online using TCU website where they offer both click and collect and courier delivery services
* You are able to buy in store. Although changing rooms are closed, sample sizes will be available to try on.

**Again this all takes on extra significance given the current situation and given that pupils will not be allowed to mix with other pupils rom different year groups, as such isolation rooms will become extremely difficult to cover. We would much prefer pupils were in the correct uniform and in lessons learning.**

**School Meal Prices**

We have been informed by the Local Authority that the price of a school meal is £2.30.

**Family Holidays**

To assist with your planning, a calendar of the school terms and holidays is enclosed for reference. Please do not book family holidays in term time. I am sure you value your child’s education highly, but how sure of that will your child be if you take them out of school to go on holiday? I think in light of the time away from school due to Covid 19 we all have to work closely to reduce any other absences from school. We cannot authorise absence for family holidays, except in compassionate circumstances. Therefore, unfortunately, such absence will be recorded in the same way as truancy.

**Pastoral Contacts**

Should you have any concerns regarding behaviour, attendance and other welfare issues please contact the Year Leader or your child’s Form Tutor in the first instance.

Year 7 Purple ***– Miss Rice and Mr Dryden- to support transition to Kenton***

Year 8 Blue – Mr Antony and Mrs Rutherford

Year 9 Green – Mrs Angus and Mr Turnbull

Year 10 Red – Mr Bouleau and Mrs Hunter

Year 11Yellow – Mr Allen and Mrs Bartram

Year 12/13 – Miss Philson

I have missed all the Kenton students and I am looking forward to Kenton School coming back to life with your child and their learning.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Holmes-Carne

Principal