December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much” – Helen Keller

Although I have previously used the quote when writing to parents during the pandemic I maintain this quote encapsulates what the Kenton School community has achieved. The collective efforts of students, parents and staff have been outstanding in ensuring that Kenton School has remained open, learning has continued unaffected and your child has been happy and safe in their routine at school.

I would like to thank students, parents and staff who have overcome their own anxieties of Covid-19 and supported the school tirelessly this term. What we as a community have achieved since September has been truly remarkable and fills me with great confidence we will continue to meet future challenges head on and provide a settled environment within which our learners can thrive.

As we draw to the close of this term, I would like to update you regarding the end of term arrangements and events.

**Christmas Holidays –** You may be aware the Department of Education announced on 8th December, in supporting track and trace for schools, sought to reallocate Friday 18th December as a staff training day.Students will finish at the earlier time of 12.25 pm on Thursday 17th December, however; there will still be the usual lunchtime arrangements for those students who want a lunch. Students normally taking school transport will need to find their own way home, since the bus companies are not able to alter their departure times.

To ensure students continue their learning on the Thursday afternoon and Friday, there will be a temporary folder added to the Kenton Learning Zone called “4 - Christmas 2020” which will contain a small number of year group specific activities designed to engage the pupils

School will be closed from 12.25 pm on Thursday 17th December and will re-open on Monday 4th January. Please note that the new term will also start for students on Monday 4th January. This will be week A on the timetable so please ensure your child has the correct equipment with them. This will be a normal start for all pupils.

Students should arrive in the school building by 8.20am at the very latest. Please note the school side gates will be locked at 8.15am and students arriving after this time will have to use the main school gates on Kenton Lane.

**Kenton Learning Zone -** We are delighted with the positive feedback to the launch of the Kenton Learning Zone (KLZ).  The KLZ is the place students go to for work when they are unable to attend school.  Lesson resources have been placed on the KLZ, often with additional narration from teachers or videos included in order to clarify key learning points and knowledge.  We know a number of students have found these useful either when isolating or when preparing for assessments.  The KLZ has Assessment folders where students in all year groups can access Personal Learning Checklists ahead of assessments and exams. The Assessment folders also contain past papers which Y11 and Y13 have been making the most of before their recent PPEs. If you haven’t done so already, please take a look at the KLZ at [www.kenton.newcastle.sch.uk/kenton-learning-zone](http://www.kenton.newcastle.sch.uk/kenton-learning-zone). We are excited about the future of the KLZ and the opportunities it presents for supporting students with their learning and we have big plans for its development.

**Christmas Concert** - As we are unable to host our pantomime this year we would like to invite you to our first ever virtual Christmas concert this year. Our theme is 'DVDs and movies' so expect to see many talented acts from Kenton School sharing performances of some movie music classics. There will be a watch party of the concert shared at 6pm on the 16th December. Links will be shared through the Kenton School website and Facebook page and the Kenton Music Department Facebook page. Grab your popcorn, take a seat and enjoy!

**Christmas Lunch for Students –** A traditional Christmas Lunch will be available for all year groups during the week commencing 14th December which can be pre-ordered as part of the weekly lunch order. The lunch will cost £2.30.

**Student Planners** - Students will receive their Term 2 Homework planner on the first day back in January. Please remember that all students have homework every night. We have included some additions to the planners this term, based on parental feedback and all year groups will now have an A4 planner. Please encourage and support your son or daughter to complete their homework and ensure the planner is signed every week as well as the home / school agreement.

**Teaching & Learning -** Our big three initiatives this year remain **high quality behaviour** for learning; the **explicit teaching of vocabulary;** and the use of **silent retrieval** activities (ongoing memory / revision quizzing) at the start of every single lesson. We are also developing highly effective revision strategies as part of our **Kenton Revise** initiative. All strategies build on the best evidence and offer a clear explanation of how to best revise (Flashcards, past papers, ‘reducing’ and ‘exploding’ knowledge are our first three strategies that we have shared with Years 11 and 13).

**Uniform** – Details of our uniform expecations, including some information on school skirts can be found at <https://www.kenton.newcastle.sch.uk/uniform> . We need to make it clear, lycra miniskirts and any other mini type skirt is not acceptable school uniform. The website also gives information for appropriate school uniform skirt styles and we 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 represent 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 the school 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 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.

As we look ahead to a new half term please can I ask parents to ensure that your child attends school each day with the facial covering that was provided, or suitable alternative, or wear the medical exemption lanyard the school has provided to them. This must be worn in communal areas at all times. We would also appreciate it if you talk through social distancing practises that they should undertake as they journey to school; 'Hands, Face, Space'.

Please can I remind parents if your child forgets something for school, we are unable to receive this item from you due to the Covid-19 risk assessment. Please ensure your child brings their own water bottle to school along with their own bag and equipment.

**Punctuality to lessons** - Thank you to all parents who have actively supported our drive on punctuality by ensuring pupils arrive at school on time.  Indeed, partly because of the new structure of teaching pupils in their own area, punctuality to lessons has improved by 75%.  But there is more to do.  A small minority of pupils continue to show disregard for their future by missing vital learning time in arriving at school after 8.20.  This must stop and we will take robust action against those parents not supporting the school on punctuality.  But for the vast majority of pupils and parents it is a huge well done on punctuality.

**Car Parking -** We have received numerous complaints from local residents regarding illegal and dangerous parking. Parents are choosing to park at junctions, park on pavements, park across residents' driveways and double park on roads. This is both illegal and will increase the risk of a road traffic accident. Blocking the paths with cars pushes pedestrians, including Kenton students, on to the roads. Indeed we have experienced incidents of late where pupils have been placed in danger because of this.

We would prefer that your child walked, cycled, or took a public bus to school, which supports the Newcastle Council vision to make the city green.

If you must us a car as a last resort to drop off your child please follow the one-way system in the car park and leave promptly having dropped your child off. But to be clear you must use the car park to drop off and you must avoid drop off on Kenton Lane or adjoining roads.

**Free School Meal Vouchers-**Vouchers will be provided to all students eligible for free school meals for the holidays via Wonde. The link for the £30 voucher will be sent via text and e-mail to the priority parental contact on Sims on Monday 14th December to allow any issues to be resolved or support received before the holidays.

**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 Leaders and staff are unable to take phone calls during the school day as they are on the corridors with students but will return calls as soon as they can. Alternatively, you can contact Year Leaders via e-mail for a faster response as they are able to access their e-mails while on the corridors. Please do not ring reception at these times but e-mails are below:

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| Year 7 | Mr Ferguson - Angus.Ferguson@kenton.newcastle.sch.ukMiss Wilson - Connie.Wilson@kenton.newcastle.sch.uk |
| Year 8 | Mrs Rutherford - Jannene.Rutherford@kenton.newcastle.sch.ukMr Antony - Paul.Antony@kenton.newcastle.sch.uk |
| Year 9 | Mr Turnbull - Nigel.Turnbull@kenton.newcastle.sch.ukMrs Angus - Alison.Angus@kenton.newcastle.sch.uk |
| Year10 | Mr Bouleau - Andre.Bouleau@kenton.newcastle.sch.ukMrs Hunter - Jocelyn.Hunter@kenton.newcastle.sch.uk |
| Year 11  | Mr Allan - Matthew.Allan@kenton.newcastle.sch.ukMrs Bartram -Tracey.Bartram@kenton.newcastle.sch.uk |
| Year 12/13 | Miss Philson – Lisa.Philson@kenton.newcastle.sch.uk |

If you have a concern outside of school hours please email 4485admin@kenton.newcastle.sch.uk this mailbox is monitored by staff throughout the holidays but should be used for emergencies only.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year and we will look forward to the students return on Monday 4th January (week A).

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Holmes-Carne

Principal