



KINGSWOOD SECONDARY ACADEMY

16 December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As we draw this long, eventful and challenging term to a close I think it's important we reflect on all that has been accomplished and also think about planning for the new year ahead. This term, we have seen the full opening of the Academy post lockdown and students re-engaging with their learning and with their teachers, albeit with restrictions and strict operating procedures to follow. If you remember I wrote to you at the end of the first half of this term to say how proud I was of the students' adaptability to change and the way they adhered so well to the new rules in order to keep everyone as safe as possible. In addition, as a community we stood in solidarity of the death of our much beloved student Mikey Connelly and we paid a fitting tribute on the day of Mikey and Jessie's funeral when Mikey came to school for one last time so we could all say our goodbyes. I believe Kingswood did Mikey and his family proud on that day and we will of course look to create a fitting memorial for Mikey in the coming months.

We have also had an interim 'Covid' style Ofsted inspection as part of a random sample of schools and, as the letter which will soon be published indicates, the Academy is doing everything in its power to support the continued education of our students and a focus on closing gaps in knowledge using all the resource we have to hand, but equally important that we have continued to drive the Academy Improvement Plan so that the Academy moves from strength to strength even in such challenging times. In addition, we had a no notice safeguarding audit conducted by the Trust as part of their Trust wide assurance visits and we are proud to say we remain an effective 'green' school for safeguarding on all fronts.

Moving to next term, we will be looking at planning and communicating with you on a new change to our operating procedures, in line with many schools up and down the country, as we look to move away from year group bubbles, replacing it with a one-way system and mandatory mask wearing during transition as is the case now. This is so that we can ensure that all students get to access all the specialist teaching facilities and to benefit from the full and wide curriculum, albeit with the associated risk assessments by subject still in place to keep everyone as safe as possible. Many things will stay the same including lunchtime in year groups and year group zones (no socialising outside of year groups still) and tutor bases being designated to the same bubble areas for morning registrations. Similarly start and end times will remain staggered. I appreciate that this change may cause some concern but rest assured, we are not going to 'rush and regret' but rather take our time to plan the gradual phasing in of the full movement of students using a one way system, 1 meter distancing etc in order to access the specialist rooms. This will require some detailed planning, preparation and communication on our part which we are going to move forward with in the new year. The idea being that by the end of January we are all working to the Revised Operating Procedures and Risk Assessments which will be shared with parents, staff and students in the first weeks of the new year. Prior to the change, all arrangements for PE lessons will remain in force in January. The changing rooms will remain closed

and students should come to school wearing their PE kit on the days they are timetabled for PE. There will be, as ever, an opportunity for you to raise any questions directly with me about any concerns or comments you may have on the proposed changes.

In the new term we are also looking to bring more after school and before school activities back on the agenda so that students start to enjoy a more full and rounded experience of their time at school as it should be, though always in a Covid safe way.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say that we are launching our own official Facebook page for Kingswood Secondary Academy. From January all important notices will be tweeted and placed on our FB page. The rules and expectations of the page are set out clearly for all to see and this is the only official FB page for the Academy.

Finally, all that remains is for me to thank all Kingswood Academy staff for working so incredibly hard, as ever, but even more so in such challenging circumstances. For responding to change where needed, for working on the unexpected curve balls we have been thrown and for continuing to be committed and determined to provide an excellent educational experience for our students, whether that is the cleaning and site teams keeping us operational and safe or the teachers, learning mentors and technicians ensuring that learning carries on in a productive way- the whole team have been relentless, focused and determined to get it right. I also want to thank Parents and Carers for being so communicative with us, for being prompt to let us know if there are any Covid concerns or otherwise and for supporting us with your kind words of encouragement- they really do go a long way and often are a much-needed source of motivation so thank you! Have a wonderful, safe and joy filled Christmas Kingswood family and I look forward to seeing you in what I hope will be a much better year for everyone.

NB: If any student develops symptoms of Covid, and therefore has to arrange a test, **within 48 hours of leaving the Academy on the last day** please email their full name and year group to principal@kingswoodsecondaryacademy.org to enable us to implement our Academy track and trace. Anyone who develops symptoms after this time will need to follow the NHS track and trace guidelines.

Yours faithfully

Mrs M Newman - Principal