

Dear Parents/Carers

Summer Term 2019 Newsletter

This is my final newsletter to you after nine years as Headteacher at King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy. It has been an absolute pleasure and privilege working with your daughters and getting to know you as parents/carers. In that time, myself, the staff and governors have achieved a huge amount together to provide a high quality education for your daughters. However that does not happen unless parents and carers are on board, working with us in partnership, so it is with great appreciation that I acknowledge your contribution.

As I reflect back on the past 9 years, I know that we have made significant improvements to this academy both in the quality of teaching and learning and students' examination results as well as the facilities. The academy is now over-subscribed and in September will have 160 students in years 7 – 10, with 150 in year 11, and around 180 in the Sixth Form. The increase in numbers from around 700 in 2010 means that we receive more funding now and are able to provide a wider curriculum choice and other opportunities for our students. Now that the academy is part of the King Edward VI Academy Trust, we have been working with the three grammar schools nearby to design a common option block for year 12 in September. This means that students will be able to access a broader range of subjects than the academy can offer on its own. Students entering year 12 will be given all the necessary information on GCSE results day in August.

In addition, being a member of the King Edward VI Academy Trust Birmingham so far has enabled us to:

- provide a wider range of enrichment opportunities for students in the arts and sport;
- collaborate between the other schools on teaching, learning and assessment;
- develop and implement leadership development programmes for our staff;
- make some efficiencies in expenditure at a time where budgets have been significantly cut in Birmingham.

These activities will continue to develop over the years and inevitably new ones will also come on board during the course of time.

GCSE, A Level and L3 BTEC Examinations

This year's external exam season went extremely well. All the GCSE examinations are now the reformed GCSEs, so they will all be reported as grades 1 – 9 for the first time when the results are published. The external exam results this year will be published on the following dates:

Headteacher: Ms Nicola Walters BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQH

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- A Levels – Thursday 15 August from 8.30 a.m. – 12.00 p.m.
- GCSEs – Thursday 22 August from 8.30 – 12.00 p.m.

Students will need to go to the Sixth Form area to collect their results on those dates.

Enrichment Activities

I am pleased to report that we continue to offer a growing number of enrichment activities for all students which supports not only their learning and progress, but also their personal development. If your daughter is not participating in any enrichment activity, then can I ask you please to persuade to engage in something as it will help her enormously. The activities included:

- A second residential trip for year 7, who spent two days and two nights at the Kingswood Centre in Staffordshire, near RAF Cosford. Students enjoyed a range of activities such as abseiling, orienteering, building a go-cart but due to the inclement weather, the campfire sing-along did not go ahead this year. In spite of the awful weather, the girls did very well in their activities and had a very enjoyable time.
- Year 9 students also benefitted from attending a PGL course at Boreatton Park in Shropshire where they engaged in outdoor education activities such as fencing, quad biking, high trapeze, high rope course, raft building, abseiling and a challenge course.
- The French department took some students to the Côte d'Opale in northern France to visit a boulangerie, the town of Boulogne and Parc d'Astérix which is a theme park based on the characters from a French comic book series called Astérix. The series follows the adventures of a village of Gauls (old term for the French) as they resist Roman occupation in 50 BC and is very popular with French children.
- Duke of Edinburgh Bronze expedition to Cannock Chase and assessment on the Long Mynd in Shropshire for year 10 all of whom passed with flying colours.
- Music concert performance by our students who have peripatetic music lessons in the academy.
- Sports days for years 7 – 10 which parents also attended.
- Year 7 fund raising day for their chosen charity Unicef, which works for children's rights.

Attendance and Punctuality

I continue to be concerned about the amount of students being taken out of the academy to travel abroad during term time. I cannot give permission for any of these requests as students are expected to be in the academy. Students have over 13 weeks holiday during the academic year which provides enough opportunity for any trips to take place. I do expect full attendance from all students to ensure they do not miss out on learning which could impact negatively on their progress.

We have now changed our procedure if students are late to the academy which has seen a real improvement so I would like to thank you for your support in this matter. Good habits of full attendance and arriving on time are essential in preparing young people for adulthood and the world of work, therefore it is essential we maintain a high standard.

Uniform

I have been very pleased with the standard of uniform overall this year but we must continue to maintain that standard. Can I please remind you that skirts must not be higher than the knee in length nor lower than the top of the ankle for health and safety reasons, and that trousers must be full-length, not 7/8. If you are unsure about any aspect of the uniform, please check our website or your daughter's planner which contain all the information you need.

Keeping Safe During the Summer Holidays – Advice from the Police

I have posted a letter on Firefly and the website from the police regarding your daughter keeping safe during the summer holidays. I urge you to look at this letter with your daughter(s) as it contains very useful information.

Academic Year 2019 - 2020 Key Dates

Summer Term 2019	
Friday 19 July	End of term for students and staff
Monday 22 July – Tuesday 3 September	Summer Holidays
Autumn Term 2019	
Wednesday 4 September	Return to school for students Y7 – 11 & Y13 8.40
Thursday 5 September	Registration for Y12 8.40
Wednesday 2 October	Open Evening for Y6 5 – 7.00 p.m.
Thursday 24 October	Students break up for half-term holidays
Monday 28 October - Friday 1 November	Half-Term
Monday 4 November	Staff and students return
Thu 14 November	Sixth Form Open Evening 5.00 – 7.00 p.m.
Friday 20 December	End of Term
Monday 23 December – Monday 6 January	Christmas Holiday
Spring Term 2020	
Tuesday 7 January	Return to school for all students for Spring Term
Wed 8 – Fri 24 January	Y11 & Y13 Mock Examinations
Friday 14 February	Break up for half-term
Mon 17 – Fri 21 February	Half-Term
Monday 24 February	Staff and students return
Friday 3 April	End of Term
Mon 6 – Fri 17 April	Easter Holidays
Summer Term 2020	
Monday 20 April	Staff and students return for Summer Term
Friday 8 May	Bank Holiday
Mon 11 May – Tue 23 June	External Exam Season
Friday 22 May	Break up for half-term
Mon 25 May – Fri 29 May	Half-Term
Monday 1 June	Staff and students return
Friday 17 July	End of Term

Mon 20 July – Tue 2 September	Summer Holidays
Autumn Term 2020	
Wednesday 3 September	Return to school for students Y7 – 11 & Y13 8.40

Staff Leaving

Inevitably, at the end of the academic year, some staff leave for pastures new, retirement or for personal reasons, and this year is no different. This year we will be saying goodbye to the following staff:

- Mrs Simmons, Head of Humanities
- Mrs Williams, Teacher of English
- Miss Sydenham, Head of Art
- Dr McGing, Teacher of Maths
- Miss Roberts, Finance Officer
- Ms Maynard, Acting Health and Welfare Officer

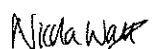
I would like to wish them all the best and good health for the future and to thank them all for their work at King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy.

Thank you all too for the support you give to your daughter and the academy to help her progress and achieve success. This term finishes on Friday 19 July at 12.00 p.m. for the students and we all start back on Wednesday 4 September 2019 at 8.40 a.m. We have again had a year of lots of developments to deal with which have meant a great deal of work for the staff. They have continued to show their commitment to the students and passion for their role in the academy, for which I am very grateful.

Finally I would like to wish you all best wishes for the future and to thank you for working with us to support your daughter(s) during their time here. On a personal note, I have really enjoyed meeting and getting to know you; you have all been a great support for us here at King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy. I will be taking up a new post in the King Edward VI Academy Trust from mid-September as Consultant Headteacher working 3 days a week so that I can phase out my working life over a few years. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here and feel privileged to have been the Headteacher of this wonderful academy.

I trust you will all have a good summer holiday with your families and friends.

Yours sincerely



Nicola Walters

Headteacher