

## Message from the Head Teacher

Dear families,

Welcome to our summer newsletter which as you can expect has been put together during an unprecedented period for our country and much of the world under far from normal circumstances.

We hope this newsletter offers you a flavour of all the many things our staff have endeavoured to do to support your children since our closure.

This newsletter also marks the end of my first year in post as the Headteacher of King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy. Even though the circumstances have not been ideal I have thoroughly enjoyed my first year in post and believe when the students return, we will be able to continue to work towards achieving our Vision to work together to achieve educational excellence and fulfil the potential of every student.

There are many highlights from this last year:

- Meeting many of you at my drop-in sessions where we discussed the numerous strengths of the school, but also areas we can do better in.
- Our Year 7 students attending the Foundation welcome ceremony at the University of Birmingham.
- Retaining the schools Outstanding status during our Ofsted inspection in October.
- Our first whole school trip to the cinema just before Christmas.
- The other trips to universities, visits from external speakers, businesses and visits to other places of interest.
- Our talent show which demonstrated to me how creative and talented our students are in so many areas.
- The school production of Oliver, which was simply stunning!
- The numerous sporting fixtures our students have competed in.
- The community and volunteering work carried out.
- The engagement in local politics and community initiatives through our work with Citizens UK.
- Mentoring and Tuition opportunities we offered to our year 11 and 13 students through external coaches and Academic Coaches.
- The continued collaboration between our school and the Grammar and Independent schools within the King Edward VI Foundation.
- The purchasing of each Y10 student a Chromebook to ensure they don't fall behind.

There is much to look forward to next term including the completion of a purpose-built 6th Form centre and a newly created Multi Use Games Area which will allow the students to play football and netball at the front of the school.

I look forward to continuing to work with you positively to further support your daughters to fulfil their academic and personal potential.

Best wishes,

## **Covid-19 Response**

As the country went in to lockdown on 23rd March this year, our staff at KEVI HWGA began working on a plan to ensure that all of our students can have access to learning resources to continue their education at home. We made extensive use of Firefly in the initial stages of the lockdown to set work for students and provide access to resources, whilst still being open to vulnerable children and those of keyworkers. This provision continued through the Easter holidays also.

As time went on, we established safe working protocols that allowed us to deliver lessons and open lines of communication with students using a MS Teams solution. This meant that our students in years 10 and 12 were able to receive teaching and learning by their teachers using a 'blended solution' - this is where students were offered face-to-face sessions alongside online tutorials.

We would like to thank the KEVI HWGA community for working in partnership during such unprecedented times and we are very proud of our students for adapting under these circumstances.

## **Laptops for Y10s**

Covid-19 posed a significant challenge to the education system as a whole, however it was particularly hard for those students not able to take their public examination this year and those who are to sit them next year. It was widely recognised that this situation could have a detrimental impact on the long-term life chances of young people, especially those that are disadvantaged and vulnerable. KEVI HWGA made efforts to mitigate this risks in a number of ways but it was clear that in order for the distance learning initiatives to be successful our Y10 students needed dedicated technology access.

On 22nd June 2020, we began the provision of laptops to our entire Y10 cohort. This means that our Y10 students, who will be getting ready to sit their public examinations in less than 12months, had full access to the online learning that is currently being offered by KEVI HWGA.



Used for illustration purposes only.



## King Edwards Virtual Art Exhibition

During Lockdown, several Art Departments from The King Edwards Academy Trust joined together to form an online virtual exhibition of artwork. The artwork featured has been created by pupils from across our schools during the lockdown period. It is intended to allow you to look at our art in the gallery from the comfort and safety of your screen. This virtual exhibition was shared across the schools to celebrate students who have been creative at home during these uncertain times and is an excellent opportunity to exercise your imagination, while enjoying the Creative Arts and all its different specialisms.

Miss Palmer, Head of Art and Design at King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy, said: *"We were looking for a venue for a potential art exhibition for our schools when coronavirus changed everything in our daily lives. The students continued to produce fantastic art at home, often reflecting their experience of the pandemic and lockdown, and we came up with the idea of a virtual exhibition where our family of schools could come together and showcase our creativity despite the difficulties."*

The Ikon Gallery in Birmingham is among the visitors to the online gallery. Linzi Stauvers, Head of Learning, and Sam Newman, Head of Development, at the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham visited the online gallery and wrote:

*"We are so impressed by the artworks exhibited in this online gallery. The breadth of subjects and range of materials, found by the students in their homes and localities, evidence the creative freedom that comes with lockdown. Some of the images are personal, including portraits of the self, family and community. Others take specific objects, from nature, architecture and technology, offering an alternative worldview. A focused line drawing demonstrates a keen technical eye, whilst a flash of colour reveals a highly expressive spirit. Each work poses a question about our current condition, resulting in a collective display that is so bold, so dramatic, it inspires great hope for the future."*

Ikon have generously made three awards for examples of art which they particularly enjoyed, choosing pieces from Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy, Five Ways School and King Edward's School that reminded them of artists' work displayed at their own gallery. Our artists will receive a copy of the related illustrated catalogue to further inspire them in their work and Ikon plan to make further awards in July.

You can access the exhibition at [schoolsofkingedwardvi.co.uk/gallery/](https://schoolsofkingedwardvi.co.uk/gallery/)

Miss Palmer



## KEVI HWGA Chicks

On 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020 we received some fertilised chicken eggs and over the next few days, as a school, we watched 9 of them hatch into cute, fluffy little chicks, just in time to observe their growth in the run up to Easter. They started to develop their own little characteristics and within 15 weeks they grew into full-sized chickens. In the last week, they have also been laying their first eggs for us to harvest and are currently enjoying life at their home in the school grounds. They love the company of each other and humans and a couple of the roosters have started to crow in the mornings. We look forward to September when we can all appreciate them.

Miss Harris



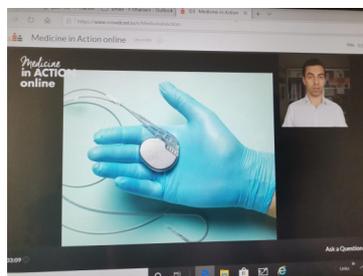
## Medicine in Action Workshops

Students from year 11 and 12 KEVI HWGA attended a virtual Medicine inaction workshop on the 3/7/20. The virtual workshop provides our students with the insight into the life of a medic and all the opportunities and challenges that accompany this role.

Presenters included renowned cardiologist Dr Francis and his inspirational lifesaving heart surgery techniques, comprehensive school educated Dr Underwood, renowned oncologist, who narrated his challenging but resilient journey into getting into medical school and a final year medic, scientist and comedian Dr Mykura, who embraced medicine as a post graduate degree. At the end of the workshop there was an interactive Q and A session which students found invaluable from advice on UCAS applications to different routes into medicine.

Student feedback was overwhelmingly positive with one student saying "the virtual event was extremely informative and it provided me with a lot of information related to the career path I'm exploring. I especially enjoyed Dr Francis's session on stents and where he enacted the cardiology patient scenarios and shared his day to day role at the hospital. I am thinking of researching more into cardiology as I found it very interesting. Overall, I really enjoyed the event and I think it was a very useful experience."

Mrs Dhanani





### **A Farewell Message for Year 13s**

2020 and it finally happened! No, not getting rid of you lot, Liverpool finally won the league! People never forget their time in Sixth Form, particular their final year in a school where they have spent so much time. I think it's fair to say with the class of 2020, your final year will never be forgotten by anyone. It is such a shame your time at the academy was cut short in such drastic and unforeseen circumstances. A world pandemic (I promised I wouldn't use the C word in this message), a few months before sitting examinations that you had worked so hard for I know is tough to deal with. I could not be prouder of how you have taken this disappointment in your stride, and looked positively towards the future.

Believe it or not, I really appreciated my time with you whilst you have been in Sixth Form. You are a passionate and opinionated group of students, who are never afraid to express opinions to change things for the better. I feel that with focus, discipline and sustained effort no matter the challenges, you will have what you need in order to be great citizens of the future. This is shown in a wide variety of ways, from generosity in raising large amounts of money to charity, to showing care and compassion to your fellow members of the academy.

If there is one thing that you can take from the abrupt manner in which your time with us ended , it's the fact that you are far more resilient than you realise. I hope that you recognise your potential, have confidence in yourself, and know that if you give a 100% to everything you want to accomplish, your dreams can become reality. Many of you will take very different and varied paths, don't spend time comparing yourself with others, as you are on your own journey to reach your own desired destination. Be resilient, knock backs will come in your life, it just makes the goal even better when you get there.

I wish each and every one of you success for the future, even the ones that came to school frequently late, even the ones whose phones I had to collect and, even the ones that drove the Sixth Form Team crazy during study periods. I have much more grey hair than I did when you began your journey in the Sixth Form, but maybe that's just me getting old!

I can't explain how much I hope you achieve the results you want in the summer, as I know how hard you have worked during your time with us. Despite missing out on your final few months, all your efforts will be worth while to achieve your desired results this summer. Always remember as one journey ends a new one begins. It's good to learn from the past but ensure you always look forward. After results day ensure you celebrate your achievements and keep in touch. Whatever you decide to do, I am sure you will achieve great success.

Good luck and best wishes.

Mr Billingham





## **A Farewell to Y11s**

Dear Year 11 students,

I'm so sorry to those of you I didn't get to see on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March to say goodbye in person. I am hoping that once we are allowed to use the hall for assemblies again, that we will be able to have a proper leavers' assembly and that as many of you as possible are able to attend. I will also see if we can arrange some kind of celebration event to make up for not having our prom on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July.

You will always have a special place in my heart and mind as the first year group I took all the way through from Year 7 to Year 11. It has been a privilege to watch you grow from the scared Year 7 students who were overwhelmed by the large surroundings in September 2015 to the beautiful young women now in July 2020 who have the potential to go anywhere and do anything they put their minds to.

I know there have been ups and downs throughout the years, but the moments that will remain with me for years to come will be the positive memories, for example, seeing how mature you were during work experience and the level of commitment you showed when attending the careers fair in Year 10.

I hope you realise now that any time I told you off or nagged at you, I was doing it with your best interests at heart. All I want for you all, and all I have ever wanted for you since your arrival in 2015, is that you become the best versions of yourselves you can be and that we have equipped you with the skills and intelligence to make the decisions that will lead to you realising your full potential and more.

I wish you the best of luck with your next steps. For those of you remaining with us in the Sixth Form, don't be a stranger, if you see me around school, come and say hello and let me know how you're doing. For those of you moving onto pastures new, I hope that the change in environment is what you need to flourish and achieve your dreams. Don't let what has happened this year hold you down, you are resilient and have the power to bounce back and go far in life.

I'm not going to say goodbye, I'm going to say "au revoir" as the French do, which means see you again. I hope to see as many of you as possible on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August and that you will be pleased with the results you receive on that day. I know that they have not been achieved in the traditional way, but that does not mean they are any less valid. You all deserve the elation and happiness that a good set of GCSE grades will give you.

I will miss you all, and I will think of you as I'm welcoming my new year group on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September, they have got a tough act to follow! It has been an honour to be your Head of Year.

With love, Mrs Newman





### **A Farewell Message to Y11s**

Dear Year 11,

I very much hope that you are safe and well, be assured that we have all missed you very much and despite the disappointment of not being able to sit your exams, please believe that all of your preparation, care and skills will not be wasted, it will serve you well in your future endeavors.

What would I say if I was stood in front of you now? What should I advise you to do?

*Be first to step forward, when others step back.*

*Be a leader, when others follow.*

*Be a friend to those you know, but a friend to those you don't.*

*Be quick to admit you were wrong, even though you thought you were right.*

*Be up when others are down, dig deep and stay strong.*

*Be passionate about things you believe in and open minded about things you don't.*

*Be who you are, not who others tell you to be.*

*Be the very best you can be.*

*Be you.*

I sincerely wish each and every one of you the brightest and happiest of futures, please keep in touch and remember we will always be here for you. I look forward to seeing you all on the 20<sup>th</sup> August to help celebrate your GCSE examination success.

Ms Redican

*Good Luck!*



