

Kettlethorpe High School

Standbridge Lane, Sandal, Wakefield WF2 7EL
Headteacher: Mr T Griffiths



18 May 2022

Dear Parent/Carer and Pupils

It really is nice writing with the current warm weather and knowing, that increasingly, the school is returning to more familiar and regular routines.

Staff absence has been reduced considerably as a result of Covid-19 infections declining, and this means that timetabled lessons are delivered by our regular teachers.

Very well done to our Year 11 pupils on such an excellent start to this year's GCSE examination series. The MFL speaking tests were amongst our best ever and benefitted from being done in our new MFL block. Pupils and staff have said how much better the tests were as a result. This year, we will have the largest MFL examination entry in the district and, no doubt, will maintain our position as the school with the best English Baccalaureate entries. Last year, we were ahead by a country mile!

This week, pupils and staff have prepared well for their biology and English Language examinations. Both of these, again, have high numbers of candidates taking the examination. Feedback has been positive and pupils have responded well to the routines and expectations in place for lessons and revision sessions.

This afternoon, I managed to see the art and design work, alongside our textiles coursework entries, as staff in school were moderating the entries. The quality of the work was quite exceptional with the candidates really demonstrating their talents in these subjects.

Keep the focus going Year 11 and thank you to all our families, and staff in school in with supporting our Year 11 on the return to public examinations.

A big thank you to Ms Mallinson, Mrs Sharkey and the science team for arranging for a science undergraduate visit from Leeds University this week. All our Year 9 pupils got to hear about what it is like to study science at university as well as what career opportunities exist for them. The pupils participated well and feedback has been extremely positive.

Routine matters: Families will need to be aware of the following news items:

- **Lesson time-out passes:** As the school returns to normal lesson/break times, all lesson time-out passes are under review. Going forward, passes will only be issued, short term, for pupils with medical needs and those with EHCP/SEN named actions. This will require a doctor's medical note and/or a SEN expectation from a professional review. The new working approach will start on our return to school in June, after the half-term break.
- **Mobile phones:** Following a recent review, that also involved families, the Governing Body have agreed the school's working mobile phone policy. This can be viewed under the policies section on the school's website. The school has a very clearly communicated, 'use it, lose it' expectation which the pupils are aware of. Going forward, confiscated mobile phones will be available for collection, the next working school day, after any confiscation at the end of school, from the school reception.

Please note, staff in school will no longer reply to emails, phone calls or direct representation ahead of the collection of any confiscated mobile phone from the school reception, in line with the mobile phone policy. Parents/carers are required to collect the phone from the school reception where staff will be available.

The school's mobile phone policy is in line with Department for Education guidance and the school is legally allowed to confiscate mobile phones in line with the agreed and published mobile phone policy.

Other news:

- The school would like to wish Mr Steven Haswell, our Site Manager, and Miss Rachael Boucher every success as they move into new career opportunities at the end of the month. Mr Haswell has been responsible for the commissioning of both the 3G pitch and the new MFL block. Miss Boucher has been a trusted colleague in English and we will miss her calm and supportive working approach. All the very best to you both and thank you.
- Richard Clough: Next week will mark the second anniversary of Mr Clough, a maths teacher, who suffered a fatal heart attack in school during the first lockdown. Much has happened over the last two years and the school will be, alongside Richard's daughter, laying flowers on the bench the pupils organised as a memorial. Richard Clough is still very much in our thoughts.

- Lifeguards Course: Well done to Nicole Perry on being successful in a competitive application process to become a qualified lifeguard with BPL Barnsley. Nicely done Nicole!
- Basketball: Very well done to the following Key Stage 4 boys who play for Barnsley Leaders Basketball team and who recently won the North Regional U16 boys' league. Interestingly, over half the team are Kettlethorpe High School pupils. Nicely done, Jay Adcock, Max Morrell, Connor Hawes, Ben Pearson, Ebrahim Kebbeh and Ben Gladun.
- Rewards and consequences: Kettlethorpe High School suspends the fewest number of pupils across the Wakefield district. We were also the lowest school for suspensions last year. This is because the school makes every effort to engage, include and support every pupil who joins our school.

In some cases, despite the hard work and effort of school and families, some pupils do end up being permanently excluded from our school community. This is as a result of very poor behaviour that presents risk or disturbs the learning of others. This academic year, the school has used this ultimate sanction on 4 occasions.

Please note, that at Kettlethorpe High School, all pupils are expected to respond, first time, to polite instruction and request from adults. Pupils who do not follow advice or instructions are at risk of being defiant, at which point consequences will escalate.

One of the great things about being associated with Kettlethorpe High School is that the vast majority of our pupils are a pleasure to work with. They are polite, hardworking, engaging and kind. It is important that we remember this. I have worked in 6 schools over 35 years and have been headteacher at Kettlethorpe High School since 2006, and this is by far the best school I have worked in. I have also had the privilege of inspecting schools, as a lead inspector, for Ofsted since 2012 and have been in over 100 schools. Looking back there are only one or two schools that outperform us in their whole school offer for their pupils.

On the back of this, we are pleased to report that rewards trips are in place for pupils who have worked hard and done well over the year. We last ran the offsite rewards trips in 2019.

In the past, the school took into account pupil attendance as a cut-off for invitation onto a reward trip. This year, because of the Covid-19 situation, invitation will be based solely on behaviour points and records. Attendance is not a consideration for invitation for the rewards trips.

The school has also reduced the required contribution to support transport costs, despite inflation and higher fuel costs, by 50%. As such, all pupils invited on the annual end of year rewards trip will be asked for a £5.00 contribution. The school will also be ensuring that for families in hardship, additional support will be made available.

The school will be sending out invitation letters for the rewards trips to pupils before the break for May half-term. This will provide clearer details. For now, the trips have all been booked to Alton Towers, on the following dates:

Year 7: Monday 11 July 2022

Year 8: Tuesday 12 July 2022

Year 9: Wednesday 13 July 2022

Year 10: Thursday 14 July 2022

Very well done to all those pupils who give 100% and have worked through a very challenging year at school. Enjoy!

To conclude, thank you for your continued support for the work of the school and well done to our pupil body for all their focus and efforts.

‘And so with the sunshine and the
great burst of leaves growing on the trees,
just as things grow in fast movies. I had
that familiar conviction that life was
beginning over again with summer.’

F Scott Fitzgerald: The Great Gatsby. Francis Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) was an American novelist. He popularised the ‘Jazz Age’ and wrote six novels. He became more famous after his death at age 44 from a heart attack.

Very best wishes

Yours sincerely

T Griffiths
Headteacher

Dates for the Diary:

- Friday 27 May: School finishes for the half-term break.
- Monday 06 June: School reopens.
- Thursday 16 June: Year 7 Consultation Evening.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clean our hands more often using soap and water as well as the hand sanitiser found in all classrooms and social spaces.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have good respiratory hygiene habits: 'Catch it, bin it, kill it'. Use the tissues and bins provided.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow instructions from all adults quickly and sensibly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not attend school and follow public health advice if we have any symptoms of coronavirus.