



NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2019

Dear Parent(s) & Carer(s),

As we set out into the second half term of this academic year I am writing to give you an update on some of the fantastic events that have taken place at KHCA so far this year, to inform you of an INSET day on Wednesday 4th December and a subsequent move of our Year 10 Parents' Evening to Tuesday 3rd December, and to update you on some changes to our behaviour systems.

GCSE and A Level Results

As this is the first time I have written to you this year, I would like to begin by congratulating all of our students that took either GCSE or A level examinations last summer. I am delighted to report that all of the hard work that went into preparing students for their examinations paid off, and we saw dramatic improvements in grades for both Year 11 and Year 13. As examples, the proportion of A level grades between A* and B rose from 25% to 34%. At GCSE, the proportion of pupils gaining a grade 4 (equivalent to the old grade C) or better in English rose from 64% to 70%, and in Maths it rose from 57% to 69%! As well as congratulating the students, I would like to extend my thanks to all of the staff and parents, because it really is a team effort!

Behaviour Systems

This September saw lots of change here at KHCA, with new staff, new courses, and some department moves around the buildings. We also refined the level of information we collect on a daily basis regarding pupils' behaviour in lessons. This information has allowed us to identify a minority of pupils whose behaviour is falling below our expectations too often.

As a result we have centralized some of our systems, in order to improve the consistency across our school. Our expectations have not changed at all, and so in reality these changes will not be noticed by the 90% of our pupils whose behaviour is consistently good. However, if a pupil has to be removed from a lesson, they will automatically receive an afterschool detention the following day, and if a pupil is removed three times during a week, they will be excluded for persistently disrupting the learning of others.

Science Ambassadors

Our science ambassador programme is well underway for 2019. Our Year 9 and 10 team welcomed and trained the next generation of Year 8 Science Ambassadors in preparation for our upcoming WOW days. Our theme this year is 'Our Diverse Planet' and includes investigations into whether dinosaurs were warm or cold blooded, how different are our fingerprints really are, and why temperatures across planet earth are so different.

Our ambassadors ran their first WOW days at Scargill Primary School with pupils from Years 3 and 4. Everyone really enjoyed exploring the world through science, and we were very proud of our ambassadors. We have many more WOW days planned at different primary schools later this year.

Kirk Hallam Community Academy | Godfrey Drive, Kirk Hallam, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 4HH
Telephone: 0115 9301522 | Email: office@kirkhallamacademy.co.uk | Website: www.kirkhallamacademy.co.uk

Executive Head Teacher: **John Tomasevic** BA (Hons) Econ, MEd, NPQH, NLE | Head of School: **Mark Watts** BSc (Hons), PGCE, MEd

Science Club has also been in full swing this term, with Year 6s meeting afterschool on Tuesdays, and Year 7s on Tuesday lunchtimes. Our theme has been "Does witchcraft and wizardry exist in the real world?" With Halloween approaching, it was only fitting to finish the first half term of the year with a dry ice extravaganza, allowing us the opportunity to investigate some of the unique properties of solid carbon dioxide.

Maths

It has been a busy half term for the Mathematics team, following their move upstairs in the main building. Special mentions go to the Year 7s who have settled into maths lessons so well, and our Year 11s who have been busily revising for their mocks and attending the study support sessions on Tuesdays afterschool. We will also be introducing 'Mathematician of the Term' before Christmas, so keep your eyes open for that. Our on-line homework and study support package, 'Hegarty Maths' is being used really successfully for homework and independent study, so please ensure your child is accessing it.

Expressive Arts

As always, there has been plenty going on across Art, Music and Drama! Our Art club for Years 7 and 8 on Thursday lunchtimes has been very well attended so far, and our artists have been creating work in response to Remembrance Sunday. There have also been regular workshops afterschool for our Year 11s as they prepare for their final submissions. These sessions have focussed on developing specific skills such as photo editing and printing.

For the first time, we have also launched our GCSE Photography course. The Year 9 students have made an excellent start, and we are excited to see what work they will produce as the course progresses.

Just before the half term break, our Year 12 Theatre Studies students presented a performance of 'Too Much Punch for Judy', a piece of educative theatre to a small audience. This has been the focus of their lessons since starting the course in September, and was very well received by their audience.

Rehearsals for Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs are running most nights after school in preparation for the end of term performance. This fun pantomime has a cast of students from year 7 - 13 and is already being enjoyed by all. Tickets will go on sale shortly.

Year 7 Poetry Visit

On Friday 25th October Year 7 finished their first half term at KHCA with a visit from author and poet Paul Cookson (<http://paulcooksonpoet.co.uk/>). Paul has visited the academy for a number of years now, and always entertains the children with his brilliant use of language through the art of poetry. We were delighted to be joined by Year 6 pupils from Ladywood School and Dallimore School, giving them a chance to visit the school as part of their transition to secondary school.

English KS4 Theatre Trip

On Thursday 5th December our English department will be taking pupils from Years 9, 10 and 11 to Derby theatre to watch 'A Christmas Carol'. Pupils on this sold out trip will get to enjoy a fantastic live performance of this festive favourite:

"Neil Duffield's stunning adaptation of Charles Dickens' treasured novel returns to the Derby Theatre stage for Christmas 2019. Made in Derby and performed by a talented ensemble cast, this much-loved festive story will be a heart-warming experience for all the family this Christmas."

Food Technology

Pupils were once again invited to enter our very own version of 'The Great British Bake Off'. The challenge was to create a filled and decorated sponge, and as always the level of competition was high. The eventual winner was Abigail Burton with her fantastic "*chocolate orange sponge cake, layered with chocolate orange buttercream, decorated with sugar shards, gold leaf, and charred marshmallows*". Well done Abigail on a delicious winning entry!

P.E. & Extra-Curricular Sport

Once again our pupils have been busy participating and competing across a wide range of sports at all levels this term.

Our girls have continued to support the fantastic 'This Girl Can' campaign, and six of our pupils represented KHCA at a national event.

Our Year 11 'Cambridge National' pupils have been completing their officiating units by helping to referee district football tournaments. They have done brilliantly, with many of them experiencing sport on the other end of the whistle for the very first time! In addition to this, our leadership Academy will start soon after half term, and some of our younger sports leaders have already been helping to run Futsal competitions for primary schools.

Football and Netball have made up the majority of our school fixtures since September. All of our teams have done a great job of representing KHCA, but a special mention goes to our Year 10 boys who won their district tournament.

Special mention also goes to two individuals in Year 10: Riley Moloney has been selected for the England U15 squad, and Dahnon Ward has continued to compete at the highest level in wheelchair tennis, and at the time of writing has an U18 ranking of fifth in the world! Our congratulations go to both Riley and Dahnon.

INSET Day 4.12.19 – The Knowledge Led Curriculum

The Department of Education and Ofsted have set out a new agenda for schools under the umbrella title of the 'Knowledge Led Curriculum' (KLC). This agenda is now 'live' and it is the framework by which all schools will be inspected and judged.

From an educational viewpoint, it is broadly welcomed because judgements about schools will be primarily shaped by the 'quality of education' inspectors see in classrooms, rather than through the narrow prism of educational outputs such as Key Stage 2 results, GCSE results, etc.

A key ingredient of this new approach is that schools 'own' their curriculum and develop an aspiration for the content of the curriculum beyond that which is set out by the various subject 'National Curriculum' statements. Equally, the new curriculum expectation is for schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable our young learners to enjoy a wider range of learning experiences, than just those linked to preparing them for key assessments.

This significant change requires every school and classroom teacher to re-engineer their approach to the education they provide for their learners. This is both exciting and challenging. In order to secure this new agenda, the Nova Education Trust, and its associated schools, have set out an ambitious programme of staff development in order to ensure we deliver education to the highest of standards within this new framework. This agenda will require significant training inputs over the next few years.

As a key starting point to delivering the necessary training for the 'KLC' agenda, the Nova Education Trust Directors have granted an additional training day on:

Wednesday 4th December 2019

This means that our school will be closed to children on the above date. We hope this early notice will enable families to more easily make alternative arrangements for child care and supervision.

At some point in the New Year our school will be inviting all parents/carers to an information evening regarding how the KLC agenda is being delivered in our school.

In the meantime, please accept my gratitude and thanks in anticipation of your understanding and support over the additional training day.

Year 10 Parents' Evening – Tuesday 3rd December

As a result of the aforementioned INSET day, our Year 10 Parents' Evening will now be held on Tuesday 3rd December. The online booking system will open at 9:00 a.m. on Friday 8th November for you to make your appointments in the normal fashion.

It only remains for me to wish you all the very best for the remainder of 2019, and thank you for your on-going support of our pupils and our school.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Watts
Head of School