



The Kingswinford School

A part of the Windsor Academy Trust

Headteacher: Mr T Macdonald, BA Hons, MA

Water Street
Kingswinford
West Midlands
DY6 7AD

Tel: 01384 296596

Email:
info@kingswinford.windsoracademytrust.org.uk

Website:
www.kingswinford.windsoracademytrust.org.uk

Twitter: @kingswinfordsch

Company registration no: 07523436
Place of registration: England

Our Ref; TM/pg
Letters for TM/end of Year 2018

Wednesday 18th July 2018

Dear Parent / Carer,

Information for 2018/19 Academic Year

As we approach the end of this year, I would like to send you all some key information about the start of the new academic year and some planned updates and changes to our approaches. This year has been, certainly for me, a whirlwind of changes and improvements – lots of hard work from my excellent team of teachers and support staff, but I've loved every minute of it! I am so proud to have the chance to lead this fantastic community of students and staff and I am very conscious that there is still so much more we can do. We have created a Newsletter for the end of this year which will be on our website and will be emailed out to all of you – do please have a look at what we have been getting up to this term!

Start of Year - The new Academic year for students starts on the 4th of September (Tuesday), following our annual INSET day. We will have a staggered start to the day as we bring in our new cohort of Year 7 students at the usual time but the rest of the school (Years 8 – 11) are asked to arrive for a 10.00am start in their form groups. This allows us to properly introduce the new students to the school and spend some time ensuring that they are ready for secondary school life! I am keen that we get into normal lessons as soon as possible so after a short break at the usual time, students will all start lessons formally from 11.00am on that first day.

Uniform - At the start of this year I told parents that I was keen to ensure that the school uniform code was met by all students. It very soon became apparent to me that there were too many loopholes and that we were not going to win a war on trainers and inappropriate trousers or skirts without a little more preparation. So, as we head into the Summer, I would like to ensure that all parents and students are aware of the uniform expectations so that you can have ample time to purchase appropriate clothes in advance of the new year. To be clear then, shoes should be formal, polishable, leather shoes. I am often asked about whether specific shoes are ok or told that the shoes were in the 'School' section of Marks and Spencer or similar. To my mind 'school shoes' have not changed so please recall your own school days and purchase a set of shoes that are properly school appropriate. We will be purchasing a set of cheap school shoes of all sizes and students who we believe are in inappropriate shoes will be asked to change them in school for a loan set of shoes until they can replace them with shoes that are more appropriate. With trousers and skirts, please be mindful that we are trying to create a professional learning atmosphere in school and that jeans, skin-tight trousers, leggings or short skirts are not appropriate: trousers should be formal and tailored; skirts should be approximately knee length (or close to it). Again, we will procure a stock of spare trousers in a variety of sizes and will ask students in inappropriate clothing to change it in school for something suitable. All loaned clothing will be freshly clean but we will insist on students being appropriately dressed for lessons. I do hope that you



understand our firmer stance on this: it is the only way to be fair to those students who are conscientiously following the rules every day.

PTA - Another element of improvement that we have not been able to secure this year is the formation of a PTA for the school. With that in mind I would like to invite any interested parents to join me in the school (with perhaps some tea and cakes!) to discuss the establishment of a new PTA on Wednesday 3rd of October from 5.00pm in the refectory. An effective PTA is an invaluable tool in improving school life as it allows parents to support the school in growing in the direction that suits you and your children. It also enables me to consult with a committed group of parents, particularly on the ways in which we communicate with you and offer feedback and guidance. I am keen to more formally improve the ways in which we communicate with you through our website (which is being revamped and relaunched in the Autumn); through Parents' Evenings and reports (which we will be reformatting following some consultation in the new year); through our calendar, bulletins and newsletters (which will be more readily available and downloadable onto phones etc); and in our direct communication with you by post, phone and text message. I do hope and invite you to help me make these adjustments in the way that will best help and support you working with us.

Anti-Bullying Approach - You may be aware that we have developed and had a 'soft launch' of a new approach to Anti-Bullying. No school can ever reasonably claim to eliminate bullying completely but we should all be able to claim we have a firm, proactive approach to bullying incidents that reduces the amount of bullying to a minimum. Part of this comes through our relationship education and development of relationships with and between students; part of this comes from a clear approach with clear definitions of bullying. Our new approach introduces an action that seeks to prevent lower level incidents transforming into a bullying situation whilst giving the school the opportunity to rapidly escalate and define bullying should it continue. In this way we can maintain our commitment to 'zero tolerance' towards bullying more firmly and fairly. Early in the new year you will be provided with a small pack of information regarding our anti-bullying approach to support you in helping to identify, prevent and tackle bullying should it ever occur.

Free Swimming in Dudley - I would like to draw your attention, as the holidays begin, to an offer from Dudley Council for all students to swim free through the summer:

*'Children aged 16 and under who reside in the Dudley borough are eligible to swim for free at Dudley Leisure Centre, Halesowen Leisure Centre and Crystal Leisure Centre in Stourbridge during **public swimming times**.*

*Free swimming will be offered during the school summer holidays, starting on **Saturday 21st July** and finishing on **Sunday 2nd September**, the day before most children return to school.*

Swimming is a great way to get children active, keep them healthy and have fun during the six-week break.

*To access this offer, registration must be completed in advance and parents can sign their children up from **Tuesday 17th July** to **Saturday 1st September** at www.freeswimindudley.co.uk. They will then be issued with a QR code which can be scanned every time they visit one of the leisure centres. Families without access to a computer or internet can sign up at any of the borough's libraries.'*

I hope that as many students will take up this opportunity as possible – Swimming is a fantastic way to keep fit.

New York Trip - Finally, I would like to address a concern raised over one of our overseas trips – the New York trip. We have been extremely disappointed to learn that the hotel accommodation was not as suggested by our tour company. Unfortunately, some of the facilities were not of the standard that one would expect for the cost of the trip. Our staff on the trip have tried, in vain, to arrange for improved accommodation within the hotel for all affected, and whilst we are assured the rooms and facilities are clean, they are not all at what I would consider an acceptable standard. We are already investigating how and why this has happened with the tour company and I will be requesting that they provide some

measure of compensation or restitution for the students affected. I don't expect to be able to provide a formal response to you before we come back in the new academic year but I did want you to be aware that we are working with the tour company to find some form of solution. As soon as I know more about these challenges I will inform the students and parents concerned.

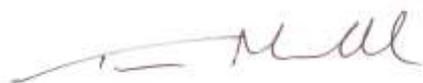
Hello and Goodbye - You may have spotted in the newsletter that a small number of staff are leaving us this year so we say our fond farewells to Miss Carrier (Maths), Mrs Whyton-Owen (Spanish) and Mrs Purewal (Religious Education). I hope you will join me in thanking these staff for their tireless and committed service to the students of Kingswinford. Too often these days, teaching can become a somewhat 'thankless' task and I know it means an awful lot to outgoing staff (and just any staff who have helped out) to receive the grateful thanks from students and parents so please do, should you wish to, pass your thanks onto the school and we will ensure that staff receive them. However, it is not all sad news as we have a team of new staff joining us next year:

Mrs Wilkinson (Deputy Headteacher)
Mr Gray (Geography)
Mrs Bagnell (Maths)
Miss Wilkins (Science)
Mr Gould (PE)
Miss Rehman (RE)
Mrs Zarin (English)

Some will be known to our students, as they have been with us over the past few weeks to get to know the school and I am sure all will fit in very quickly in the new year.

With that, I will wish you all the very best for the Holidays and hope our students (and staff!) are able to take a well earned break and we will see you in September at The Kingswinford School!

Yours faithfully



T Macdonald
Headteacher