

6th September 2018

Dear parents, carers and families,

It is that day once again! As we begin another fresh year at KLA it has been such a pleasure to welcome our students into the building this morning – both our new Year 7 students as well as those returning for the new year in older year groups. They all look immaculate and there is a genuine buzz of excitement around the school – believe it or not we have really been looking forward to today!

It is especially exciting to be returning this year following the release of the summer's GCSE results, which were by a great margin the best in the school's history, with 55% of our Year 11 students achieving at least a grade 4 in both English and Maths, an improvement from 2017 of 8 percentage points. While we were delighted to see great results in English (especially literature), Maths and Science, we are determined to continue to do better this year, and our new Year 11 cohort is perfectly poised to benefit from that, having finished last year by doing very well in their end of year examinations.

The school has been a busy place over the summer – our new Forward Step inclusion unit has been built, and is ready to open. We have also had significant remedial works done to the flooring throughout the school and the sports hall roof, as well as having two new classrooms built and a refresh of our Central Hub!

Because we are full (indeed over-subscribed) in Year 7, we have been able to bring in some new staff to strengthen our already-strong team. We welcome the following new staff:

Mr J Crockett – Head of Maths
Mr D Bennett – Art
Mrs N Bower – Geography
Mrs E Baughman – Science
Mr B Reeve-Hayes – Citizenship, Beliefs & Values
Mr A Walpole – PE
Mr M Spraggs – History
Miss T Ward-Robinson – ICT
Miss K Wilson – History
Mrs L Gilbert – Science
Miss H Ansell – Teaching Assistant
Miss C Burrow – Science Technician
Mr T Craske – ICT technician
Mr N Williams – Teaching Assistant
Miss J Penson – Teaching Assistant
Miss C Doughty – Isolation Room supervisor
Miss S Lacey – Reflection Room supervisor
Mr B Griffin – Teaching Assistant

We are delighted to have been able to strengthen our team so much this summer, and hope all our new members of the team very quickly become part of the family here at KLA.

At the very end of the summer term Mrs Davis shared with me her desire to retire after a very long and successful teaching career. Unfortunately, we have not as yet been able to find a replacement teacher of music of sufficient quality to replace her, and as a result (and to avoid unnecessary periods of supply lessons for students) I have taken the very difficult decision to temporarily remove music from our curriculum until we find a suitably excellent teacher – please rest assured we are working hard to do so.

Finally, we are currently experiencing an issue with SIMS – our school management IT system. This affects timetabling and teaching group lists (so clearly perfect timing for a new academic year!) and as a result student timetables are not quite printing correctly – the timetable is correct, but the glitch means that teaching groups are not; as a result the team here at KLA have been manually putting together 800 timetables, and have been working around the clock to overcome this issue since it became apparent a few days ago. We are managing this issue in school, and I would ask for your patience to bear with us as we do so. I need also to place on record my huge thanks to the admin team who have been working so hard to try to overcome this frustrating issue – which is not of their own making!

As we begin a new academic year I wish all students, parents and families within our community a very successful, happy and healthy one. As always, we welcome your views and rely on your support as we try to make KLA the brilliant school we are striving to be. We have reformed the way we tutor our students with new forms and a new way of working, and you can expect your child's form tutor to be in contact at least once a term from now on just to check in and keep you informed as to the progress your child is making. I hope you will welcome this development.

With very best wishes

Alan Fletcher
Principal