

3 July 2020

Dear Parents

As much as possible this letter is not about Covid 19 but to inform you of changes that Knole Academy had planned to make regardless of the current pandemic, however, Covid 19 has obviously affected some changes.

Academic Year 2020/21

The decision has been taken to reorganise the curriculum structure at Knole Academy for Year 7-11. At present we have, in most years, 4 grammar classes and 4 high school classes. These are then split into two: V and W in the grammar bands and XA/B and X1/2 in the high school bands. The V and W classes should be similar in attainment, as should the XA/B and X1/2 classes. From September, we shall simplify the structure: the grammar classes will be set G1, 2, 3 and 4 and the high school classes will be set H1, 2, 3 and 4. Maths, English and science will continue to be set independently from each other.

This brings many advantages to the teaching of the students:

- we are able to target teaching to more specific grade ranges
- students will find greater variety in the composition of their peers from class to class
- there is less of a performance gap between sets
- we are able to move students up and down sets more easily to reflect their achievements
- in subjects where there are Higher and Foundation tiers, such as maths and science, we avoid teaching both tiers in a single class.

There are some disadvantages:

- it will involve change for all students as their classes will be populated by different students than this year. Personally, I believe this is a positive change but recognise that it may be a cause of anxiety for some
- classes will be made up of different pupils and, therefore, not all will retain their teacher from this year.

Overall, we believe the benefits significantly outweigh the negatives and will allow us to provide the structure to raise achievement for all of our students.

EduLink

We have made the decision to move to the use of EduLink from September. We had originally intended to launch this in May of this year but with everyone already working remotely we did not want to make changes which might create issues. **EduLink One** is an app that can be downloaded to phones or accessed by desktop computers which centralises all of the information platforms that we currently use. It will provide the following services:

- Homework (solves previous issues)
- School reports
- Letters home
- Exam timetables and entries

- Behaviour and detention log
- Achievements and awards
- Absence reporting
- Contact details
- Medical information
- Lesson timetable
- School calendar
- Booking parents evening appointments

EduLink One Demo: See the app in action! Click [here](#) to view a demo.

During the lockdown period a number of parents have asked why we are using so many platforms to access information, this will hopefully remedy the situation with all information available from one source.

We shall be placing instructions on how this works onto the website and sending out usernames and passwords in the next few weeks.

Buses

At present Kent are making arrangements with bus companies, no one knows what the situation will be in September and it is likely that plans won't be finalised until late August to take into account the latest advice from Public Health England. As soon as the Academy has information regarding bus arrangements it will forward them to parents but, like most information we are unlikely to find out anything before it is announced publically.

Laptops

During the lockdown we have lent 170 laptops to students to enable them to access home learning, these are laptops that would normally support learning in class, we were given 16 by the government that arrived last week. We obviously need these back before school resumes in September and we shall be writing to parents to arrange returns. As advanced notice, I would like to have these returned during the last week of August. This will allow students to use the laptops over the summer, but also allow our IT technicians time to wipe the memory, rebuild and clean the machine, before being placed back into the classrooms.

Uniform

When all students return in September, we are expecting them to be in full school uniform. Students in Year 9, 10 and 11 from September are permitted to wear either the new black uniform or the original grey uniform, or a mixture of the two. We would like all students to be in the black uniform by September 2021. Uniform should be purchased direct from Price and Buckland and the link to their website can be found on the parent tab of the academy website.

<https://www.knoleacademy.org/485/uniform>

Due to Covid 19, we will not be lending uniform or shoes on a daily loan basis, we will have some laundered blazers that we can loan while parents await orders from Price and Buckland.

If there are uniform issues, students should see their Head of Year who will give them a note in their planner for a fixed period of time and we ask that the uniform be rectified within that period. If students arrive in school without uniform or an appropriate note they are likely to be held with their form tutor for the day.

September start

As my previous letter sent on the 2nd July stated, we are expecting all students back in September and the times of the school day and the dates of return are as originally published. Year 7 and 12 will return on September 1st and all other year groups return on September 2nd. The dates of the school year and calendar can be found on the website:

<https://www.knoleacademy.org/503/calendar>

Staff changes

There will be some changes in staffing next year. Mrs Cupper, Mr Roberts and Mrs Cutting are moving on to other positions, Mrs Kong is retiring and Mrs Hazelton, the Pastoral support manager, is also retiring after amazing service to Knole Academy and Wildernesse School. I would like to thank them all for their service to Knole Academy.

Joining Knole Academy will be Mrs Cedervall, Mrs Brown and Mr Winter in maths. Miss Tyler, Ms Benham, Mr Bermingham and Ms Peers-Noakes in English. Miss Haughney and Miss Franklin in science, Ms Thomas and Ms Robins in humanities, Miss Stock in PE. We are employing many more teachers than we are losing which reflects the increased popularity of Knole Academy in both Year 7 and the Sixth Form. Mrs Cedervall, Mrs Brown, Miss Tyler and Miss Franklin will be familiar to all students as they have trained at Knole Academy mostly through the academy's own teacher training centre, the Oaks Consortium. This year joining us via the Oaks Consortium are Mr Leath in history, Ms Badawy in business and Ms Malik in maths. If, as a result of the home schooling experience, any graduate parent is considering a career change, please contact the Oaks Consortium.

<https://www.knoleacademy.org/489/kent-oaks-consortium>

We have made several changes to staffing internally which are effective from September 1st.

- Mrs Corbett has been promoted to the position of Deputy Headteacher
- Mr Deighton has been promoted to Head of Science
- Miss Nixon has been promoted to Head of Year 10 replacing Ms Cheeseman
- Miss Cheeseman has been promoted to lead teacher status
- Miss McArthur has been promoted to second in charge of English.
- Miss Warner has been promoted to Assistant Head of Year, attendance.

I am really pleased with the staffing situation at Knole, in times of a national shortage of teachers we are fully staffed for September with quality specialist teachers. However, I do need to be transparent, if staff have to self-isolate we may see greater staff absence than in previous years. We have purchased a number of cameras to enable staff to deliver lessons remotely to students based in a classroom, a complete reversal of the current situation. Please be assured that we shall always endeavour to maintain the quality of teaching.



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Wishing you all the very best of health.

David Collins
Headteacher