



Wednesday 23rd May

Dear Parent / Carer,

I'm writing to follow up the meeting we held on Monday 21st May to discuss the potential return to our original school building in Silchester Road in September.

This meeting was specifically with surviving families and other families most severely affected by the Grenfell Tower tragedy and I am very grateful to those parents and grandparents who were able to attend.

For the benefit of those who were there and those who were not able to come, I have attached a summary of the key points from the meeting. This letter, like all of our communication and planning for our potential return, is available on our website at www.kaa.org.uk/students-parents/letters-to-parents/ and www.kaa.org.uk/students-parents/kaa1-faqs/.

We will be in contact with you individually by phone in the coming weeks to discuss how, subject to your agreement, your child could now be given the chance to visit KAA1 in a careful, controlled way, with support from parents, therapists, friends – whatever is needed. I think it is important we do this as early as practically possible.

In the meantime you have any questions or concerns about this please do not hesitate to contact me directly on 0207 313 5800 ext 2.

Best wishes,

David Benson
Principal

Meeting Minutes – Monday 21st May

David Benson started the meeting by saying:

1. The decision to move back has not been formally taken, despite what some parents think. Remaining at KAA2 is 100% an option for next year and the final decision on whether to return will be made by Governors on 3rd July 2018.
2. Students welfare and wellbeing is the only thing we are thinking about, and we will only go back if it is the right thing for them.
3. The Tower will not be deconstructed for several years, which means if we decide to wait until it is gone we will have to remain in Portakabins in Hammersmith until 2021/22 at the earliest.
4. We have been developing plans with our therapists and counsellors for how students, especially those worst affected, could be supported with a gradual re-orientation to the building in June and July. Clearly this message had not got out, and people were anxious they would be forced back. If we have been slow in sharing our plans with students and parents, then we are sorry.
5. We acknowledge that it will be difficult and emotional to go back, but we think that, on balance, the educational benefits of being in our real school, and the capacity we have to support students to emotionally adjust, means that returning is better than remaining in temporary buildings for many more years.

Points raised by parents in the meeting included:

6. Parents thought that the school could have done much more to communicate with the families of those most affected by the fire, including personally meeting with parents and students who were most affected, and that Mr. Benson as Principal should know all of these students. Parents also questioned the extent to which students had been asked, and their children had reported to them that they had not been.
Mr Benson said he understood why they felt he could have spent more time personally talking to them about this issue and listening to people's views. He tried to explain that whilst he didn't know every student as an individual, his focus since the fire had very much been on making sure every single student had access to the high-quality therapy and support that they needed, and that the school had been able to keep operating at the highest possible educational standards under very challenging circumstances. In terms of asking students, he accepted that he had not done a universal poll as yet and explained this was planned for after more formally the school had held a series of assemblies to give students the full information about how re-orientation would work, so they could make an informed view.
7. Some parents said that they would want to be with their child when they first visit KAA1.
We will commit to do individual visits to the school with students and their parents in order to discuss further how the worst affected young people can be supported with the proposed return. These visits will also give us the opportunity to show students how they will not be required to look at the tower during the day if they do not want to. We will be in contact with individual families to set these up in the coming weeks. Students will be given the opportunity to visit first in small groups with their friends, or with their therapist, or with their parents.
8. A parent enquired as to why they had not been provided updates on their child's progress in therapy.
Going forward, the therapy team will provide age-appropriate parent feedback at periodic intervals showing progress students have made in therapy, though we cannot break confidentiality rules.



9. It was raised by several parents that the school has issued letters threatening to fine for their child's low attendance, when their low attendance had been related to their recovery from Grenfell.
Mr. Benson apologised if this issue had been handled insensitively and promised to review what letters had been sent when and make changes to policy if needed.
10. Some parents expressed the feeling that more could have been done to offer PTSD screening to students.
Mr. Dumigan talked through what the school had done, including the recent letter on 29th March, inviting parents to sign up for appointments on Monday 16th April at the school. If you would still like your child to be assessed, please contact the Grenfell Health & Well-Being Service on 0208 637 6279 and ask to speak to the children's team.
11. A year 10 parent enquired as to the possibility that Year 10s would be sitting their end of year exams at KAA1 and why this had not been communicated to parents.
Mr Benson explained that this has not been communicated yet as a decision has not yet been made. He explained that if Year 10 do sit their exams at KAA1, all students would be given reorientation visits in advance, and arrangements would be made for alternative exam venues should any students feel unable to sit their exams at KAA1. He gave examples of other ideas which were being developed to help support re-orientation, for example holding events like the school production or an art exhibition at KAA1 in July.