

**19<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**Re: Farewell letter**

Dear KAA Parents and Carers,

It is with a mixture of emotions that I write this, my final letter to the parent community here at KAA. Much sadness that - after a very long while - tomorrow will be my final day working with our fantastic students, staff and parents. But also a great deal of pride at everything the school has accomplished over the years, and gratitude for the generous support I have received from you all.

As the excellent results KAA students achieved in their GCSEs and A Levels last summer show, our school goes from strength to strength as it moves through its tenth year. Still a relatively young school, we have achieved so much already. All this success stems from the talent and commitment of our staff, and the near limitless potential of our students.

One piece of news hot off the press – and a great example of this potential – is that today **Pankhurst House** have secured a spectacular victory in our tenth annual **House Music** competition, the theme of which was ‘West End Musicals’. 40 Pankhurst students from years 7-13 came together to sing a medley of songs from Hairspray, Little Shop of Horrors, Bugsy Malone, High School Musical and Matilda (all previous KAA productions). It was a powerful example of KAA’s Intrepidus spirit and our core values of excellence and creativity. Big congratulations to Mr Rigby and Ms Ellington from the Music department, Ms Redford the Head of Pankhurst, and Gabriel (12 Sirleaf), Aarmi (9 Armstrong), Israa (8 Ali), Katori (8 Andrews) and Braxton (also 8 Andrews) who performed powerful solos in the piece. Four industry judges scored the performances, and a particular highlight was Gillian Ford (West End Mamma Mia cast member) singing ‘The Winner Takes It All’ to open the show.



I also want to mention that, thanks to the continuation of the ‘National Tutor Programme’, we are able to keep providing 1-2-1 and small group tutoring in certain subjects to KAA students this year. This will take place after school, either in person or via Zoom. Many students are pre-selected for this programme based on their current attainment (with Y11 and 13 prioritised), but we have some limited places available for parents who wish to take this up. Tutoring is provided free and interested parents should email Ms Vandelanotte ([h.vandelanotte@kaa.org.uk](mailto:h.vandelanotte@kaa.org.uk)) no later than Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October with their name, year group and the subjects you want. Please do check with your child first though to ensure they will attend regularly after school.

As you all know by now, Ms Jordan will formally take over from me as KAA’s new Principal after half term. In truth, she and I have been Co-Principal’s for some time now, and I have every confidence that the transition will be smooth and the school will go from strength to strength under her leadership. She will write to you all after the break with some notices for the new half term.

If you’ll permit me a brief moment of reflection, I wanted to share the quote below. This was my closing paragraph of my **first ever letter to KAA parents** in March 2014, six months prior to opening. It went to all our ‘founder’ Year 7 students’ parents, at a point when we were unsure if the community would fully embrace us as a new school. Looking back at this now, I’m delighted I had the courage to make this **promise** – the confidence of a young Head perhaps. I’m equally delighted that so many parents trusted us, and that we were able to repay them in the way we have.

*“Finally, I would like to assure you of my personal commitment to your child’s educational future. I understand that young people have just one chance in life to receive an **exceptional education**, and over the next seven years – together – we will help them achieve it.”*

Best of luck with the year ahead, and thank you so much for all of your support over the years. Being the founding Principal of KAA has been the honour of my life and an experience I will never forget.

Intrepidus,



**David Benson**  
**Principal**