

30 August 2024

## 2024-25 Academic Year Update

Dear Parents / Carers,

I hope you are well and have had a lovely summer break. As we approach the start of the new academic year, I want to take this opportunity to welcome back our returning students and parents, and our new Year 7 and Year 12 cohorts. I have a few updates that will be helpful for all parents, carers and students to take on board before students return next week.

### GCSE & A Level Results 2024

I'm delighted to share that KAA students achieved excellent **GCSE and A Level results** this summer, including a third of all A Level grades at A\*-A, and over a third of all GCSEs at grades 9-7 (the equivalent of the old A\*/A). These are unprecedented results for us and my congratulations to all students who have worked so hard to achieve them. The university entrance picture is also positive, with the majority of students achieving their first or insurance choice and 50% of applicants securing places at Russell Group Universities, with one at Oxford, and two medicine places. You can read more on our [website](#), but the main point to make here is that the results underline the very high educational standards at KAA, which all students, regardless of their current year group, will benefit from in the future.

### Start of term

Staff have been back this week and are eagerly anticipating the students' return. **A reminder that only Year 7 and Year 12 students are expected on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September for their 'Induction Day', then all students must attend on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September for the start of lessons.**

Please be aware that holidays during term time are illegal in the UK and may result in your Local Authority issuing a penalty charge notice if your child does not return to school for the start of term. KAA has ample school holidays – more than most state schools (including a two-week half term in October) – so please do avoid ever removing your child from school in term time. If your child is ever absent due to sickness, you should call our Attendance Officer on 0207 313 5800 and then press option 1, or email [attendance@kaa.org.uk](mailto:attendance@kaa.org.uk).

KAA is fortunate to be able to provide a delicious, hot breakfast for all students **free** each day via our **Breakfast Club**. We serve from **8am**, starting from Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September, and I would encourage as many families as possible to take us up on this offer. Our **libraries and study areas** are also open to students from 8am. **Students in Years 7-11 must arrive no later than 8.30am for the start of lessons please, and Sixth Formers no later than 9am.**

### Parent Communication & Payment Systems

A reminder that we contact parents via SIMs text and email with whole school or year group messages. Emails come from our email account at [2074000@sims-communications.co.uk](mailto:2074000@sims-communications.co.uk) and text messages come from [07860095005](tel:07860095005). Our fortnightly parent newsletter is also sent from [info@kaa.org.uk](mailto:info@kaa.org.uk). Our outgoing call number is [0207 313 5800](tel:02073135800). Please save KAA as a contact in your phone so you don't miss anything.

Parents can also have the **SIMS App** downloaded to their phones. It takes a matter of seconds and is an essential tool to keep on top of your child's education, allowing you to view your child's timetable, attendance and behaviour record. We will send reminder emails as to how to access the app and new login details for Year 7 & Year 12 parents once the term begins – please look out for these.

As a general rule, we ask parents to look for any information they need on the SIMs app, our website, or [Parent A-Z](#). We have a dedicated member of staff who keeps these up to date. It is hard for us to respond to requests via phone or email as our staff are very busy throughout the working day teaching lessons, so we ask parents to look for the info they need online instead. However, if you need to speak to a teacher the simplest thing to do is to email them and they will aim to respond in 48 hours. Please note we have a zero-tolerance approach to any abuse of KAA staff, either in email or verbally on the phone / in person.

It is worth noting now that the following parents' evenings take place in our first half term:

**Year 7 Parent Information Evening – Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September 6pm-7pm (at KAA)**

**Year 11 Parent Information Evening – Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 6pm-7pm (at KAA)**

**Year 12 & Year 13 Progress Meetings – Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October 5pm-8pm (virtually via School Cloud)**

Further details about these events will be sent to parents via email from your child's Director of Learning. There will also be an increased programme of parent coffee morning events this year, so please do look out for these and attend those you feel are most relevant for you.

### **Director of Learning Team 2024-25**

A reminder that the Directors of Learning leading each year group this year will be as follows:

*Year 7 - Ms Rudkin & Ms Gogarty*

*Year 8 - Ms Madill & Mrs Dewes*

*Year 9 - Ms Chauhan & Mr Gibbins*

*Year 10 - Ms Cockell & Ms Kruk*

*Year 11 - Mr Abubaker & Ms Nix*

*Year 12 - Mr Whitlock (interim)*

*Year 13 - Mr Jones*

### **Parent Pay & Free School Meals**

Parents of new Year 7 & Year 12 students will receive their Parent Pay log-in details in the first week of term. Students in these year groups will be able to receive a free lunch for the first week of school until student accounts are set up - and parents then have until Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September to top up their child's new account. If you think you may be eligible for Free School Meals, please contact our Finance Officer Ms Jain at [finance@kaa.org.uk](mailto:finance@kaa.org.uk) as soon as possible, and Ms Jain will assist you with an application.

The price for a main lunch meal at KAA has remained at £2.40 for almost 10 years now. Given the increase in supply and food costs over the last few years, however, we are now having to increase this price to £2.60 unfortunately. We have resisted making any price changes like this for several years, however, I hope parents will understand why this is needed at this point. Please do consider applying for Free School Meals if you think that this price change will cause any difficulty.

### **Building Works**

Many of you will notice that our exciting building project is now well underway, and making good progress. The internal 'hoarding' that separates the school from the actual site, has been constructed during the summer break, ready for the students to return next week. This means the internal building will look quite different in places, however, we are confident students will adjust to this quickly and the overall project have very little impact on their school day. Plans for the final design are looking great – with 7 new state-of-the-art teaching spaces and plenty more office space – so lots to look forward to.

Also, just to add to this, KAA is part of a wider project, aimed at keeping our community a safe and fully accessible place for all. As such, we have managed to secure a road safety barrier on the corner of Silchester Road which will help keep students better protected in this busy spot. However, please still remind your child to use the designated crossing and to look both ways when crossing the road to help avoid accidents in this area.

## Online Safety

There has been an increased, and understandable, emphasis in national safeguarding legislation over recent years surrounding the requirement for schools to safeguard students online. This isn't only about teaching students how to stay safe online, which we do in abundance, but also about the filtering and monitoring systems that schools have in place. This has always been the case at KAA, however, we wanted to notify parents and carers that we have now upgraded to a highly sophisticated system called 'Smoothwall Monitor'; a system that is used widely in schools across the country. In essence, whenever a student is logged into their KAA account on a device, the technology risk assesses students' online activity, captures the risk and alerts the academy's safeguarding team, where needed. Ultimately, this allows us to concentrate on supporting and educating students, with the peace of mind that if Smoothwall Monitor detects a potential online incident, we will be alerted within minutes. If you have any questions regarding this system, or indeed regarding anything related to safeguarding at KAA, please do not hesitate to email [safeguarding@kaa.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@kaa.org.uk)

## Senior Leadership Team 2024-25

Finally, you will be aware that there have been some new additions to the KAA SLT recently, and I am delighted to announce the promotion of **Mr Bernard to Senior Vice Principal** as the final part of this. This promotion now fills the vacancy left when I took up the role of Principal. I know that many of you will have worked with Mr Bernard at some point during his 10 years at KAA, and are therefore aware of the fantastic job that he does, and will all want to join me in congratulating him on this important move.

Given this, the Senior Leadership Team this academic year will be as follows:

*Anna Jordan – Principal*  
*Ryan Bernard – Senior Vice Principal*  
*Amy Gurnell – Vice Principal – DSL & Pastoral*  
*James Waller – Vice Principal – Teaching & Learning*  
*Adam Whitlock – Assistant Principal – Sixth Form*  
*Jasmine Vines – Assistant Principal – Personal Development*  
*Ross Dunning – Assistant Principal – Data & Assessment*  
*Sophie Pedley – Assistant Principal – Timetable*  
*Robert Davies - Assistant Principal – Timetable*  
*Lisa Blount – Assistant Principal – Teacher Development*  
*Clare Kitteringham – Assistant Principal – Curriculum*  
*Laurence Weeks – Finance Director*

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and we very much look forward to welcoming students back to KAA next week.

Kind regards,



**Anna Jordan**  
**Principal**