

5th May 2025

Dear all

Welcome back after the bank holiday weekend. We hope you made the most of the bank holiday weekend – whether relaxing, exploring, or getting things done!

As this is a shorter week, we're bringing you **one combined message covering last week and this one**. As ever, there's been a real buzz of activity at KSA, from inspiring visitors to student-led projects and important learning across the school.

Exam Season – Let's Make Every Moment Count

Last week saw the start of speaking exams for our **Year 11 students** studying **modern foreign languages** and we've been incredibly impressed by their focus and preparation.

The **main exam series for Year 11 and Year 13** starts imminently. **Every moment now counts**. Teachers are making sure that in-class time is focused on **modelling exam technique**, **building recall**, and giving students the tools they need to succeed.

At home, please encourage **active revision strategies**. Making notes alone is not effective – all students have been taught how to use **mind maps** and **flash cards** effectively to help embed knowledge. **Thank you for all you're doing to support them**.

Final AIB of the Year – Science in the Spotlight

Tomorrow (**Tuesday 6th May**), we welcome our **Director of Education** for the **final Academy Improvement Board (AIB) visit of the year**. The focus will be on **science** and we're looking forward to showcasing the fantastic work taking place across our classrooms.

We're also proud to be joined by one of our governors, **Daniel Warren** – a **former KSA student** and now a **lawyer working in London**. It's always a privilege to see our alumni giving back and helping shape our future.

A Visit from Helen Sharman – Britain's First Astronaut

We were absolutely delighted to welcome a truly inspiring guest to KSA this week: **Helen Sharman**, the **first British astronaut** (the very first person from the United Kingdom to travel into space) and a renowned scientist.

Helen delivered captivating talks to both our **Year 10** and **Sixth Form students**, sharing the incredible story of her journey to space and the challenges and triumphs of becoming an astronaut. Beyond the wonders of aerospace travel, she spoke about the wide range of careers in **STEM and Medicine**, and gave invaluable advice on **university life** from **applications and funding** to **sports and social opportunities**.

Her visit was not only a rare opportunity to hear from someone who has truly pushed the boundaries of human experience, but also a powerful reminder of how far **passion, curiosity, and determination** can take you.

We are so grateful to Helen for taking the time to engage so thoughtfully with our students, answering every question and inspiring the next generation of **scientists, engineers, doctors** – and perhaps even **astronauts!**



Gardening Club Grows

Our **Gardening Club** has had a fantastic start this term, thanks to the generous support of the local **Rotary Club**. Students have created a thriving vegetable patch now growing **peas, onions, beetroots and potatoes**, and have also planted **peppers and flowers** in new borders.

Looking ahead, the **Rotary Club** hopes to host the group at local allotments in **July**, and to visit school to talk with our **Year 7s** about their community work. We'll also be cooking with our **home-grown produce after school**; real **plot-to-plate learning** in action!



Photos of the veg patch are attached – well done to all involved.



Vaping Awareness – Factsheet Attached

Following our participation in the **County Vaping Challenge** and **assemblies delivered to all students** last week, we've shared a **factsheet** outlining the dangers of vaping. This is attached for your information.

We know this is a concern for many families. We take **robust action** and **students caught vaping on site are suspended**; but we also recognise that some may need **support**. If your child, or you as a family, would like help or resources, please contact their **form tutor** or a member of the **pastoral team**. We'll be happy to connect you with further **guidance and support**.



Reminders & Notices

- **Menu Change – Tuesday 7th May:** Due to the bank holiday, we'll be serving **Monday's menu**.
- **Year 8 Parents' Evening – Thursday 8th May:** If you haven't yet made appointments, please do so. **We're looking forward to seeing you.**
- **Uniform Reminder:** Please ensure students wear **plain black shoes** – trainer style is fine, but **no coloured logos or soles**. **PE kit** must include a **plain black hoodie** or the **official KSA hoodie**. If your child has **sensory needs**, please get in touch; we're happy to make adjustments that work for both home and school.
- **Mobile Phone Use in School:** **Mobile phones** continue to cause some disruption. We'll be **surveying students, staff and parents** in the coming weeks to **review our policy** and explore whether any changes are needed.

Wishing you a lovely week.

Mrs Giovanelli