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 Principal: Jennie Giovanelli

8th September 2023

JGI/KQU-6896

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we finish our first full week back, I wanted to write to thank you for your support during our return to school, as well as take this opportunity to introduce myself.  If you have a YouTube account, you can also view via the video version of this letter by clicking on the link below.

URL: <https://youtu.be/vOzL_UNV9MU>

I am absolutely delighted to have been appointed as KSA’s Principal and I have really enjoyed getting to know our staff and students properly over the last week.  I have been made to feel so welcome by everyone and have been very grateful for the support of your child when I have been lost!  The standard of uniform and behaviour has on the whole been excellent and I want to thank you for your support in helping our students demonstrate the best version of themselves.  The first week back is always a time where our staff reconnect with both old and new classes, and it’s been lovely to walk around the school and see this in action.

Prior to taking up this post, I was Headteacher at Kingsthorpe College in Northampton. This was my first Headship, and I was there for 7 years – and loved every minute.  I am incredibly proud of how the school developed over the time I was lucky enough to be its leader, and I am clear that this success was not down to me as an individual but down to the hard work and collaboration of all those involved with the school.  I am looking forward to bringing my experience and expertise to KSA, but also know I will learn a lot from our staff, children, and our community.

I have three daughters who are in Year 9, Year 7 and Year 5.  All are very different and have extremely differing experiences at school.  In particular, my eldest is neurodivergent and as such, finds some aspects of secondary school tricky.  She’s wonderfully creative and quirky, is fiercely loyal with a strong sense of justice and fairness, and she can be frighteningly perceptive about people.  But she can also be forgetful, disorganised, seemingly unmotivated, and inflexible, and become emotionally dysregulated really quickly.  I know first-hand therefore just how difficult it can be for her at school because of some of the ways that secondary schools are traditionally set up.

I am determined to make sure that we do everything we can at KSA to celebrate every child in our KSA family, including helping them have the confidence to be themselves.   I know that this means we need to further develop our training and understanding of effective teaching for our learners who find school challenging, as well as making adaptations to our environment and practices so that we are not creating additional barriers to our students’ success. I spoke to the children in my first day back assembly about the other things that matter most to me, so please feel free to ask them to share this with you.  I imagine possibly the thing they will remember is that I don’t like wearing shoes!

I am incredibly passionate about the importance of listening to the voices of those who matter most at the school – the children.  I also know that you know your children best.  Therefore, we love hearing from our parents – we can’t always promise to agree but we will always listen. Please do therefore get in touch if there is anything you think we do well or that we can be better at; more so than ever, it’s going to be crucial that we work in partnership for the success of our young people.  On that note, we have had some feedback in relation to the information that was shared regarding compulsory uniform requirements for PE.  Please accept our apologies for this miscommunication.   For clarification, the details are correct on the website and football boots, gum shields and shin pads **are compulsory** for PE. However, we understand that these things need to be budgeted for, so we will make exceptions for those that do not have those items this term.

And finally, of course for some of your children, this is their first week at secondary school and I know that at the end of my middle daughter’s first week back, I felt a mixture of anxiety, relief, and pride at how she had tackled what I know is a huge transition for students. I also know that what I want and need most from her school now is a community which understands and accepts her as an individual, a school which communicates frequently and responsively with parents, and a school which both challenges and enables her to have the confidence, belief, knowledge, and skills to achieve whatever it is she sets her mind to.

I am determined that KSA will be this school for your child, whatever year group they are in, and I know that for some of you, we need to work harder at building your confidence and trust in us.  Over the next few weeks, I will be letting you know about a number of different things we will be doing to help make sure that you feel included as an extremely valued member of our team.

I appreciate it’s been a very long, hot week so I will leave it here for now, and I look forward to speaking with you all again next week.

With my very best wishes



**Mrs Giovanelli**

**Principal**