



**KING EDWARD VI
ACADEMY TRUST
BIRMINGHAM**



**KING EDWARD VI
CAMP HILL
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

King Edward VI
Camp Hill School for Girls
Vicarage Road, Kings Heath
Birmingham, B14 7QJ

T: 0121 444 2150
F: 0121 444 5123
E: head@kechg.org.uk
W: www.kechg.org.uk

Dear Parents and Carers

Firstly, Happy New Year, I do hope you and your family are well and staying safe. Unfortunately, the year has not started in a way anyone would have wanted. Following the government's announcement about the National lockdown, including the closure of all schools in England until, at the earliest, the start of next half term we are beginning to adjust as we will now enter a further period of remote learning. Having spent much of the Christmas break and all of Monday preparing for mass testing, clearly this is now on hold. I wrote to you requesting consent for testing, I would like to ask you to continue to send in your response by the end of the week. I will contact you again with more detailed information before we welcome students back, I am sure things will have changed by then!

At the moment, we have no more information about the Government's plan for GCSE and A Level examinations, although we may have more news today. Currently we have received the same message that the general public has, that it won't be possible for all exams to go ahead as normal this summer – and that the Government will work with Ofqual and exam boards on alternative arrangements. I am sure that this announcement will have caused both you and your child yet more concern. I can say that we are really pleased to have been able to run our assessments for both Year 11 and 13 in December, including many remote assessments. As you are aware, we have already planned a second set of assessments scheduled around Easter time, to support us in being able to provide accurate data if/when required. Please reassure your child, that as a school we will do all we can to support them and ensure that they achieve all they are capable of to allow them to move on to the next phase of their lives. Our strong advice is that they do their best to stay focused, continue to work hard and remember that the staff are on hand to support them. We will communicate with you as soon as we know more.

In terms of teaching and learning this time round we feel much more prepared to be able to deliver high quality remote learning to our students. Teachers have been developing skills in delivering live lessons, and will also be using pre-recorded lessons and online resources. Hopefully all students will receive a varied diet of work, but please refer to our Remote Learning Policy, which can be found in the 'Policies' section on our website for more detail. As far as possible, we have asked teachers to deliver lessons in line with students' timetables, though we know that this is not always manageable. We very much appreciate and rely on your support in ensuring your child is up, dressed and able to access learning in a reasonably quiet space, preferably using a table which will allow them to work effectively. If your child is experiencing problems because of a lack of a device to work on, please contact a.gahir@kechg.org.uk. If your child is struggling with engagement with work, please contact your child's Form Tutor in the first instance. Teachers will monitor engagement with work and

Headteacher: Mrs L. Johnson

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learning.

If you are a Key Worker and would like to request a place for your child in school, or if you have specific concerns about your child which may be addressed by them being in school, please email January2021@kechg.org.uk. In order to ensure equitable provision, students in school are accessing exactly the same work as their peers at home, they are simply being supervised to do this. Unfortunately, there will not be a lunch offer as the catering company have had to furlough their staff.

In the meantime, I would urge students to look after themselves and each other. Social Media might be a useful tool for staying in touch with friends, but it should be used to be kind to each other and to offer support, be that in terms of academic work or as a social contact. We do need to be mindful of the impact that losing routines and structure can potentially have on all of us. The Coronavirus outbreak has led to a high degree of worry, uncertainty and concern. The issue is very present in the news; everyone will have some degree of awareness of events and many have had their lives significantly disrupted.

During these times both young people and adults can potentially feel anxious and unsure about their safety. There are ways in which we can provide opportunities for feelings to be discussed within a safe context, as well as maintaining a sense of normality, routine and calm. Supporting our young people will enable them to process and manage their feelings and build resilience. We shared the following suggestions last year and they remain sensible and may be helpful to you:

1. **Reassure young people that they are safe:** Try to regularly reassure they are safe, and that adults will faithfully try to keep them safe.
2. **Let young people know that it is alright to be upset:** All feelings are OK, *but* it is important to always behave in a polite and respectful way to others. Provide opportunities to be honest about feelings: sharing worries or feelings of upset with other family members reduces a sense of vulnerability and isolation and raises optimism and self-esteem. Checking in with your children to see if they have things that they would like to discuss can help them start these conversations.
3. **Maintain a normal routine:** Set up a work/leisure/exercise routine for students at home. This should be as close as possible to the “normal” term time routine. Emails and contact with staff should ONLY be during the school day. Make extra time to listen to what your children need to tell you. It is important that young people switch off from technology in the evenings and particularly at bedtime.

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4. **Place an emphasis on resilience and strengths:** Focus on skills, in terms of daily life. Focus on the strengths to help them cope if feeling anxious or upset. Consider yourself a role model: social media, for example, should be used to support rather than to alarm or speculate.
5. **Look for opportunities to help others:** Sensible acts of benevolence, charity and humanity help to restore positivity about the world and close to home. Thinking about others takes the focus off potentially negative introspection.
6. **Provide opportunities for physical exercise:** Exercise is valuable in developing natural chemicals in the brain to help us cope with feelings such as shock or worry. Research shows that time spent in nature is beneficial for mental and physical health, and current government advice on coronavirus is that people without symptoms or health vulnerabilities can go for a walk outdoors if they follow the guidelines.
7. **Look after yourself:** A time of stress can mean less energy and more potential for illness for you, as well as others. So please take care of yourself.

There are a number of websites that may be of support that are signposted in your child's planner, one that is particularly of note is Kooth.com (endorsed by the NHS).

We will keep in contact with you and our students over the coming weeks. Thank you once again for your ongoing support and patience.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Johnson
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