

KLS Sixth Form

Head of Sixth Form Termly Bulletin

Term 1 (2022/23)

Dear Students and Parents/Carers,

Welcome to the first Head of 6th Form's termly update of the academic year. I hope that this provides a comprehensive summary of this terms activities, events and developments within the sixth form.

The sixth form team would like to take this opportunity to congratulate students on the completion of term 1 of the academic year; we cannot quite believe that we are at this point already but there have been many student achievements and successes that students should feel proud of.

At the start of the year, I expressed how I would like to develop synergy and a positive culture of students/parents/carers/sixth form, working together to develop effective relationships to ensure that the provision at KLS is the best that it can be.

The student and parent survey for term 1 was a very insightful way of finding out student and parent views on the provision and I will be ensuring that feedback is acted upon over this year. Thank you for all students and parents/carers who responded.

I am also pleased to have received email communication with many parents/carers within my first term in position of Head of Sixth Form at KLS and thank students/parents/carers for the respectful and solution focused emails that we receive. I wish to keep this communication channel open and invite parents/carers to get in contact with me or the sixth form team so we can work positively together to continue to develop the sixth form at KLS. Please email me directly on tubbj@kls.herts.sch.uk or 6form@kls.herts.sch.uk to get in contact with the team.

I have also had the pleasure in meeting with a number of parents/carers to discuss areas of the sixth form and found these to be very productive and positive indication of the synergy I mentioned previously.

As we reach the end of Term 1 and head into the Christmas break, I would like to take this opportunity to wish a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to our students and their families. I hope the festive period is a time where students can take the opportunity to balance revision and preparation for the exams and assessment periods in the new year, with rest, relaxation, and the all important, time with friends and family.

I look forward to welcoming students back on **Monday 9th January**.

Kind regards,

Mr J. Tubb

Principal Assistant Headteacher & Head of Sixth Form



We want to hear from you 6form@kls.herts.sch.uk 01923 264504

'Positive feedback is just as valuable as negative feedback'

Exam preparation

The Yr12 examination period during **23rd January – 3rd February**. Exam timetables have been published. Yr12 reports will be sent home on **Friday 3rd March**.

Yr13 trial exams take place during the first two weeks of the new term (**9th January – 20th January**). Yr13 reports will be sent home on **10th February**.

These exams will give you an indication of your current level of attainment and will also be a contributor towards your UCAS predicted grade. We appreciate that this period causes some apprehension and anxiety and therefore recommend the following:

Preparation. Make sure that you feel prepared as much as possible. This includes having a good study plan to help focus on reducing the stress associated with work overload. Set specific goals for each of your study periods and ensure that you know what you need to do in these sessions. Be realistic and do not overload yourself with too much as it is counter-productive. Prioritise revision using a mixture of subject confidence, what order the exams take place, and time required

Health. Exercise, drinking lots of water, and eating healthily all contribute to superior performance. The more fuel and hydration you receive, the better you study. Exercise helps with focus and sharpening attentional and interference control.

Sleep. Never underestimate the power of sleep. At your age, you are experiencing many changing factors and impacts on your body. Sleep is your body's natural way of supporting you so don't skimp on sleep.

Balance. Whilst you will need to revise and prepare for your exams, make sure that you get some down-time and spend time relaxing with friends and family. A work/life balance ensures that you come back in January feeling revived and ready to achieve your best.

Please refer to these links for more information:

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/help-for-teenagers-young-adults-and-students/tips-on-preparing-for-exams/>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/blog/exam-self-care/>

<https://www.ubyssey.ca/science/studyology-take-care-of-yourself/>

During these exam periods, attendance to all lessons is required as subjects have content that is continued to be delivered as well as exam preparation. Teachers are directed to be flexible with lessons so that students are able to revise for an afternoon exam session for another subject during lessons, as long as students are prepared with their own revision materials and self-support their revision. Study leave is not provided for the trial exams as it impacts significantly on content delivery and is detrimental to students who study NEA subjects such as Art, Technology, for example.

Open Evenings

Yr12 Virtual Parent Consultation Evening takes place on **Thursday 16th March** via ParentCloud. Please be advised that appointments are made on a first-come-first-served basis and you are advised to book an appointment early.

Breakfast Club

As we continue to experience the colder, wintery months where we notice a drop in temperature and an increase in wet weather, I would like to remind you of the Breakfast Club as part of our student health and wellbeing campaign. The breakfast club provides a warm environment for students who arrive early, to socialise or study whilst having access to a free hot porridge, tea/coffee, or fruit. The breakfast club is open 8am-8.40am. It is a great way of starting the day warm and with the fuel for the day.

UCAS & Post-18

We recognise that parents/carers are often confused by the variety of options following A-Level study and the application requirements and processes associated with them. We are preparing a Post-18 Options Parent/Carer Information Evening for the summer term which will help Yr12s prepare for applications. More information will be published next year.

The student opportunities publication which is published every month, provides information about open days, degree-apprenticeships, and other post-18 opportunities which may be of interest to students when considering their next option.

UCAS applications should be submitted by now. The earlier the applications, the higher the chances of offers being made by universities. Please speak to your form tutor or Mrs Battaglia to find out about the status of your application.

Young Carers

Are you a Young Carer? A young Carer is a person under 18 who regularly provides emotional and/or practical support and assistance for a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally unwell or who misuses substances. (Child Law Advice (<https://childlawadvice.org.uk>))

Below are some examples of tasks Young Carers may have to do, although often it is not just practical support that is being given, for many the emotional support they are providing can have the biggest impact:

Practical tasks - shopping, washing, cooking

Physical care - lifting, helping up/downstairs, physio

Personal care - dressing, intimate care

Household management - paying bills

Looking after siblings - taking to school, parenting

Giving medicine - handling insulin needles, preparing tablets and reminding to take medication

Interpreting - for hearing/speech impairment

Emotional support - listening, calming, keeping company, take on adult worries and responsibilities

If you think you may be a Young Carer, support could be available, please speak to your form tutor to arrange a meeting with the sixth form's family support services.

Sixth Form Build

We are pleased to report that progress on the new sixth form building are on schedule, despite the recent snow and cold weather. The foundations have been dug and concrete poured. In the new term, students will be invited to be part of the consultation group looking at the fit and facilities. The sixth form building is set to be ready for opening to students in September 2023.

Sixth Form Student Leadership Team

Do you want to make a difference to the experience of sixth form and the wider school community? Do you want to hone your leadership skills? Do you want something extra special that employers and universities love to see on applications? Do you want to leave a legacy at KLS?

This year, the process will be slightly different with students being able to apply for Head Student or to be part of a committee group who form the Sixth Form Student Leadership Team. More information can be found on the Yr12 General Registration Group channel on MS Teams.

Applications for the next generation of the Sixth Form Student Leadership Team are now open with the closing date for application letters **Thursday 9th February**.

Dress Code

I want to thank all the students who have made an incredible effort to follow the dress code of the sixth form, especially during the colder months. I appreciate that the cold weather makes it more of a challenge but for the majority of the students, the dress code has been followed. Students should consider their footwear when travelling to and from sixth form during the icy periods but ensure that they are appropriately attired once inside the school building.

A reminder also, although we recognise that sixth formers will want to express their identity and individuality, we do operate as part of the wider school where lower school students have a uniform and therefore, we expect our students to present themselves in a smart and appropriate attire. We have seen an increase in baggy sweaters with large logos which are not part of our dress code. Warmer layers can be worn to travel to and from sixth form, but the school has a very efficient and warm heating system which removes the need for clothing that is not part of our dress code. We advise students to consider putting on extra layers such as t-shirts under shirts/blouses/tops to provide further warmth.

Preparation for University and Moving-out

We recognise that some students are preparing to, or considering, to move out/away from the family home when they attend university or when they begin their next stage. We are currently putting together a comprehensive programme where students will have the ability to attend sessions such as; food-shop budgeting, basic household maintenance, financial planning on a limited budget, car maintenance, living with others, cooking on a budget, household emergency situations (plumbing, heating, power-cuts, etc.), household chores in shared living accommodation, etc. Further information will be provided next term.

Subject Folders

With Christmas around the corner, what better opportunity to furnish students with stationary and equipment that support well-organised and productive subject folders. Mr Easthorpe will be working with form tutors and subject leaders to ensure that all students have a well-organised folder for each and every subject – these make a significant impact on student organisation and preparation for assessments and examinations.

What can help with these folders? Lever-arch folders, dividers, highlighters, lined refill pads, post-it notes, plastic punch-pockets, are examples which ensure good practice with subject folders.

Monitoring Programmes

Newly introduced this academic year, the sixth form uses a three-stage monitoring programme to provide support to students who may require it in the following areas:

- Academic progress and attainment
- Attendance and punctuality
- Wellbeing
- Behaviour and Conduct
- Submissions, Deadlines and Independent Working

These programmes are designed not to sanction or punish students but to assist them with support mechanisms to encourage progress and to achieve their best. These student centred programmes identify areas where students need support, guidance or the use of interventions or where required or appropriate, external services. The monitoring programmes may require students to engage in directed or supported study if independent, self-supported study is not showing signs of assisting the students. Form tutors and/or subject staff can place a student on stage 1, Mrs Battaglia (Acting Head of KS5 Pastoral) or Mr Easthorpe (Acting Head of KS5 Curriculum) place students on stage 2 if stage 1 has not been successful, and finally, stage 3 is where students are supported directly by me as Head of Sixth Form.

KS5 Scholarship Awards

Congratulations to the eight students (four in Yr12 and four in Yr13), who were awarded the KS5 Scholarship Awards of £50 to spend on things to support their studies or progression into a career or university. The next round of scholarship awards will be announced next half term where up to another eight students can win these scholarship awards.

Wellbeing

There have been many developments in this area as part of a campaign to improve student wellbeing, following the identification of this area being a priority from the student and parent surveys. We now have Dacorum Healthy Hub providing an externally organised, drop-in style surgery and appointments can be made via scanning the QR code below:



I am also pleased to say that we were successful in a bid for funding towards 16-19 wellbeing and mental health and we will be working with our Sixth Form Student Wellbeing Ambassadors (from Yr12 and Yr13) on utilising this funding on wellbeing initiatives to benefit all sixth formers.

Off-site, self-supported Study

I was pleased to announce a change in the attendance policy back in November, which sees students in both Yr12 and Yr13, the ability to select off-site- self-supported study from 12.50pm if they are not scheduled for a lesson or other planned activity in the afternoon. It is hoped that students will be able to use this time to identify how they can best engage in purposeful self-study. Letters were both emailed and hard copies handed out to students; off-site study is conditional on parent/carer authorisation, therefore, these contract slips must be returned prior to students accessing this option.

I feel it important to highlight to parents/carers that sixth form study is a full-time education commitment where we are bound to requirements by the local and national government, including funding regulations, alongside a duty of care for safeguarding and Health & Safety. We recognise that young people want greater independence and autonomy however, as previously outlined, enrolment into the sixth form is on the basis of full-time education. I continue to look at our systems, policies and procedures to support the autonomy of our young people. If there are any questions or you would like clarification of reasons behind our policy, I welcome your enquiries.

Polite and respectful request

We all now live in a digital age where traditional forms of communication such as letters and telephone calls are generally being replaced by emails and digital communication. Whilst this is usually the most time-efficient method it does come with its disadvantages. Tone and intent can be lost in translation and the risk of emotional responses can be expedited through the use of devices at our immediate finger-tips. The sixth form is looking to develop a communication charter to ensure our communication is efficient, focused and understanding. We recognise that we haven't always got it right and I am making a commitment to ensure that these are rectified. I would however, also like to take this opportunity to make a polite and respectful request that communication with the sixth form team is not abusive, rude or threatening. Although only occasional, we have received some communication that is impolite and inappropriate. Doctors, lawyers and other professionals have the right to work and operate in an environment which does not tolerate this; our sixth form is no different.

On a more optimistic note, positive feedback is just as useful as negative feedback and we welcome any comments or feedback on what we are doing right so that we can continue to develop the sixth form.