

5 September 2024

Dear Parents

I would like to welcome everyone back to Knole Academy for the 2024/25 academic year and for new starters a very warm welcome.

Attendance

I previously informed parents on 11 July 2024, that new statutory guidance from The Department for Education 'Working together to improve school attendance' would come into effect from 18 August 2024. Within the guidance, there is a requirement for schools to inform the local authority when a pupil is absent from school due to illness for 15 days or more (consecutively or cumulatively throughout an academic year) or is due to be absent for 15 days due to illness. In addition, the guidance from Kent County Council is that Headteachers should not authorise any absence of a planned nature in term time. Planned absence includes all holidays and weddings and parents will be liable to fines if they choose to ignore this advice.

The fines are issued by Kent County Council and the money is collected and retained by the authority. As a school we support this measure, as attendance at Knole Academy and nationally has not returned to pre-Covid levels, and students with poor attendance are not performing in their examinations in line with their peers.

Exam Results

Last year's Year 13 students performed extremely well in their IB exams. They received these results in July, and these were supplemented with outstanding results in vocational subjects which were released in mid-August. We wish these students the very best for the future.

The Year 11 students recorded the best 4+ English and maths pass rate (an old grade C at O-level or GCSE) and the best 5+ English and maths results (a "strong pass" and the measure put into government league tables) that Knole Academy has ever recorded. The 5+ pass rate was almost 10% higher than our previous best. As a result, we are welcoming back our largest Year 12 cohort ever into the Sixth Form. However, the progress for the school overall, again a figure that appears in league tables, is the worst we have ever had. The biggest driver of this is the fact that we had many Year 11 students whose attendance was low and did not reach the level we would expect. The correlation between attendance and academic success is overwhelming, and we encourage all students and parents to please consider this.

Buses and Bus passes

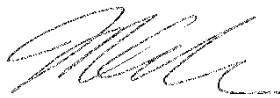
The same buses are currently running as they were last year, and I am not aware of plans to change any routes. The grace period for bus passes will end on the 12 September; after this date students will need a valid bus pass to travel. These can be collected from the admin office when they have been issued by Kent. The majority of our buses are provided by Go Coach, and they have an app called "GO Coach Hire"

which is available from the respective app stores. This provides students and parents with live tracking of where the buses are.

Pupil Premium

Please see the attached flyer.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Collins", written in a cursive style.

David Collins