

Dear all

I am writing to welcome all students and families back as we start a fresh academic year and to extend a warm welcome to our new students, families and staff. New beginnings are always a mix of excitement and feeling anxious, especially for those new to Seven Kings. Reception on the whole skipped into school after their stay and play sessions. Our internal Year 7s have hit the ground running and taken their new friends with them. They tell me it is fun, they love the way teachers make them learn and they love the library and new subjects; they are a friendly, mature year group who are a happy influence on our community. Year 12 meanwhile feel they have been warmly welcomed into the Sixth Form by their tutors and tell me 'all is good', they have had their fires lit and have already had their first bowling trip!

We celebrated our best GCSE results this year and what we are most proud of is the narrowing of all groups. Our progress 8 sits at +0.92, which means we add on average roughly a grade to children who attend Seven Kings. I have spent a great deal of time working out why the results are so good and I am convinced it is because we did not allow the gaps to get too big during the pandemic. Our staff and I mean our whole staff, went above and beyond during the pandemic from attendance to providing resources to developing the virtual classroom experience with break out rooms led by our LSAs to creating opportunities to keep everyone connected; we stripped back our priorities to reading and oracy as well as making masks and looking after the vulnerable and NHS children on site. When students came back the gaps were there but small enough for us to work on and set students up ready for their SATs, GCSEs and A levels.

I know it was tough at home, getting students up and ready for learning, often supporting several children at once whilst trying to work yourselves. You kept our attendance in line with our onsite attendance, which is remarkable. As a result, with your child's reliance and curiosity we achieved this year's set of remarkable results. It is a reminder to us all that when we work together we can do great things for our young people. **Attendance, reading and talk are the backbone of all we achieve.** If we can support you in any way in raising these expectations then do let us know.

I do however urge you not to take holidays during or at the end or start of term times. We will be tracking the impact this is having on our students because we are beginning to see it and I also want to remind you that your child's attendance forms part of their application to universities and apprenticeships and can be a crucial factor when deciding between students as it demonstrates a commitment to their education; as an all through school this tracks all the way through their school life with us. If you need support in getting your child to school ON TIME please contact k.dari@svenkings.school

Here, we will not rest on our laurels and remain 'calculated selfless', a lovely phrase from a basketball coach describing how great teams work. Our staff are world class and as I have reminded students this week we have no gold dust at Seven Kings, just great relationships and great ambitions for all. Our secret ingredient remains our young people who go with us on the journey.

Please see our **website** for our results and celebratory film 2023, where Year 6, 11 and 13 are featured. Have a look at the subjects and destination Year 13 are heading off to in the next weeks; we wish them continued success. We will also be advertising our **open evening and tours** for Reception, external Year 7 and Year 12. Please let your families and friends in catchment know for Reception age applications.

You will shortly find on our website our film recording our South Asian month celebrations. It is pure joy and full of the values of our school, young people challenging bias and stereotypes, challenging themselves to be better and committing to moving our community forward whilst celebrating all we hold dear. 'This is bigger than us. We wanted to come together as a school community to show how inclusive and diverse we are, because we really are.'

Finally, we have had some issues with our new tills in the restaurant on the secondary campus. We have informed the company of our concerns over this, our children have been patient and our staff have had to go above and beyond to get through the week in the heat! On the other hand the

new counter has made the primary lunch smoother and calmer, with the move to universal free meals being a great success so thanks to all those over the summer making sure this happened.

You will have heard covid rates are on the rise and I will keep you informed of this when and as needed. A reminder our uniform and foodbank is open to support you when you need it. If there is a concern about school please contact your Year Leader but please ask questions before issuing blame. We all want the best for all our young people, we really do!

I wish all our children and staff a successful and happy year

Warm regards to you all.

Jane Waters

Executive Headteacher

