

7<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you had a peaceful and joyous Christmas and that the New Year brings you all good health and happiness.

On our teacher training day yesterday we were focusing on what we need to do as a school to become a truly outstanding school...this is our aim and I know that it is one that is shared by everyone associated with the school. There is already much to be proud of in our school and a lot of progress has been made over the last few years with great academic success for many pupils, excellent careers education with many pupils gaining places on apprenticeships and university courses of their choice and great strides being made in supporting the personal development and welfare of our pupils as recognised in our latest Ofsted report. However, we are not there yet and there is still a lot that we can do, as a school community, to raise our standards even further.

With this in mind, I am writing to ask for your support in tackling some of the biggest issues that, I believe, are preventing us from becoming a truly outstanding school. The vast majority of our pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school and already have extremely high standards of self-discipline – this is regularly commented upon by visitors to the school. It is disappointing therefore that there remain a significant minority of pupils who are not complying fully with our school policies and I would be very grateful if you could go through the points below with your child to ensure that they are clear about what is expected.

**Behaviour on the way to school, including on the buses:** All pupils are reminded that their conduct on the way to and from school falls directly under our school behaviour policy. The highest standards of behaviour are expected at all times when travelling to and from school. I do not want or expect to be receiving reports from members of the public, making complaints about our pupils' conduct on the buses and we will always work with the bus company, members of the public and the police to follow up on any anti-social behaviour that is reported. This type of behaviour is very damaging to the reputation of everyone associated with the school and will not be tolerated.

**Lateness to school:** All pupils know that school starts at 8.55 each morning and that they are expected to be ready for learning at this time. Occasionally we receive reports that a school bus is late because it is held up in traffic and we take this into account on our school register. Unfortunately, we have some pupils who are arriving late to school almost every day. We operate a system of after school detentions for pupils who are late to school twice in a week and we will continue to enforce this rigorously. For pupils who are persistently late to school we will now be treating this as a serious safeguarding issue and will be following it up with parental meetings and further action, including referrals to social services, if required.

**Pupils leaving lessons and asking to go to the toilet:** We ask our teachers to use their professional judgement whenever a pupil asks to go to the toilet. Our lessons are only 50 minutes long and so there is no real reason why anyone should be asking to leave a lesson to go to toilet. With sensible planning from pupils, this can be avoided. We appreciate that some pupils may have a medical condition that

means that they have to go to the toilet more frequently. In this instance, we will issue a discrete toilet pass that can be shown to their teacher. We record on our Class Charts system when a pupil asks to leave a lesson to go to the toilet and we can track to see how frequently this is occurring. Any pupil out of a lesson will have a red lanyard to show that their absence from a lesson has been authorised for a short period of time. We take our safeguarding responsibilities very seriously and do not want pupils to be walking around school unsupervised during lesson times.

**Non-compliance with the school's uniform policy:** Our school uniform policy is very clear and yet too many pupils are coming to school wearing items of clothing that do not comply with this policy. The main issues are with hooded tops which are not to be worn anywhere on school site and trainers which may only be worn for taking part in sport at lunch and break times. Any pupil who has an item of uniform missing must collect a note from their Head of Year to excuse their uniform infringement and must also set a date for when the full uniform will be worn. Anyone wearing an item of clothing that is not allowed to be worn in school will have this item confiscated until the end of the day. You are reminded that school ties can be purchased from school (Head of Year office) at a cost of £7.50

**Noise between lessons:** Pupils are reminded that they must walk around the building in a sensible and quiet manner, as it is place of learning. We do not want to go to the lengths that some schools have gone to where pupils are banned from talking as they walk between lessons. We do however, expect all pupils to walk swiftly and quietly from one lesson to another without being asked.

**Mobile Phones in school:** Finally, mobile phones continue to be banned in school and will be confiscated if they are seen or heard. There will be no exceptions to this rule and pupils are not allowed to use their phones under any circumstances. In the event of an emergency at home, messages can be swiftly passed on to pupils via our school switchboard. We are all aware of how useful mobile phones can be for communication and information however, they can also cause massive distractions and are the single biggest cause of social issues and disagreements between pupils in school. The misuse of social media is a huge concern for us in school and is fast becoming the number one safeguarding issue that our young people are facing. We will be increasing the frequency of our educational inputs for all pupils on this important issues over the coming months with support from West Midlands Police. I would strongly advise you as parents and carers to carefully monitor your child's social media use, to not allow them to have accounts for social media if they are below the relevant age limit and to report any inappropriate use to the social media companies and, where appropriate, to the police.

Thankfully, the vast majority of our pupils get this right all the time and they are certainly playing their part in making our school an outstanding place to learn. We expect this excellent level of conduct from all our pupils and I am very grateful to you for your support in reinforcing these expectations.

As with all schools, we have a systems of consequences in place for when pupils get things wrong and ignore warnings about their conduct. This is set out in our behaviour policy that can be found on our school website. Again, this only applies to a minority of pupils and parents, however I would like to remind you that the consequences are there to reinforce the importance of following the school rules. Sanctions include lunchtime and afterschool detentions (a 'Red' after school detention will last until 4.15pm) where restorative practice will take place in order to repair relationships where they have broken down and prevent the inappropriate behaviour from reoccurring. Attendance at detentions is not optional and further, more stringent consequences will be put in place if the detention is not attended. We will not be able to accommodate pupil or parental requests for a change of date for detentions as these are set, administered and monitored centrally. It is clearly up to the child not to repeat their poor behaviour if their detentions are causing problems and inconvenience for other

members of the family. Detentions are only given following reminders and warnings and are therefore the result of repeated poor choices on behalf of the pupil.

If the behaviour infringement is significantly serious or if there is a repeat of unacceptable behaviour, then we also have a system of internal exclusion and your child will spend a period of time, supervised by a member of staff, working outside of their normal lessons. This system is put in place to reinforce our expectations and also to allow lessons to continue without disruption and interruption. I must stress that this is a very serious consequence and in many schools, a legal, fixed term exclusion would be given at the point. As a school we are seeking to avoid exclusions whenever possible.

In extreme circumstances, the behaviour policy allows for a pupil to be excluded from school, either for a fixed period of time (typically 1-5 days) or for very serious incidents the exclusion may be permanent. To set this in context, last year 5 pupils were permanently excluded from The King's C E School and this year so far, one pupil has been permanently excluded so far, for persistently disruptive behaviour. This is always a very sad and difficult decision to make however, it is very important that we uphold the standards so that every pupil can aspire, believe and achieve together.

We are always very grateful for your support, particularly with issues relating to behaviour and we believe that a joined-up approach with parents and school working together is far more effective in securing the best possible outcomes for your children. Your child's Head of Year should be the first port of call if you have any questions or concerns about their behaviour record or a consequence that has been issued. We are always very keen to work with families to support your child and fully recognise that there may be issues outside of school that are impacting on their behaviour from time to time. This does not mean that we lower our expectations or standards but it is always good if we are aware of anything that may be impacting on their learning or behaviour.

It is also important to mention that there are many, many pupils at The King's who always follow the school rules and set themselves very high standards. A significant number of pupils are on track to achieve a Gold Award this year for achieving 250+ commendations for positive work in and around school. We also have hundreds of pupils who are consistently part of the 20/20 Club for outstanding behaviour each term. Please speak to your child or log on to Class Charts, in order to find out about their commendation and points totals. Remaining a member of the 20/20 club should be a target for all pupils as we begin a new year and new term.

Finally, thank you for playing your part in helping us to provide an outstanding education for your child. We are all working very hard to achieve this and I look forward to seeing you at a school event or parents' evening in the near future.

Best wishes for 2020

Yours faithfully



Mr Ludlow  
Principal