**End of term letter Autumn Term 2022**

Dear parents,

As we approach the end of what one of my colleagues recently described as the “longest term in the history of education” I’m writing to thank you all for your support, and for the privilege of working with your wonderful children. There are many things that make King David High School and the Yavneh Schools special places to work, but the most joyful part is working with the very special young people we have here. They are honest, resilient, courageous, respectful, kind and hardworking, living out the school values of Emet and Emunah in their daily lives.

We welcomed the Chief Rabbi Thursday 1st December who spoke to the school about the characters who have inspired him in his life and the importance and being proud of their Judaism and finding joy in their lives and faith. He is a truly inspirational character himself.

You’ll be aware that we had our second OFSTED monitoring visit November 22nd & 23rd Nov. We look forward to the publication of the letter following this which is due out any day now. This recognises the hard work all members of the school community have put in to making the improvements OFSTED require. We’re not quite where we need to be yet, but we are all very happy with the direction of travel.

We were delighted to be ranked the third best performing comprehensive school in the Northwest of England in the Sunday Times’ Parent Power supplement which is a testament to the hard work of our resilient pupils and our dedicated staff.

Thank you to those of you who attended our Parents' Forum this term. The next Parents’ Forum will take place at 6:30pm on Wednesday 1st February. This will be an opportunity for us to discuss the progress the school has made since our last OFSTED monitoring visit, and the next steps we’re planning to take.

Perhaps one of the most significant changes the school has seen in its history this term was Mr Rowe retiring as chair of governors after 33 years of unstinting service to the school. There is no doubt that this wonderful school would not be what it is today without the dedication and hard work of Mr & Mrs Rowe, and generations of Jewish children have a great deal to be thankful to them for. I’m delighted to announce that the new chair of governors, Mr Jonathan Dover, was formally elected at last week’s full governing body meeting, with Andrew Berkeley as his vice chair.

In response to feedback from pupils, students and parents the careers curriculum for the King David High School has been significantly redesigned. As a school, we aim to provide our students with the core employability skills needed for the world of work and to demonstrate the vast number of opportunities available, so that we can help them aspire to the best of their ability. We have engaged the services of 'Our Futures', an external careers agency, to provide independent and informed careers guidance for year 11. The feedback from this has been overwhelmingly positive and the quality of the individual action plans produced is impressive. Through 'Our Futures', we have also launched our Year 10 and Year 12 work experience programme for this academic year and continue to work with the 'Princes Trust' to develop employability skills for Year 7 - 9 to develop key leadership, communication and teamwork skills. This will lead to a certification and awards for these pupils across the school. All of our year 9 pupils have had a conversation about their options and their hopes and intentions for the future with Mrs Basger this term too.

As the term ends, we say thank you and farewell to Mr Oles, who is moving on to another school closer to home, and Miss Shields who returns to Ireland. Both of these teachers have had a positive impact not only on their department but on the school more widely.

We also welcomed a new data manger, Mrs Sue Hipkiss, who has a breadth of experience working in range of schools and will further improve reporting, tracking and intervention, which are already strong features of the school. Parents should notice a positive difference in the information provided in tracking information and reports.

We look forward to Mrs Niven and Mrs Watson joining the science department in January. Both are highly experienced teachers with excellent track records. Mr Rushworth will also be taking up his post as our new Head of Music in January. He too comes to us with a wealth of experience of running successful music departments.

This has made it necessary to make some minor adjustments to timetables for next term. Pupils and students will be able to see their new timetable on Edulink after 1st January.

The school continues to face significant challenges. The cost of living increases, which are affecting so many of our families, also have an impact on the school. We are not immune to rising utilities costs, food costs and staffing costs. We are grateful as ever for the financial support we receive from the community without which the school simply wouldn’t be able to function as it does.

We are now using ParentPay to streamline transactions etc. Any problems with logging in; please contact Mrs Rose in the school office: l.rose@kdhigh.co.uk

I have written to parents before to ask for your support with ensuring all our pupils wear the correct uniform. I thank those of you who have donated good quality second hand unform to our supplies of spare uniform for those pupils who need this. I would also take this opportunity to remind all parents that our uniform includes a blazer and jumper but not an outdoor coat. We do ask children to remove coats when they are inside the building. Wearing the correct uniform helps our children to be comfortable and ready to learn, amongst other things. There is assistance available at school for anyone who is struggling to afford school uniform.

We are keen to hear from our pupils and students about what they want from their school. I’ve enjoyed listening to the views of our young people during my focus groups this term and have learnt a great deal about their experience of school from these conversations. There is also an opportunity each Thursday lunchtime for children to meet with Rabbi Rickman and Mrs Cohen to share their views through our fledgling school council. I would urge all pupils to get involved in this and share their views with school leaders via this democratic process.

We’ve also been talking to our young people quite a lot this term about the importance of punctuality and attendance. We are aiming to equip all our young people with the skills they will need for their working lives. Turning up on time and every day (as far as they are able to) are key expectations of any employee. Please do not take your child out of school during term time unless this is absolutely necessary. I am unable to authorise holidays during term times.

Whatever your plans for the next two weeks, I wish you a relaxing and peaceful break.

Your sincerely

D J Dalziel

Headteacher

Support Agencies - Please see link below to support agencies should they be required during the holidays: <https://www.kdhs.org.uk/wellbeing.html>