



Dear TGAK Community,

In light of the extremely sad circumstances, we end this term in, I felt it was best to write to you all with absolute thanks for the support that you have shown to each other as a community, and the academy, across this cold and frosty term. As we approach Christmas, we need to take some time to reflect with friends and family and enjoy time together – as this is what is most important. This past week has taught us this. I tell our young people frequently, that they are special, that this community is special and that I am most proud to be Principal at this academy, above all others.

We have lots to celebrate this half-term and I think it would be right and fitting to do this after the Christmas break due to the current context of a grieving community. I do, however, want to thank all our young people that turn up and demonstrate exemplary behaviour each day. I have already written to 352 children and thanked them for their personal contributions this term, but I offer thanks to all our children here and the families that support them. Thank you for attending Progress Evenings, sports events, and school productions. These will get bigger and bigger as the year progresses and we are excited.

I do want to update you all on some new appointments at the academy. Following improving sets of results in the summer, we are pleased to welcome to the academy in January, two new and experienced science teachers (one will be taking the role as Head of Physics), a new English teacher, a new geography teacher, two new learning mentors, a new administrator, new teaching assistants and a new examination officer. We look forward to welcoming them into our ever-growing team of caring professionals, and we look forward to the new year and the new strength this will bring to our existing team.

The end of term will be with us tomorrow with a closing time for students at 12.30pm. Should any student require lunch, this will be served as a 'grab and go' in the restaurant at 12.30pm. Tomorrow will be a planned non-uniform day with proceeds going to the *Make a Wish Foundation*. We are asking for a £1 contribution from all staff and students via cash in school or ParentPay. This is a charity close to our hearts – with people in our own academy having accessed their life-changing experiences. This was a student-centred choice of charity. We had already pledged to support this charity at the start of December, and it is one we support annually. The academy will open again to all students, at the normal start time on Tuesday 3rd January 2023 where they will have an extended tutor period and normal lessons from Lesson 2 and beyond.

Finally, I do want to address the heart-breaking accident at Babbs Mill. I must admit here, I struggled to find the right words to express the emotions felt this week. I quickly discovered that I cannot. There are no words that can express such a feeling of sadness. On Wednesday, Miss Ivery, being from Kingshurst, and I visited the site to lay flowers on behalf of our academy and its community. We paid our respects to the loss of these four children and to their families who are suffering so badly this Christmas. Whilst, at this moment, just a small gesture, we will work alongside the Kingshurst community early in the new year to support fundraising for these families and support any local memorial plans. We will keep communicating with you all, and we will stand firm with Kingshurst Community during this time.

On this note, I wish you the best as we break for Christmas. Please stay safe and look after each other.

Warmest wishes,

Miss Nicola Crehan
Principal