

Wednesday 6th September 2023

Dear parents and carers,

### **Welcome back! Academic year 2023-24**

It has been a pleasure to welcome students back to the academy for the start of the new year. We have been busy over the summer break to ensure our students have the best possible return to school. We want our 51<sup>st</sup> year as a school to be the best ever and we look forward to working closely with you over the course of the next three terms.

This September, a number of new staff have joined the academy. We are delighted to welcome our new teaching and support staff, who are looking forward to working with our students and getting to know our schools. Our recruitment has been excellent this summer and I'm pleased we have secured such a wealth of talent and experience for our school. Our new teachers and support team are introduced at the end of this letter.

#### **Updates to school over summer**

There have been a number of capital projects taking place over the summer break. I'm excited to see what our students think of the improvements to our learning environment.

- All classrooms have been decorated and new storage provided.
- Careers information boards are now in place in all department areas, providing guidance and pathways.
- Humanities toilet block has been fully refurbished.
- Post 16 coffee shop opened in the Lakeside building.
- New outdoor seating provided for break and lunch times.
- New Reflection Centre opened in the dome area.
- Quad flower beds prepared for planting.
- Safeguarding fence and gates completed

Assemblies for all year groups have been held on the first day of term to clarify changes to the site, introduce new staff, and reinforce expectations. Students then participated in activities in an extended tutor time to help build relationships and get to know new students and staff. We have attached updated information in relation to our behaviour policy and consequences system for your reference.

#### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Attendance and punctuality remain high priorities for us. Whilst we saw both measures improve last year, with persistent absence from school falling considerably, there remains much work to do. Research undertaken by FFT clearly highlights the impact of attendance on GCSE outcomes, with students whose attendance is below 90% likely to achieve over one grade less in every subject by the end of year 11. Our attendance team, family support worker and all academy staff will be working to raise expectations and ensure all our students attend the academy each day.

## Home Learning Expectations

Home Learning at Kirk Hallam Community Academy is an integral part of blended learning. Home Learning has many benefits; it increases learning potential, develops students' independent skills and builds students' confidence. A key focus of Home Learning is setting tasks that engage students in thinking, so that the knowledge that students learn in school will stick in their memory. To ensure home learning is meaningful, teachers will follow 'PREP' when setting assignments (pre teaching, reading, extending or practice.)

Students should expect to be set weekly:

Key Stage 3 (Year 7, 8 and 9) -each subject 20-30 minutes  
 Key Stage 4 (Year 10 and Year 11) -each subject 1 hour

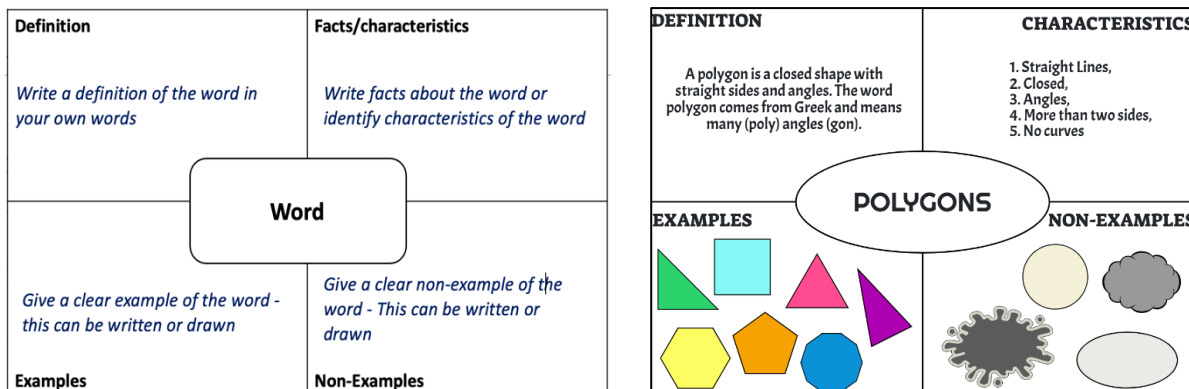
## Planners

The academy has invested in a digital platform called Class Charts. Over the course of the term, we will be transitioning to using its range of features which includes home learning. Whilst we work in the background to test, introduce and embed it, students will use small yellow homework planners to record their home learning activities and assist them with their organisation. The Frayer vocabulary home learning activities (below) are the minimum expectations from class teachers and both this and additional homework will be recorded in planners. We will keep you informed of our progress in the transition to Class Charts when, along with other features of the system, students and then parents/carers will have access to this digital platform.

## Vocabulary Home Learning

Expanding and deepening an individual's vocabulary is important for them to develop their knowledge and communication skills. Starting this week, in addition to usual home learning set by the teacher, students in Year 7 – Year 10 will be given a subject specific key word, once a week in each of their subjects to learn. To facilitate this, we will be adopting the *Frayer Model*. This visual model has a proven, research driven track record in the classroom. It is a simple but effective model to help students to organise their understanding of a new words and increase their vocabulary.

The template for the Frayer Model and an example of a completed model are shown below:



To help students with their organisation of home learning, they will either be given a template of the Frayer Model by their teacher to complete, or they will be asked to use their new vocabulary books which will be distributed this half term.

Students will record the word that have been set for home learning in their planner and use the vocabulary book to complete the work, as per the examples above. The vocabulary book will allow them to keep their growing vocabulary in one place. They can use this at any point to return to the vocabulary they have learnt by using the Frayer model and recap prior learning.

We appreciate your support in ensuring that your child comes to school with the right equipment and supporting them with their completion of home learning.

### Uniform

Our uniform policy is unchanged from the previous academic year and details can be found in the usual place [on the academy website](#). Our school uniform is a critical part of school life and helps to create a sense of pride amongst our students, whilst ensuring the academy is well represented in the community.

The start of term is an exciting time. It provides an opportunity to set high standards as we look to improve on the achievements of last year. Our reformed school day pattern was the overwhelming choice of students during the summer term and I am looking forward to seeing how they respond to this. We have also introduced a new 'Teaching and Learning Blueprint'. This research led approach has been developed to raise standards in our classrooms whilst ensuring a consistency of approach. We are highly ambitious for all our students and I know they will all enjoy rising to the challenge.

Yours sincerely,



Mr C Turner  
Headteacher

### Our new staff at Kirk Hallam Community Academy

<b>Mr Lenton</b>	Teacher of History	<b>Mr Martin</b>	Teacher of Science
<b>Ms Lloyd-Jones</b>	Lead Teacher of Drama	<b>Ms Royal</b>	Teacher of English
<b>Ms Poppleton</b>	Associate Assistant Headteacher PP/Maths	<b>Mr Cutforth</b>	Lead Teacher of Business Studies
<b>Ms Reinten</b>	Teacher of Science	<b>Ms Beighton</b>	Student Advisor
<b>Mr Howard</b>	Teacher of PE	<b>Ms Speake</b>	Family Support Worker
<b>Ms Hand</b>	Teacher of English	<b>Mr Eardley</b>	Reflection Centre Manager
<b>Mr Hitchcock</b>	Teacher of PE	<b>Mr Patel</b>	School Improvement Partner
<b>Ms Crouch</b>	Teacher of English	<b>Ms Alima</b>	School Improvement Partner
<b>Ms Marriott</b>	Teacher of DT	<b>Mr Nelson</b>	Teacher of Geography
<b>Mr Ryden</b>	Teacher of Science	<b>Ms Weld</b>	Teacher of English
<b>Ms Williams</b>	Lead Teacher of English	<b>Mr Voice</b>	SEND – Inclusion – 1 day per week
<b>Ms Palfrey</b>	Teacher of Art		
<b>Mr Turner</b>	Teacher of English		
<b>Mr O'Neill</b>	Teacher of English		
<b>Ms Chaudry</b>	Teacher of Science		