

MW/KAW/Message from the Chair of Governors
4 September 2020

To all SHS families

Dear Parents and Carers

Now that school has started back, although it is by no means a return to what was once normal, and given the current climate, you may have concerns about your child's safety and wellbeing as well as how they will get on in school having been away for so long.

As the Chair of Governors, I would like to assure you that the safeguarding of all SHS children, as well as that of the staff, and visitors, who come into school is a major priority of the school governing body. It is both our wish and duty to establish and maintain a healthy school environment.

To this end, we have been supporting the Principal and his leadership team throughout this challenging period; helping to ensure that a rigorous risk assessment covering return to school operations, hygiene, social distancing, classroom management and student movement to mention a few. All these aspects have taken into account the government guidance on dealing with Covid 19 and all the additional guidance and direction from the Department for Education. Your children can tell you the detail of the procedures put in place in the school as they experience them.

The other key priority of the governors is, of course, the education of our students and we recognise that, even for the most able, it will be difficult to return to the flow of education and lost time during lockdown. The remote learning offered by the school helped to reduce potential gaps but all students would have had very different experiences and we recognise that those from a disadvantaged background may have suffered more during this period.

Bearing this in mind, governors have, over the past few months, fully supported the requests of the Principal and have made available from reserves significant additional funding to enhance key facilities such as IT provision, involving a complete overhaul of the school IT infrastructure, as well as the provision of a large number of new laptops and related teaching aids which will benefit all students. In addition, there have been major improvements in our performing arts area whilst there are other significant enhancements planned for our school as we continue to support our school leaders in delivering a school that demonstrates the vision and values that underpin Shirley High School.

We can try to make the task of learning less demanding and more supportive. We can try to make the best teaching and the best tools available to ease the path through school but above all we can encourage our students to aim higher and to achieve the best they can.

Of course for now, the road to recovery will be challenging however, our teaching staff will be relentless in their endeavours to support your child and governors would like to thank the Principal and all his staff for their resilience during this time. Now more than ever, we must all work together and I ask that you all do your utmost to encourage your children to persevere and work hard at all times. If we all make a concerted effort, we can put some of the worst effects of this terrible disease behind us and lead our children on the road to the success that they all deserve.

I hope my words have reassured you about safety and wellbeing at school but if you do have concerns about these matters or anything else about the return to school please contact your child's form tutor in the first instance.

Yours sincerely



Michael West
Chair of Governors