

SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Robin M Bevan MA MEd PhD FRSA



June 26th, 2020

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your continued support and encouragement. We have been delighted to welcome students from Years 10 and 12 back into school and it is particularly encouraging to see such high levels of attendance, positivity and determination to make the very best of the blend of remote learning and on-site support. You can read more about our provision on [Essex Live](#).

We understand that our pupils in Years 7 to 9 are equally eager to return. We admire their resolve and dedication. We know the prolonged closure has not been easy, but we also know that engagement with the daily tasks continues at exceptional levels. We look forward to welcoming back every pupil at the earliest opportunity. We will continue to adapt and develop the remote learning to increase participation, interactivity and feedback; whilst also making sure the provision is accessible to every pupil.

Parents should be encouraged that thorough completion of the remote learning activities will leave every pupil well-placed to resume lessons without significant detriment. One of the advantages of distributing tasks through Show My Homework is that they remain accessible to revisit and review at any time.

Although there have been various announcement from the Government about 'relaxing lockdown', at the time of writing, the Government advice for schools is absolutely clear and constraining: "Primary schools should continue to operate in groups of no more than 15 and **secondaries should not exceed 25% of year 10 and year 12 pupils in at any one time ...**" (June 24th). Some press coverage and commentary has suggested that schools are reluctant to open, or teachers are resistant: *quite the opposite!* The limits placed on our current provision are from the Department for Education (DfE).

The DfE has also indicated that we should plan for a full return in September: we are ready to do so and share – with you all – the hope that this will be possible. If Public Health (England) advises that provision in the Autumn Term is still subject to limitations on physical distancing, on group sizes or on the inter-mixing of teaching groups: we will move rapidly to generate the best logistical solution. It is unlikely that we will know these parameters until mid-August.

In the meantime, we will plan for a full return.

Robin M. Bevan
Headteacher



from our student-led Fairtrade Committee



Nestlé have declared to the Fairtrade Foundation that from October they will stop using Fairtrade cocoa and sugar for KitKat bars. This means that for all the cocoa and sugar farmers not only have they had to face the turmoil that has resulted from the COVID-19 outbreak but also co-operatives representing 27,000 farmers now face losing almost £2million of Fairtrade Premium each year, along with the security and power Fairtrade has offered them over the past 10 years.

The affected farmers have stated that they want to remain Fairtrade, an obvious opinion due to the amazing support Fairtrade gives to so many farmers that make the products that we all too often take for granted. The KitKat Fairtrade Premiums have helped Ivorian cocoa farmers to build more classrooms and dispensaries, as well as investing in support for women to grow their businesses.

Here is a [link \(click here\)](#) to see what the Fairtrade Foundation have to say on the matter, including a letter from the Ivorian Fairtrade network in response to Nestle's announcement.

It may not sound like a big deal on the surface and some people may still choose to buy KitKats if Nestle choose to stick by their decision, however, as a Fairtrade school I believe, along with many others I'm sure, that it is down to us and establishments like us to use our voice and raise awareness to how much of an impact this will have on the farmers. I think we can all agree that there is no better time to look wider than our own front doors and own communities, to see the impact that buying one small KitKat can have on others in our society.

Use your voice otherwise nothing will get done, the decision will not be reversed and these farmers will lose out. Here is a [link \(click here\)](#) to share your thoughts on the situation.

from my response, as Headteacher, to a letter from the African Caribbean Education Network

... We are proud to be one of the first secondary schools in the UK to have secured the EQualities Award; and, almost certainly, the first Grammar School to be accredited in this way.

The award confirms our commitment in depth and across time to promote equality in the context of our fantastically diverse school community. I have spoken publicly, to large audiences of educators, confirming that 'tolerance' (that most inadequate of the so-called fundamental British values) is not enough.

Our student-led Equalities group provides a forum for the voicing of authentic experiences: they have shaped our celebration and affirmation of diverse cultures and heritages, they have led assemblies directly on themes of inequality, racism and justice.

We have worked to see our commitment to equality manifest itself in practice. Our governing body has a diverse membership that reflects the composition of our school community. Our teaching staff is increasingly diverse and significantly more so than the education workforce in general.

We also recognise that aspects of the compulsory school curriculum – especially at examination level – are disproportionately Anglo-centric, Euro-centric and 'white'. We openly support calls for this to change.

However, we also know that what we teach isn't always what our pupils learn! They do not always behave as we advocate. Our commitment to a progressive and educative response to addressing misbehaviour includes a robust commitment to work to eradicate any residual racist conduct.

Your email suggests that there is much to be done: we are proud, as a school, to be leading the way and learning as we go! ...