



**KING EDWARD VI
HANDSWORTH WOOD
GIRLS' ACADEMY**

Educational excellence for our City

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**KING EDWARD VI
FOUNDATION
BIRMINGHAM**

Educational excellence for our City

Thursday 19th December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

And here we are – we've reached the end of Term 1 of this academic year. It really does go so fast! This also marks my first term as Headteacher here, so I thought it was the perfect time to share some reflections and extend my best wishes for the new year.

The Spirit of Christmas

As we approach the festive season, it's a good time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. While it's often a time of celebration and joy, it's also about giving, showing kindness, and helping those in need.

This term, our students and staff have shown these values through their charitable efforts, such as collecting donations for *We:Are* to support women fleeing domestic abuse, and raising contributions for *Birmingham Children's Hospital*. These acts of generosity reflect the heart of Christmas – a time for reaching out and making a positive difference in the lives of others.

As a school, we encourage our students to embrace the spirit of the season by reflecting on what they are grateful for, supporting their peers, and looking for opportunities to give back to their communities.

Fantastic Progress in Our New Building

Since moving into our new building, the students have settled in remarkably well. It has been wonderful to see them embrace the opportunities the new space provides. The new environment has not only enhanced our learning experiences but has also allowed for greater collaboration, creativity, and engagement in all aspects of school life.

This term has also been filled with exciting initiatives designed to support our students' personal development and academic growth.

- Year 7 had a collapsed timetable day to deepen their knowledge of High Performing Learning (HPL). They explored our VAAs and ACPs and participated in an impactful *Personal Development Day* focusing on online safety, equipping them with essential skills to navigate the digital world responsibly.

Headteacher Miss K Takhar, LLB

- Years 8 & 9 engaged in sessions on exploring healthy and positive relationships, based on mutual respect and understanding. This included a visit from *Loudmouth Theatre Production* and our School Liaison Officer, PC Shannon Maley.
- Year 10 participated in a fantastic STEM event where they designed eco-friendly houses, fostering creativity, environmental awareness, and project management skills.
- Year 11 attended workshops by *Talk the Talk*, preparing them for their future with confidence and enhancing their interview skills.
- Sixth Form hosted an inspiring Careers Fair, connecting students with employers, sixth-form colleges, and apprenticeship providers, offering valuable insights into diverse future opportunities.

We've also had several enriching trips, including the *Young People's Parliament*, a *Christmas Carol Theatre Trip* for Years 10 and 11, and a cinema trip for all year groups.

Student Leadership, Enrichment, and Celebrations

Our *student-led clubs* have thrived this term, providing opportunities for leadership and personal growth. From debate teams and creative writing groups to coding clubs and environmental initiatives, students have embraced these platforms to enhance their teamwork, communication, and confidence.

The newly launched *Treats and Triumphs* initiative has been a great success. Students who consistently demonstrate outstanding effort and go above and beyond were invited to share hot chocolate and sweet treats with me, celebrating their contributions to academy life.

We've also reinvigorated our *Student Drive Team*, focusing on High Performing Learning (HPL) initiatives. Year 7 students had their HPL discovery day, and we're excited to work more closely with parents and guardians to foster greater collaboration in enabling students' readiness for life beyond school.

To top all of this off we have sold an amazing 182 tickets to families for our Talent show this evening!

Headteacher Miss K Takhar, LLB

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

Belonging remains a cornerstone of our work. Our *EDI student team* has made brilliant contributions to local charities, collecting journals, chocolates, and toiletries for *We:Are*. They've also organized collections for *Birmingham Children's Hospital*.

To further promote inclusion, we're introducing *sunflower lanyards* next term for staff and students who wish to wear them. These represent hidden disabilities, such as neurodivergence, and are a step towards ensuring every student feels seen and supported. This has been requested by our girls! how fabulous!

Additionally, our students are creating a "*Decorate Your Door*" project in form groups, with the theme of current religious festivals. This fosters creativity and celebrates cultural diversity within the academy.

House System Competitions

Our *house system competitions* have flourished since September. Students have enthusiastically showcased their creativity through activities like creative writing, the arts, and even baking. It's been wonderful to see them step out of their comfort zones, demonstrating impressive skills beyond the classroom.

Being the Best Teachers We Can Be

As teachers, we remain committed to continuous improvement. Our coaching journey has developed further this term, with all teachers now working with coaches to move incrementally toward better classroom practices. This bespoke training is informed by cutting-edge research, ensuring our teaching is always improving.

HPL also continues to supplement and elevate our practice. We're proud to have been designated as an *International Research School* – a testament to the high-quality teaching and learning at HWGA.

Thank You to Our Families

As part of our school community, I want to say a huge thank you to all our families for the support you've given us and the kind words I've received from parents. It means a lot and highlights the strength of our partnership.

Headteacher Miss K Takhar, LLB

I know the start of the year was a little turbulent due to the building works, but now, as we complete our first term here, it feels like we've always been in this fantastic new space.

Looking Ahead

When we return in January, the evenings will still be dark, so please remind your child to go straight home after school to ensure their safety.

- Reminder: School closes to all pupils at 2:05 pm on Friday, 20th December. Students are invited to donate 50p to charity and wear festive colours or Christmas jumpers tomorrow.
- School reopens on Tuesday, 7th January, at the usual time.

Wishing You a Merry Christmas

Thank you for your continued support throughout this term. On behalf of everyone at HWGA, I wish you a Merry Christmas, a peaceful festive period, and a safe and happy holiday. May this season be a time of joy, giving, and reflection for all.

Warm regards,

Miss Kiran Takhar
Headteacher

Headteacher Miss K Takhar, LLB