

10<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Heating/Power Issues in School**

You may be aware of the extremely challenging and worrying issues we have been experiencing since September with the new heat source pump system that we have been obliged to have installed.

As a Governing Body we felt it was important to update you on the current situation and apologise to you all for the difficult learning conditions in school. The Governors and leadership team totally share your concerns and frustrations.

As a bit of background: installation of the new heating system is a Government Programme led by Aquila-led initiative – Aquila is the umbrella Trust of which Kingsnorth is a member school. There have been problems with the new system since it was commissioned in September. There have been numerous calls to the Trust estates department and visits from various contractors for many weeks to try and rectify.

We were led to believe that when the power cut issues were resolved, this would also resolve our problems with the heating. However, this has not been the case and there have been further issues with other components failing to operate correctly. Every time we have been assured that repairing one aspect will resolve the problem, another problem has emerged.

As we are not in control of this project, we are having to rely on others to manage the unacceptable situation we find ourselves in and also manage the contractors involved.

We have been constantly in communication with Abbie Snelling the Head of the Trust's estates team to get contractors back on site to resolve the faults. However, dealing with the 3rd party contractors is taking much longer than we feel is acceptable, meaning we still have no fully functioning heating system. We fully appreciate the extremely difficult conditions that are being experienced throughout the school because of this. We are 'at the mercy' of the contractors visiting site in project management.

As a Governing Body we will continue to monitor this daily and work with Aquila at the highest level to try to get these repairs completed urgently.

As you would expect our desire is always to keep the school open. We are working 'against the odds' to maintain as much normality as possible. Everyone is doing everything within their power to resolve the situation.

We truly recognise that these are far from ideal conditions for your children to be learning in. We really appreciate their resilience and thank you for your understanding. Please rest assured that we are doing everything we can to keep the children as warm as we can in class. Yesterday we had a further delivery of heaters for the classrooms.

As many of you have already been doing, please send your children in their warmest clothes and layers, irrespective of whether this complies with school uniform. It is important that they stay as warm as possible.

We have planned works to take place week commencing Monday 22 January, where we hope this will finally resolve our issues and our heating system will be commissioned.

We will keep you updated on a regular basis ie. via the school newsletter or other means as appropriate. If you have any concerns could we please ask that in the first instance you contact your child/ren's teacher as these messages will be passed immediately to senior leaders and Governors. As Chair of Governors I can also be contacted via the Clerk: [clerk@kingsnorth.kent.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@kingsnorth.kent.sch.uk).

Your comments are also being relayed to Aquila to show the depth of everyone's concern.

Yours sincerely

**Chris Myers**

Chair of Local Governing Body