



NEWCASTLE
UNDER
LYME
SCHOOL

Always Striving
for New Heights

Our Ref: MJG/VMD

13 June 2020

Dear Parents

Education's role is key, and we embrace that responsibility.

After many weeks of correspondence on issues related to the pandemic, school's temporary closure and remote learning, I feel compelled to write on a different matter that has a significance I feel it is essential to recognise for us as a school and as a community.

Recent events internationally, have highlighted once again how racial equality must continue to be a goal society is working towards, and sadly how far it still has to travel. NULS is an immensely diverse community, and I know our pupils, former pupils, parents and teachers will have been as deeply affected as I have been by recent global events covered in the news.

When NULS was founded it was done so to be a force for good, with strong values at its heart. Our school has been praised for its inclusivity but global events represent how it is apparent that we all must try harder. NULS' community reflects our wider community and society, and the richness of our diversity is an undoubted strength. Therefore, the opportunity we have to be an ever more positive influence in issues of racism is one I feel we must embrace. Under Inspection in March we were praised for the inclusivity of our community and how this is a School strength, and now we must go beyond this and make sure we lead on issues of equality to ensure pupils thrive.

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As such, over coming weeks we will ensure students have time in form periods and pastoral sessions to discuss their feelings and views on recent events and the broader issues they represent. We believe such discussion and sharing of views is fundamental to greater understanding and also importantly a way for us as a school to educate ourselves too. We must be ready to reflect and keen to learn as an institution as well. Issues of race and inequality have always been a part of the education we provide. Moreover, it has always been vitally important that education in issues of inequality and race extends beyond pastoral boundaries, into academia. As we seek to do more, we will reflect on whether we can, working with our Student Council, further develop in curricular terms, to ensure our academic curriculum can grasp further opportunities to consider racism and matters of broader inequality. Furthermore, just as we now have specific student groups focussed on publicising key issues of our time such as the environment and its conservation, I am now extending, and indeed encouraging our students to build on this by introducing an NULS Equality Society, that extends its interests over wider matters of race, gender, sexuality, disability and beliefs.

Finally, I am also pleased to share that as we recently engaged in the advertising of a Senior Leadership Pastoral Assistant Head role in school, that this role was specifically designated to ensure amongst other things, that issues of inclusivity, representation and participation are embedded into the leadership structure of our school.

At this time, and as we move into the future, we must seek to build on the good work that has taken place before in this critical area and be true to our school motto of Always Striving for New Heights. The matters recent events have raised can sometimes seem difficult for some individuals and organisations to discuss. However, my knowledge and understanding of our pupils, former pupils, parents and teachers suggests we should feel confident that we can achieve this. Quite simply, we must ensure our community is one that enables its students to thrive in an environment in which they feel safe and respected at all times, and where issues of prejudice are never tolerated, both now and in the future. Now more than ever, it would seem that **Education's role is key, and we embrace that responsibility.**

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Should they be of interest or assistance, we will be posting several resources on our website in the course of the next week, that relate to the matters raised in this letter, should parents wish to use them to discuss these important issues with their children.

Thank you very much indeed for your time in considering this correspondence.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MJ Getty', written in a cursive style.

M J Getty
Headmaster