

9th August 2024**Tragic Southport Incident and Social Unrest in the UK**

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well, and that you and your family are enjoying a peaceful and restful summer break. I am writing to you after recently returning to the UK from a short break, and like many of you, I have been deeply concerned by the events that have taken place in our country over the past two weeks.

One of the most heart-breaking aspects of this period has been how the unrest we've seen across the UK has overshadowed the tragic deaths of three young girls in Southport. At a time when our nation would typically come together to support the families and communities affected by such a profound loss, attention has instead been diverted by what appears to be a reaction to social media speculation and unfounded rumours about the suspect that have led to anger and division.

It has been distressing to witness the rise in tensions and the resulting protests and riots across various parts of the UK. The Islamophobic rhetoric, as well as the attacks on mosques and asylum seeker accommodations, have been particularly alarming. I understand that for many within our diverse and vibrant school community, these events have been unsettling, and may have even caused fear and anxiety. I want to acknowledge the specific concerns of those who may feel particularly vulnerable during these times.

Despite these challenges, there have been encouraging signs of hope and resilience. Over the past few days, we have seen powerful responses from communities across the UK, standing firmly against hatred and division. The anti-racist marches, like the one in Walthamstow recently, are a testament to the strength of unity and the shared values of inclusivity and respect that we hold dear. These acts of solidarity remind us that, even in difficult times, our community can come together to support one another.

As we move through the remainder of the summer break, I want to extend my warmest wishes to you and your family. Please take care, stay informed, and look out for each other. The well-being of our students, staff, and families is of the utmost importance, and we will continue to prioritise it as we navigate these challenging times.

If you or your child are feeling anxious or in need of support, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to help and to provide a listening ear whenever it is needed. The school e-mail address admin@hws.haringey.sch.uk is being monitored over the holiday and we will respond to any urgent situations in a timely fashion.

In September, we will be offering additional support to our students as they process and make sense of recent events. We are already planning resources and messages to help guide them

through these conversations. Our goal is to ensure that they return to a school environment that is safe, supportive, and focused on our shared values.

Finally, I want to reiterate that Highgate Wood School is a community where everyone matters. Our commitment to our 4Cs, diversity, inclusivity, and mutual respect has never been more important, and these values will guide us as we face these challenges together.

I will be writing to you again next week with some reminders for the start of term arrangements and to welcome our new staff who will be joining us in September.

In the meantime, I wish you and your family safety, peace, and continued rest.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cozier', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Patrick Cozier
Headteacher