



## *Samuel Cody Specialist Sports College*

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Headteacher: Mrs S Chinnappa BScM.Ed NPQH

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12<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

May I first thank you for the way in which you have been working with the school to ensure we continue to provide the best education we can for all of our students in these most difficult of circumstances whether they are in school or accessing learning on-line at home. None of us could have imagined a situation of the kind we are all having to cope with today. A Head's job is hard enough in normal times, but with the guidance from government changing as often as it has, it is a tribute to the dedication of Mrs Chinnappa and her committed and highly motivated staff that we have managed so well. I am in touch with her on most days and I know the anguish that she and her senior team go through trying to do their best for your children.

I also wanted to thank all of you who responded to the Governing Body's proposal to revert to the original name of the school. The response was overwhelmingly in favour and we will be going ahead with it from September. But I would like to correct some misunderstandings about what is being proposed.

First, it is a return to its original name. For by far the greater part of its life the school has been known as Samuel Cody School. It was only in 2007 when the government of the day was encouraging secondary schools to take on a specialism, and when Samuel Cody was still only a secondary school, that it became Samuel Cody Specialist Sports College. 'Specialist' has got nothing to do with being a special school. In fact, it is most unusual for special schools to have special in their title. We only know of the very odd one across the whole of the south east.

I can well understand why some of you may have assumed that the excellent sports facilities that the school has indeed got, has something to do with investment because of its current name. However, I am afraid that it is not so. What's there today, including the all-weather pitch, was inherited from Oak Farm Community School which closed in 2011 and which preceded Samuel Cody on the site. Before that, Samuel Cody was next to The Wavell School in North Camp on the other side of Farnborough and moved across into Oak Farm's bigger premises when the latter closed. I can say that without fear of contradiction not only because my children went to Oak Farm and were there when the pitch was built with Sports Council Lottery money, but because I was a governor when it closed 10 years ago. The government has long since dropped the notion that it would be good if secondary schools

had a specialism, so, as you can see, the name is not only no longer appropriate but is in fact misleading. The school has and will, of course, continue to offer a broad-based curriculum and ensure that those sports facilities are used for the benefit of current and future students.

May I also reassure you that we will most definitely not be expecting any of you to have to go out and buy new uniform. The uniform will in any event remain the same. There will simply be a new badge from September which will be introduced progressively as new students arrive. We are more than happy for your children to go on wearing their uniform with the current badge on and to have a mix for the next few years with some wearing one and some the other badge.

Finally, thank you for your understanding and continued support for the school. On behalf of the Governing Body, please do take care and stay safe yourselves, especially if you are working or having to self-isolate or shield someone else.

Yours faithfully

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

Robin Gray  
Chair of the Governing Body