

All Saints Catholic College

A Voluntary Academy

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Headteacher: Mr A Diamond
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Be inspired. Be excellent. Succeed.

14th July 2021

Dear Parents

After what has been a demanding but exciting period, the end of the academic year is in sight and soon our young people will be enjoying their summer break.

This has been a year of many challenges. From the extended period of home learning in January and February to the difficult times in October and November when large groups of our pupils had to self-isolate as close contacts, I have to say an enormous 'thank you' for all of the support that you gave our community, and a hearty 'well done' for navigating the issues linked to home learning. Getting through those months, together, was a real display of our community working together to ensure the best for our young people.

Thankfully, it has not all been COVID-19 related and there has been a considerable amount to celebrate this year. We welcomed our new Year 7 group of wonderful young people; they may not have had the most settled of starts, but have wholeheartedly become part of our family. They enjoyed their annual Welcome Mass led virtually by Father Oliver, which is something to celebrate. We may have had to move to online but the Catholic life of the school has carried on with our usual determination, and is truly at the very heart of all that we do. That has certainly been demonstrated in our charitable work this year, and I recall not being able to get into the chapel with the floor covered in donated food goods for the local food bank, and a local homeless charity. Similarly, when we raised money for the annual Christmas CAFOD appeal we were able to raise three times as much as we hoped. This is all down to the generosity of the family of All Saints, and I can only as ever say thank you. That generosity has continued with our fundraising drive for the Tameside Hospital scanner appeal, led by Mr Jones. To support that, the last day will be a non-uniform day with funds raised going to the scanner appeal.

A new pupil leadership group was elected, with whom I meet with every other week to discuss any issues in the school. Together they represent the views of your children and I can assure you they are not shy in making their views about the school clear. We also welcomed a large group of dignitaries into the school when we celebrated the 100th Birthday of HRH Prince Phillip, and planted a tree in our Peace Garden to commemorate the Duke and to celebrate the work we do as a school linked to the D of E Award. As ever, our pupils did us proud and I have received numerous emails from those involved praising our college. We have also been working on STEM activities and a large group of KS3 pupils spent a morning listening in to a chat with Brian Cox and a debate about the future of the planet.

So, whilst it has been a challenging year that has been impacted by COVID-19, we have not and cannot allow COVID19 to impact on our continued growth and drive for the best standards.

September 2021*

We have now received information from the DfE relating to the measures schools should have in place for the new academic year. **This guidance can be read in full here:**
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/999602/Schools_guidance_Step_4_update.pdf

In summary:

We have been asked to test the children on their return. We will test pupils, in school, for whom we have consent from yourselves. The testing remains voluntary. A plan for this will be texted out before the end of the summer break, with details on our website.

We have been advised by the Department for Education that regular testing will pause over the summer holidays except for those pupils and staff involved in the summer school; only those attending should continue to test regularly. Year 6 pupils attending summer school over the summer break do not need to test.

Testing is still widely available and kits can be collected from your local pharmacy. All pupils will be provided with test kits before the end of term.

We would ask that in the last week of the holidays you test your child, and that you let us have the result of any positive cases. That will allow us to start the school year in confidence.

From September, the DfE have advised that bubbles are no longer needed. Our bubbles are based on those year groups that are paired for break and lunch (9 and 11, 8 and 10, and 7 – who have both of these times on their own). This aspect will not change but we will return to the normal school day times with no staggered starts or movement. We do feel that access to the school via the different entrances has led to a more focused start to the day, therefore this will continue. Years 8 and 10 will continue to gather on the redgra in the morning, Years 9 and 11 the main yard, and Year 7 the back yard entering through the front gates. We will once again restart our pre-school breakfast service for pupils. All pupils will be able to access this service before they move to their appropriate yard prior to going into school.

From 16 August 2021, children under the age of 18 will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Instead, children will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. The DfE and Public Health encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so. From Step 4, close contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace and schools will no longer be expected undertake contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case to identify close contacts. Contacts from a school setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. When this happens parents will be asked to contact school and work will be made available on line.

From Step 4, face coverings will no longer be advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas. However, where you feel your child and your family are better protected by the wearing of masks, this will be allowed.

School finishes on the **16th July at 12.00pm**. This will be a non-uniform day with £1 going to the Tameside and Glossop scanner charity appeal.

We reopen for pupils on **Friday 3rd September**. We may only have one day in school that week but I know you all agree that getting our pupils back into the habits of routines and learning is vital after this much disrupted year. Please make sure that your child returns in full uniform, fully equipped, with a rucksack, and following our uniform standards. Please don't allow any piercings or jewellery.

In the meantime, may I wish you all a pleasant, and hopefully sunny, summer break and I look forward to carrying on our drive to excellence, with you, in September.

Yours sincerely

Mr G. Diamond
Headteacher

**** Parents are asked to keep in mind that this is subject to last minute changes. If this does occur a text will be sent out for parents***