

15<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Dear parents/carers

Welcome to the fortnightly update on all that's happening at St Anne's. As Executive Headteacher I understand the importance of clear communication with parents. I aim to do this through fortnightly letters for the remainder of this summer half term.

### **Update on staffing**

I am delighted to report that there has been many new posts, including at leadership level, appointed at the school. Collectively, these new appointments have one major aim, and that is to ensure that your child receives at least a good quality of education. New staff appointments include 2 Deputy Headteachers, Head of Maths, Second in Maths, Maths teacher, SENCo, English Teacher, Art teacher, PE teacher and 4 new Heads of Year. They were all appointed on the basis that they are committed to raising the standards at St Anne's. I am sure that you will give all these new staff a very warm St Anne's welcome. From September 2021, we are in a very strong position to ensure that your child gets at least a good quality of education and I am delighted to report that there are no planned supply teachers for September 2021.

Furthermore, Mrs Watts, Deputy Headteacher, is leaving at the end of this half term as she has been appointed as a Headteacher. I wish her all the best in this endeavour and I am sure she will be highly successful.

### **Rules and expectations moving forward.**

It is now 2 weeks since I last wrote to you, and I am now in a position to outline some of the rules and expectations going forward. I have outlined our rules and expectations below in simple bullet format. I like rules to be simple and transparent, so that there is no ambiguity. Importantly, they will also be enforced by all staff and the leadership team. I ask parents to support the school in adhering to these rules by speaking to your child. These will be reinforced in assemblies in school. The outcome of following these rules will be a school environment where we can focus on teaching in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.

- *Behaviour:* Since I have started St Anne's I have been impressed with the behaviour of the vast majority of our pupils. They are respectful and want to learn. Sadly, there are a significant minority of pupils who believe that they can misbehave in lessons and/or disrupt the learning of others. This is not acceptable, and I will take whatever action deemed appropriate, up to and including permanent exclusion. I ask parents to support the school in this endeavour. I make no apologies for increasing our standards and expectations. In fact, I strongly believe that they are entitled to a great education, free from disruptive behaviour. So, for the avoidance of doubt, poor disruptive behaviour will no longer be tolerated at St Anne's
- *Uniform:* Similarly, I want pupils to be ambassadors for St Anne's and to be proud to wear our school uniform. I understand that due to Covid, pupils were allowed to attend school wearing non-school

uniform. However, the expectation is that pupils now wear the full uniform, including having appropriate school shoes.

- *Mobile Phones:* The rules on the use of mobile phones is simple. Mobiles are not allowed out in school. To reassure parents, if pupils need to contact home they can go to student services. Where a phone is out, it will be confiscated and kept at reception ready to be collected by a parent. For clarity, all confiscated mobiles must be collected by parents and no member of staff has the permission to give back the mobiles, except for me. This merely wastes staff time and distracts them from doing their jobs efficiently. Pupils using phones during the school day is simply a distraction from learning. If a pupil refuses to hand over the phone, it is likely to result in a fixed exclusion.
- *Jewellery:* This is not allowed. This includes both nose and ear piercings and bracelets. [Note: covering ears with a plaster or plastic piercings are also not permitted]. Like the policy with mobile phones these will be placed at reception ready for the parents to collect. Again, I ask that parents please support the school and ensure that your children do not bring jewellery to school.

Failure to follow the above will result in appropriate sanctions.

As these rules change, become embedded and are enforced I am aware that there will have to be adjustments made this half-term. There will be other small, but important changes, but these will come into effect, from September, including, for example, acceptable hair styles. I will communicate these to the pupils as well as parents when necessary.

### **Attendance**

As we enter the final half term it is crucial that your child has good attendance. This means 96% over the year (Covid-19 related absences do not affect this figure). Parents of students who fall below this target will receive a letter from school, notifying them that their child's attendance is being monitored and the next steps that school will take if attendance does not improve. We realise it has been a difficult 12 months for many of our pupils. However, the most effective way for your child to 'catch up' is for them to be in school every day. Pupils with poor attendance underperform academically compared to their peers with good attendance. In essence, if your child is to achieve their potential, then they need to have at least good attendance. Please support the school by ensuring that your child does not miss school unnecessarily.

### **Mission and Ethos Team [MET]**

As a Catholic school we have recently formed a committee to ensure that the Catholicity of the school permeates all we do. This committee has had its inaugural meeting and we have named it the '*Mission and Ethos*' Team'. Any Catholic school is built on positive relationships and at St Anne's we believe that mutual respect **must** be at the heart of our community. Respect takes many forms, but essentially it means that pupils, staff and parents must be respectful to each other. That does not mean to say we always agree, but where we don't agree, we must respect others' decisions and viewpoints.

Additionally, this committee's core purpose is to ensure our Community is Christ-centred, where our school motto, 'To know, love and serve God' is lived out through words and actions. Next academic year we are planning to review our Mission Statement and relaunch the GIFT [Growing in Faith Together] team where pupils will support the wider Catholic life of the school through, for example, leading on liturgical celebrations or developing the work we do for local charities.

### **Personal Development and PIE project**

At St Anne's we have a clear vision on personal development and believe that academic excellence and character building go hand-in hand. A great example of pupils building character is our participation in the PIE. (Pursuing Individual Excellence) project. This is an educational Social Enterprise, looking to help ensure pupils from all backgrounds are future ready by building confidence, instilling resilience and boosting the aspirations of the girls involved. These are all vital skills for the future work place. A big well done to all the girls who have embraced this project!

### **Mental Health, Well being & Safeguarding**

The safety and well-being of your children is a high priority for St Anne's. It is crucial that parents understand that mental well-being and risky behaviours are not issues that your child will be immune to. Therefore, we have put together some of the most relevant and useful websites for young people on our own school padlet. I hope they will be useful for both you and your child. The link is [www.bit.ly/stannes\\_safeguarding](http://www.bit.ly/stannes_safeguarding)

### **Safeguarding and sexting**

Over the past few years, 'sexting' has become an increasingly unwelcome feature of mobile phone usage. Sexting is *'sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums.'* As well as being hugely inappropriate it is also illegal. At St Anne's our first action would always be to ensure the children involved in such activities are protected and safeguarded appropriately, however whilst criminal prosecution is extremely rare, it has happened in the UK. The long break from school saw our pupils connecting with each other online more than ever. With this information to hand, I would kindly urge all parents to have a sensible and proactive conversation with their child about the issue of sexting. If you are unsure how to approach the subject with your child, or want to discuss this topic in more detail, please contact us. NB. As a parent you must not assume that your child wouldn't do this. Its better to be proactive and educate.

### **Meeting parents**

As promised in my earlier letter, I intend to have an 'open evening' where all parents are invited. This is an opportunity for me to introduce myself and outline a clear vision with parents. It is also an opportunity for parents to ask any questions in an open and transparent way. I was planning to make this informal, but crucial evening this half term. However, due to the increasing uncertainty, I am likely to have this evening in September. I know you may be disappointed by this, but the safety of the St Anne's community is paramount.

### **Finally...**

This is an exciting time for the St Anne's community. Last week, I shared with all the staff at St Anne's the future direction of St Anne's. This has galvanised the staff and re-energised their commitment to your children. I am really looking forward to working in a positive manner with all parents so that we can deliver a great education for your children.

Mr Logue

Executive Headteacher