



## DE LA SALLE SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mr. A. Rannard BA (Hons) NPQH

20<sup>th</sup> October, '17

Dear Parent/Carer,

Though this first half term has flown by it has been a very positive and successful 6 weeks. As well as coming out of special measures, we have also had significant sporting success with our netball, football and rugby teams, had over 100 students undertake their Duke of Edinburgh bronze assessment, held a very successful careers fair for Years 10 and 11, welcomed our new parents and students at our Welcome Mass, saw a growth in the membership of the Parent Teacher and Family Association (PTFA), taken over 250 students on geography fieldtrips and 130 on art trips, held a school disco (Septemberfest) and had our busiest and most positive Open Evening of recent years. Phew! And this is just a flavour of some of the events that have taken place.

As I have mentioned in previous letters this is just the start and there are many areas within the school where further growth and improvement are needed and plans are well underway to achieve this. In the rest of this letter, I have highlighted some key information that may be of interest and importance to you. I appreciate nobody likes a long school letter so I have broken them down into headings for you to dip in and out of as you see fit!

### **Farewell**

At the end of this first half term we say goodbye to two members of staff: Mr. Atkins (Technology) and Mr. Walker (LSA). We thank them for the service they have given the school and wish them well in the future.

### **Post-Ofsted Meeting**

I can now confirm that we will hold a parental post-Ofsted meeting on **Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November** starting promptly at 6.00pm. This will give me a chance to formally introduce myself to you and then keep you updated about how, following the Ofsted report, we plan to move the school to Good. This is a meeting for parents and carers and is not suitable for students.

### **Year 11 Information Evening**

We intend to hold a special Year 11 Information Evening to share with Year 11 parents some key information on your child's GCSEs and also outline what additional support and provision is available to you and your child so that we can work together effectively to help them succeed in this important year. The meeting will take place on **16<sup>th</sup> November from 6.00pm to 7.00pm.**

### **Exams**

- As per the school calendar, Year 7 to 10 will undertake formal assessments in class from **20<sup>th</sup> November** onwards and they will receive specific information regarding the arrangements for these after half term.
- Year 11 will undertake their 'mock' exams from **4<sup>th</sup> December** onwards and details of these will be given at the Year 11 Information Evening.
- We are also looking to move the Year 10 'mocks', originally down to take place in January, to later in the year, dovetailing at the end of the GCSE exams in June. This reduces the amount of in-year disruption, increases teaching time during the Spring term and allows a fuller assessment of the students on a greater amount of content. Of course, on-going formative and summative assessments will still take place across the year in class.

### **INSET Days**

I discovered upon my arrival in September that the school still has three INSET days to allocate in this academic year. After much consideration of how to maximise this time and avoid unnecessary disruption for parents, I have decided to place them in the final three day week of the Summer term (**23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July**). This would mean that students would finish the school year on **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2018**. This matches up with most of the secondary schools in St Helens and some of our partner primary schools.

**However, some of our feeder primary schools do not finish until the 25<sup>th</sup> July so I would urge any parents with younger siblings in these schools not to take them out before the end of term as they will miss many key activities and celebrations that are so important to school life.**

### **School Buses**

Several concerns have been raised regarding the behaviour of a very small minority of student on the school buses. These cases have been addressed and, although the buses are actually a public service and not operated or commissioned by the school, I am currently looking at the current system and will write to you again after half term with any improvements that we can make to the service.

### **Social Media**

Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Kik, Omegle, BBM and so on – whatever happened to talking to each other! As in most schools, the misuse of social media outside of school is one of the biggest causes of issues within school. As a school, we have good programmes to educate the students about the dangers of social media and other online activities, in addition to this students are banned from using their phones during the school day but it is not something we can police beyond that, especially of an evening or a weekend. To support us with this can I urge all parents to actively be aware of what social media your child uses, who they are in contact with and a general idea of the types of conversations or images they are sharing with others. I realise there are many positive sides to social media and for parents this can be difficult area to keep up with, let alone monitor, so you may find the following sites useful to inform and support you:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/social-media/>

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

### **Breakfast Service**

The school will be trialling a breakfast service for students in the main canteen after half term. This will run from **7.30am until 8.15am** everyday allowing students to purchase the usual breakfast items. If this proves popular, we will look to extend the service across the school year.

### **Moodle and Edulink**

As you should be aware all students have access to Moodle, which is used, for a variety of purposes to support your child's learning. We are currently looking to how we can expand this to give parents and carers more information regarding their child through the Edulink portal, this will allow for much greater use of the existing Moodle system. Further information will be provided after half term.

### **Key Events:**

2 <sup>nd</sup> November	Year 11 at Carmel College
9 <sup>th</sup> November	Post Ofsted Parents' Evening, 6.00pm
16 <sup>th</sup> November	Year 11 Information Evening, 6.00pm – 7.00pm
23 <sup>rd</sup> November	Trustee Visit / Presentation Evening, 7.00pm
30 <sup>th</sup> November	PTFA Fashion Show
4 <sup>th</sup> December onwards	Year 11 Mock examinations
11 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 9 Parents' Evening
21 <sup>st</sup> December	School closes

Finally can I thank you for your continued support and warm welcome during the first half term and wish you all an enjoyable break.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. A. Rannard  
**Headteacher**

