



## DE LA SALLE SCHOOL

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7<sup>th</sup> September, '18

Dear Parent/Carer,

I would like to welcome parents and students back following the summer holidays, and a particularly warm welcome to our new parents and students who join our Lasallian community for the first time. Having experimented with communicating with you through a variety of ways last year, I hope to provide you with a letter at the start and a newsletter at the end of each half term, or at least that is the plan!

### Thank You

The first week back has been a very positive experience and the standards of uniform and behaviour of the students has been exemplary and many staff have commented on how different the school feels, so a big thank you to you all for sending the students in so well prepared. Your support makes such a difference to the work we are trying to do.

### Welcome

The new academic year has brought several new staff to the school to ensure we are now fully staffed:

Hollie Blackhall-Crane	Maths
Zoe Burns	AHOD R.E.
Laura Ellis	English
Ben Engelen	English
Emma Forde	Science
Paige Johnson	Science
Grace Morley	Geography/P.E.
Amy Morris	Humanities
Alex Neill	Greenhouse/KS3
Zoe Payne	Science
Karin Piert	Science
Lily Hessey	LA: Pupil Support
Dean Johnson	LA: Pupil Support
Julia Rimmer	LA: Pupil Support

I am sure you will join me in welcoming them to our community and wishing them well in their new roles.

### Exam Results

There were many success stories in our results over the summer including 34 grade 9s and 115 grade 8s, as well as the gap between boys and girls and the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students reducing. I would like to congratulate all of our students and wish them well as they move on to college.

However, I am a firm believer in openness and honesty so I will not pretend that our summer exam results were brilliant. Trying to rectify the issues and disruption of previous years was always going to be a challenge within a year but the results fell well below what we want for our students and what our community expects and deserves. I can assure you that the work we have

done over the past year, and are continuing to do, will lead to a rapid rise in GCSE results as we move forward.

### **INSET Days**

Our staff worked hard over the first two INSET days focussing upon:

- ensuring our mission statement is at the heart of all we do.
- building a deeper empathy of students to assist with behaviour management.
- developing triads of teachers to share good practice and further improve the quality of teaching.
- looking at how we are planning to develop the character and culture of the students within the school.

The sessions were very well delivered and staff were enthused by the training they had received.

### **Flight Paths**

Over the next couple of weeks your child will be given his/her flight paths. These are not target grades but rather a measure of the reasonable progress we would expect students to make from their starting point in Year 7 to the end of their GCSE studies. When students begin their GCSE course their flight path will equate to their bronze GCSE target grade.

For students in **Years 10 and Year 11** there will be no change to their flight paths as these are well established.

For students in **Years 7-9** we have used a new, more accurate system to create flight paths based upon the nationally recognised Fischer Family Trust (FFT) expectations, which will compare your child's progress with the top 20% of their cohort nationally.

Students in all three of these year groups will now have four flight paths rather than one single flight path. This will be new to our Year 9 students only, as we moved to the system of four flight paths for our current Year 8 last year. These flight paths are: English, maths, EBACC (science, MFL and humanities) and open (all other subjects).

This means that the students' flightpaths are more accurate and bespoke to their abilities rather than a single flightpath to cover all subjects. As a result, your child may well have the same flight path for all four areas or may have two, three, or on rare occasions four different flight paths.

We believe this will allow us to make more accurate assessments of their progress and ensure higher expectations and better outcomes for the students.

If you find your child's flight path has changed, this is not an indication that s(he) is falling behind or not making enough progress; it is simply that we are using a more accurate measure to assess what strong progress would look like in each of the four areas for a student with similar prior attainment.

We are confident that these new measures will support both staff and students in the challenge to achieve the best possible outcomes in all areas at GCSE. If you have any questions regarding this then please contact Mrs Mulhall, Deputy Headteacher.

### **Open Evening**

As we did last year, the students will have an earlier finish for Open Evening on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October. They will have their five lessons but these will be rearranged as below:

8:30-8:50am	Registration
8:50-9:40am	Lesson 1
9:40-10:35am	Lesson 2
10:35-11:30am	Lesson 3
11:30 -12:00pm	Extended Break/Brunch Service
12:00-12:45pm	Lesson 4
12:45-1:30pm	Lesson 5
1:30pm	Pupils leave

As I mentioned at the end of last year, under new regulations, Merseytravel cannot change the bus service times so there will be no early school buses that day but the service will run as normal at 3.00pm if students wish to wait in school for them.

### **Lockers**

Last week I mentioned that Years 8-11 would no longer be using lockers and this led to a number of parents contacting me regarding the matter or asking for part refunds to the £5 paid before joining us in Year 7. There was a lot more to the decision than simply deciding not to have them and I should have shared this with you. For those who have questions or concerns about this please read the more detailed rationale on our website which can be found here: [http://www.delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/media/2105/2018\\_09\\_06-locker-information-for-parents.pdf](http://www.delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/media/2105/2018_09_06-locker-information-for-parents.pdf)

### **Buses/Road Works**

To think, just over a year ago I had never heard of Windle Island but it now has a big effect upon our community. As you may be aware, there are roadworks at Windle Island that will be in place for some considerable time. In most cases, the buses and other students are still managing to get in to school on time. However, please be assured that, where students are late because of these road works, it will not affect their punctuality mark.

### **Fire Alarms**

During this first week, we have had two fire alarms that have led to a full evacuation. The cause, for both of these, has been a fault within the system. Though this has given us the opportunity to complete the required termly evacuations, we are working with the alarm company to ensure the issue is rectified and no further teaching time is lost. The students have been excellent on both occasions.

### **School Building**

Over the summer, we put a lot of effort into smartening the school up for our staff and students, including a thorough deep clean, painting the areas most in need, replacing old or damaged furniture and making the building a place we can all be proud of. A big thank you to the site team for their hard work and efforts and I hope our students recognise the improvements and help keep the school in good shape.

### **PTFA / 400 Club**

Can I invite any parents or family, new and old, to consider being part of our Parent Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA). The group meet at 6.30pm on the first Tuesday of every month and meetings last no longer than 1 hour. All are welcome.

We wouldn't be a Catholic school if at some point we didn't ask you for money so if you cannot make the PTFA meetings then maybe you might consider being part of the 400 Club! This is run by the PTFA and works by parents paying a monthly direct debit of £2 and each month a draw takes place with prizes of £150, £100, £75 & £50. Further details are available by emailing school on [delasalle@sthelens.org.uk](mailto:delasalle@sthelens.org.uk)

### **300 Years of Lasallian Heritage**

We are excited that 2019 will mark the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St John Baptist de la Salle's death in 1719 and the Lasallian community around the world is keen to use this to celebrate 300 years of his legacy. There are many events planned that will involve our staff, students and parents throughout this academic year, details of which will follow in the months to come.

### **Key Events**

Below are some of the key events across the rest of this half term:

Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> September	PTFA Meeting, 6.30pm
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> September	DOE Parental Meeting, 6.00pm
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> October	De La Salle Open Evening
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> October	Year 7 Form Tutors Evening, 2.00pm – 4.30pm

Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> October	Post 16 Options & Careers Fair, 5.00pm
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> October	School Closes for pupils
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	Staff INSET day
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> October	School Returns

Year 11 Information evening will take place before the end of the half term – date to be confirmed.

Once again, thank you for your continued support and I look forward to seeing you during the course of the year.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Rannard (Headteacher)