



24 September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Weekly Parental Update 24.9.21 – week 3

Despite some increased COVID controls, it is nice to begin to return to normality, this includes attending some meetings in person. This week saw our first St Helens ASH (Association of secondary Heads) meeting of this academic year take place. There is a real collegiality between the secondary school headteachers in the town and a shared desire to improve education for all our young people. This year, as a group, we are particularly looking to focus upon SEND, Reading, Curriculum Development and, really importantly, making all of our schools safe places for all of our school communities.

Meanwhile in school, it has been a very busy week again as the novelty of returning to school is replaced by the real work of teaching and learning. Alongside the academic work, however, we have also been busy with house competitions, Macmillan Coffee Morning and, my favourite event of the school year, the Year 7 and 8 Freshers' Fair.

House Competition Scores

This week has seen the completion of the first round of House fixtures, these involved Year 11. Next week is the turn of Year 10 with Mount Carmel playing Champion in netball and football on Tuesday and West Park playing Notre Dame on the Thursday. We are keen that all young people have an opportunity to represent their houses, so many other non-sport related competitions are also planned including:

- Photography competition
- Bake off
- Spelling Bee
- Debating / Public Speaking competition and many more.

The scores in the house cup so far are below - Year 11 scores obviously including this week's sporting points - 50 for a win, 30 for a draw and 10 for a loss):

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	House Total
Notre Dame	2	2	2	3	101	110
Champion	3	4	3	2	63	75
Mount Carmel	1	1	1	1	62	66
West Park	4	3	4	4	24	39

Homework

As part of the Big Ask, it was very clear that there is some confusion around homeworks, in particular parents being able to access information regarding their child's homework. We understand that this is very important to parents. At the moment we continue to set all our homework through TEAMS Assignments and parents should receive a weekly email

regarding the homework set. However, we are also working hard with Satchel One (the artist formerly known as Show My Homework) to create an automatic link between TEAMS and Satchel One. This will allow homework to be set in either TEAMS or Satchel One and be visible in both systems as well.

Kit Recycling

Are there any families that have children who have outgrown their De La Salle PE kit and would like to return it back to school to be recycled? Rather than have them lying around as souvenirs or just thrown away, those items of kit would be warmly received by our PE Dept. As I am sure you will appreciate, many families have struggled financially recently and it would be very helpful if you could pass on shorts, polo shirts, even trainers so that we can recycle them with some of our families who are in need at the moment. The kit can be returned to any member of the PE Dept or to Reception - all donations welcome.

Open Evening

At the moment it is still our intention that Open Evening will go ahead in person on Thursday 7th October. **This means that students will finish for the day at 1.30pm.** Obviously if rates of infection become higher then we will switch to a virtual Open Evening instead and school would operate at a normal time.

Twitter

The school now has a number of social media accounts that parents may (or may not) wish to follow.

- Main School Twitter: @DLS_StHelens
- My headteacher twitter: @DLSHeadteacher
- PE Dept twitter: @DLSPEDept
- RE Dept twitter: @DLSREDept
- Maths Dept twitter: @MathsDls
- English Dept twitter: @DlsEnglish
- Geography Dept twitter: @dlsgeography
- Art Dept twitter: @ArtechDls
- Science Dept twitter: @ScienceDLS
- Design Tech Dept twitter: @DLSDT1
- History Dept twitter: @HistoryDls
- Modern Foreign Languages twitter: @dlsmfll
- Performing Arts Dept twitter: @DlsperformingA
- 1719 Society twitter: @1719dls1
- The school diversity group: @dls_diversity
- Our School Chaplain: @cantillon_sam

Upcoming Events - below are some of the key events coming up this half term:

27th – 29th September – 1719 Retreat to Kintbury
30th September – Year 7 Pastoral Parents' Evening
5th October – Year 9 Geography Fieldtrip to Snowdonia
7th October – Open Evening (students finish at 1.30pm)
8th October – Flu Vaccinations, all years (where consent has been provided)
11th – 15th October – Year 7 to Year 10 Assessment Week
12th October – Year 9 Geography Fieldtrip to Snowdonia
14th October – Your Future Event Careers event
14th October – Year 11 Information Evening (this will be delivered virtually)
22nd October – School closes for half term

COVID Related Information

New Controls

As you will now be aware, we have stepped up our COVID controls as rates increase in school and across St Helens, this now includes **the wearing of face coverings on corridors and other indoor communal spaces, for staff and students**. We will, in conjunction with Public Health, continue to monitor our rates to see if additional controls will be required. I will of course keep you updated.

Vaccinations

Whilst these have started in some parts of the country, we are still awaiting final details of how they will be delivered in St Helens. Of course, as soon as I am aware, I will share that information with you.

Testing

Two points on testing:

- We encourage all families to carry out twice weekly testing (with LFTs) to help identify asymptomatic cases (students who have consent for testing were issued with test kits and additional test for students can be requested from school).
- If your child is awaiting results for a PCR test (the ones from NHS testing centres) please keep them at home until the test result is confirmed.

In addition, the Mobile Testing Unit will be deployed at Eccleston Park Golf Club from today (24/9) until Monday (27/9)

Finally, I have the privilege of taking part in next week's 1719 Society retreat to the Lasallian training centre in Kintbury. This year's Society have already made an extremely impressive start and I am excited to see the impact they can have on the school experience of our students. Have a good weekend.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Rannard
Headteacher