



# De La Salle School

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Dear Parent /Carer,

## Parental Update 19

A very positive week in school, helped by some mild and settled weather (I type whilst looking for some wood to touch). The week has included mock exams for Year 11 and training for our wonderful Mentors in Violence Prevention. It saw our reading mentors beginning their support of the younger students, our student council giving very honest feedback to the Local Authority regarding the catering in school (see later) as well as all the usual practices, rehearsals, clubs and other activities that make up a normal week.

### Weekly Academic Focus: Learning Walks

As part of our ongoing quality assurance, we regularly carry out learning walks around the school (these are unannounced visits to classrooms) to capture an accurate picture of the quality of education and the day-to-day experience of our young people. There have been dozens of these learning walks, over the past two weeks, mostly involving our own learning and teaching team within school, but also with specialist support from external colleagues from outstanding provision or with Ofsted training.

It has been very encouraging that what we said they would see in different classrooms and subjects, matched what they actually saw. This is important as it means we have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development within the school – in other words we are working on the right things. One interesting comment that was made from the external visitors was how calm the school is, which was interesting to hear.

### COVID

Our new rates of infection are now falling and though today we still have 45 'live' cases, we expect 31 of these to return next week. This is a long way from the 65 cases we recently had, therefore, barring a significant change of circumstance over the weekend, then the additional restrictions, including wearing of face coverings, will be lifted from Monday. We will, of course, maintain our ongoing COVID controls, including:

- Awareness of and vigilance for symptoms
- Encouragement of twice weekly testing
- Ventilation
- Enhanced cleaning

Of course, staff and students are always welcome to continue to wear face coverings within school.

### Careers Newsletter

I have also attached a copy of our new and regular careers newsletter. This contains local labour market information, careers opportunities and a wealth of other useful advice. A big thank you to Mrs Moran for working on this.

### Year 11 Mocks

Our Year 11 students have made a very positive start on their mock GCSEs this week. Their overall behaviour and attitude have been exactly as we would want them to be, and

it is encouraging to see how hard they are working in preparation for these exams. A big thank you to our Year 11 families who have supported this preparation. A reminder the exam timetable can be accessed here: <http://www.delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/students/examinations/>

### **School Catering Feedback**

Many of you may be aware that the Local Authority catering company who provide our catering in school, changed their menus several months ago. It would be fair to say these met with a mixed response. To their credit, the LA Team have been out to actively capture the thoughts from our students, on top of the surveys they have done.

So, this week, our School Council representatives met with Ryan McBride from the LA.

They raised issues around:

- Customer service
- Items that have been taken off the menu
- New items they would like e.g. soup and roll and additional pasta flavours
- Costings
- Packaging and recycling
- Better advertising and clarity of the offer and prices.

Ryan was very impressed with their 'passionate, constructive and honest' feedback. Let's hope it is listened to.

### **House Scores**

COVID has limited our House Competitions so far this term, but we are hopeful they can resume after half term. The latest House scores are attached.

### **Forthcoming Events (items in bold indicate a change to normal day)**

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January – Fri 11<sup>th</sup> Feb: Year 11 Mock exams

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February: Year 8 Science Fair

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February: school closes for half term (3pm)

#### **Half Term**

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February: School re-opens after half term

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March: Years 7-10 Assessments

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March: Year 10 Retreat

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March: Year 11 Pastoral Parents' Evening

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March: Year 7 and 8 Drama Trip

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March: Data Drop 2 Opens

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> and Friday 25<sup>th</sup> Mar: We Will Rock You (7.30pm)

**Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March: Year 10 Parents' Evening (Virtual)**

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April: School closes for Easter (3pm)

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April: Staff INSET Day (students do not attend)**

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April: students return (normal time)

### **And finally...**

The past couple of weeks, we have been able to re-start the Breakfast with the Headteacher, in smaller than normal groups. These have involved students from each year group who have shown high levels of progress as well as strong Lasallian values and a positive attitude. It is an absolute pleasure to sit and talk to these students as they enjoy the breakfast delights organised by Mrs Croft (including fruit!). Though as my two sons have pointed out – "how is breakfast with you a reward?" They may have a point.

Yours sincerely,

**Andrew Rannard**  
Headteacher