



De La Salle
School

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27th May 2022

Dear Parent / Carer,

Parental Update 29

These half terms are simply flying by! This last week has felt incredibly busy in school: GCSEs are in full swing, our Year 7s had their Drop-Down Careers Days, we have been holding departmental reviews – looking at the quality of education within each department, our transition visits to our primary schools have continued, our students took part in the Mersey Region Youth Summit and last night we had our latest staff accompaniment session – listening to Mr Thomas' story of how he became a teacher.

We now have a short break to rest, recuperate and, for the students, to revise as the GCSEs continue and our Year 7-10 assessments start after half term. The country will also celebrate the Queen's Jubilee over the half term. I have attached information regarding the various official events happening in St Helens for the Jubilee.

Weekly School Focus: Support Staff

The school has a variety of other support staff who are integral to our smooth running. Our **Teaching Assistants** provide 1:1 and small group support to our students. They are such a kind and caring group of staff who go above and beyond for the students. As well as being specialists in ASC, dyslexia and SEMH most of them are also attached to specific departments. This allows them to build up subject specific skills and for the departments to deploy them exactly where they are most needed.

Our **Pastoral Support Managers** are the staff you are most likely to be in contact with. Each year group has its own: Miss Swaby/Miss Nesbo in Year 7, Mrs Moran in Year 8, Mr Johnston in Year 9, Miss Lord in Year 10 and Mrs Guy in Year 11. These staff are the beating heart of our pastoral care: providing support for all 240 students in their year group, as well as supporting the Head of Year and Form Tutors.

Finally, our **Cover Supervisors** provide the cover for lessons when staff are absent. Mr Tucker, Mrs Clague, Mrs Sixsmith, Mrs Gray, Mrs Potter and Miss Reddy are incredibly flexible and skilled at doing this, jumping from a single cover in one subject to then an extended period of cover in another subject. In normal times, they make a big difference in providing consistency and stability rather than random supply teachers, but this has particularly been the case during COVID, when staff isolation and absence was so high. A big thank you to all 3 of these groups.

Free School Meal Vouchers

We understand that there is a chance that Free School Meal vouchers may be issued to cover the half term break, though this has still not been confirmed. The LA have said that if they are being issued they will be sent after half term, possibly along with vouchers for the summer holidays. I will ensure you are kept up to date if and when this is confirmed.

School Car Park

I have managed to avoid the issue of parking for several months now, but there have been a number of dangerous incidents recently in the main school car park, particularly in the morning. So, can I put out my usual plea asking parents to be kind and considerate when driving and parking on or near the school site.

In addition to this, over half term, we are finally having new electronic gates installed at the Mill Brow entrance. The school car park should not be used by parents unless a child has a significant need e.g. on crutches. Instead, students should be dropped off at the Alder Hey Road entrance. **After half term, the main school gates will be closed and access to the main car park will be restricted.** Please use the Alder Hey Road entrance.

Assessment Weeks Years 7-10

As I mentioned earlier, the two weeks after half term are assessment weeks for the students in Years 7-10. Students in Years 7-9 will have their assessments in lesson times and their teachers have been instructed to let them know when, over the two weeks, those assessments will take place. Year 10 students have a more structured timetable for their first set of mock exams, this has been shared with parents.

Revision and exams can be a time of stress for young people and, as parents, we can be unsure as to how best to help and support our child. To help with this you may find this selection of clips and resources from the BBC useful:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/1XBINWwvl3wYrHb9hGDTPCI/top-tips-for-parents-from-the-mind-set-experts>

Reports

The final sets of reports (Year 8 & 9) are currently being checked ahead of amending and being sent out. All other reports (Years 7 & 10) have gone out already. A lot of time and effort goes into designing, completing, checking and distributing these reports and I hope you find them to provide a useful update on your child's progress, alongside the Assessment Data Sheets that are sent out throughout the year.

Mobile Phones (reminder)

Just a reminder of the message from the last two weeks, that from Monday 6th June we will be applying much tighter rules around mobile phones and the consequences of using them, namely:

- Phones are not to be seen, used or heard between 8.30am and 3.00pm
- This includes students wearing airpods/earphones who it will be assumed are using their phone (or why else have them in?)
- Breach of these rules will always result in the phone being confiscated until the end of the day (with no exceptions)
- Persistent breaches of the rules or refusal to hand over a phone may result in internal or external exclusion; a student being required to hand in the phone before school or being banned from having a phone on school premises.

We are giving a few weeks lead time for students to get used to this and would really appreciate your support, including not trying to contact students on their mobiles during the school day. This can be done via the switchboard who will happily pass on any important notices.

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

Monday 6th June

School Re-opens

Thursday 9th June

GCSE Art Exhibition (5pm onwards)

6th – 17th June
Tuesday 21st June
Tuesday 21st June
Thursday 23rd June
Friday 24th June
27th – 29th June
Tuesday 28th June
Wednesday 29th June
Thursday 30th June
Friday 1st July
4th – 8th July
8th – 10th July
Tuesday 19th July
Wednesday 20th July

Year 7-9 Assessment weeks/Year 10 Mock Exams
Year 9 World of Glass Trip
Year 9 (BDLS) Snowdonia Trip
Year 7 Parents' Evening (students finish at 1.30pm)
INSET Day – students do not attend
Year 8 Maths Trip
Year 9 Chemistry trip (30 students)
Sports Day
Year 11 Prom
Founders Day (students finish 1pm tbc)
Year 6 Transition Week
Lasallian District Camp
Whole School Rewards trip to Blackpool
School closes (Students finish at 12.10pm)

And finally....

I hope you and your family are able to enjoy the coming week of good weather (he types optimistically). Unfortunately, at home, we are having considerable work done on the house resulting in the whole of the downstairs, including the kitchen, unusable, and only the bedroom and bathroom in use upstairs. So, I will be eating my put noodle sat on the side of the bed or bath (don't know which is worse), counting down the days to being back in school!

Enjoy the half term break.

Andrew Rannard
Headteacher