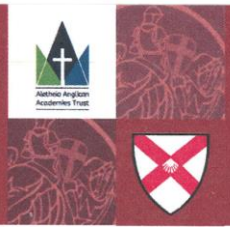




**Saint George's**  
Church of England School

Part of Aletheia Anglican Academies  
Trust (Company No. 07801612)

ALL DIFFERENT  
ALL EQUAL  
ALL FLOURISHING



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Executive Headteacher: Mr Stephen Carey BA Hons

## Newsletter December 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you for all your support through another year. This term has been a particularly long one and a great deal has been packed into it as you will see from the length of the newsletter. As you will be aware, we are very pleased with our Ofsted report from the end of last term. We are especially pleased that the work that is done through personal development and in the early years was seen as Outstanding.

As ever, I must thank the whole staff team for all they have done this year. They are amazing. The commitment of the staff to supporting all the pupils is something I am truly grateful for. They give so much to the Saint George's community. We are sad to be saying goodbye to some members of staff, in particular, Mrs Scott-Halsey who is leaving us after 13 years. We wish them every success in their new roles, and I thank them for the work they have done for all the pupils here at Saint George's.

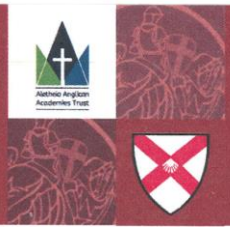
We start back at school at 8.40am on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Please can all pupils be in correct uniform for the start of the new term. If you need any support with this, please contact your child's Community Leader.

I hope that you all have a very peaceful and restful Christmas and New Year.

Matt Lillie

Head of School





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**Uniform Updates**

From September 2024 we are introducing a Saint George's School skirt which will be compulsory. Students will still have the option to wear trousers, but the only skirt permitted will be the school skirt. This will prevent some students from wearing skirts that are too short and made from Lycra material.

Should you wish to purchase your child a school skirt before September they can be purchased from [Simmonds & Sons \(simmonds-ltd.com\)](http://Simmonds & Sons (simmonds-ltd.com)) online or in their store in Chatham Dockside. Please see an example of the school skirt below. The Saint George's badge will be embroidered at the bottom of the skirt by Simmonds.



**BLACK PLEAT SKIRT (69991)**

SIZE: 20/20

Size Guide

QUANTITY 1

FROM  
**£17.95 - £28.95**

ADD TO CART

We understand that the skirts are expensive and hope that giving you 9 months' notice will help to spread the cost. If your child is pupil premium, we will cover the cost of one skirt. Please contact the Pupil Premium Coordinator Mr Hawkins to arrange this.

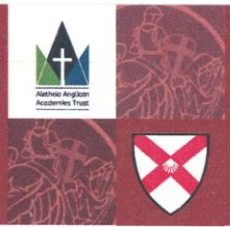
Please view the uniform expectations over the Christmas period to ensure your child is dressed accordingly on their return on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

<https://www.saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk/page/?title=Uniform+and+Equipment&pid=33>

Kind regards

The Pastoral Team





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## Sixth Form Activities

### College of Esports Trip

Year 13 students visited the College of Esports in Stratford on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023. During the visit the students, accompanied by our media teacher Mr Bulger, were able to use some of the fantastic resources such as the gaming room and presenting green screen room. Students were able to hear from student ambassadors and the teaching team to hear about the range of specialist degrees in esports business management, esports business and digital marketing, esports digital media, esports coaching and management and esports games design. All students who attended the trip either study A Level Computer Science or A Level Media Studies and are now considering adding one of these degrees to their UCAS applications.

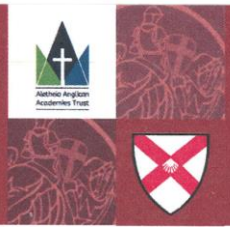


### Year 13 Prepare for Life Day

On the 24<sup>th</sup> November, Year 13 had a prepare for life day where they experienced five different workshops to help them prepare for life after Saint George's sixth form. One of the highlights of the day was teaching 100 students to cook a chilli using a slow cooker, which we all sat and ate as a group over lunch. Alongside the fabulous cooking sessions, there were also sessions on making competitive apprenticeship applications, masterclass in interview skills and aspirational goal setting delivered by one of our successful alumni James Gardner. The students were very positive about the day and felt they were now more prepared for life after sixth form.







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**Peer mentoring**

Year 12 students have been busy offering peer mentoring this term to both year 7 and year 11 students. The year 11 peer mentoring sessions have focused on revision skills and revision sessions for maths, science, and English. Year 7 peer mentoring has been used to help the students settle into the secondary phase life and to give them an opportunity to have a friendly face from the sixth form to talk to.

**SEND Christmas information and support.**

For autism friendly Christmas tips visit <https://www.autismsoutheast.co.uk/info/top-christmas-tips/>

For ADHD friendly Christmas tips visit <https://www.adhdcentre.co.uk/tips-for-an-adhd-family-christmas/>

For information about activities and events visit <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs/support-services-to-help-families-with-send-children/activities-for-families-with-send-children>

Merry Christmas from the SEND department



**Woodville Halls -Pantomime rewards trip.**

On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December St George's students in year 7 and year 8 got to go to the Woodville Halls and see the Pantomime 'Snow White'.

All staff and students had a wonderful afternoon. Two of our students Remy Colquhoun and Dottie Rayfield even got to go on stage and won themselves a prize.





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## Safeguarding Christmas Bulletin

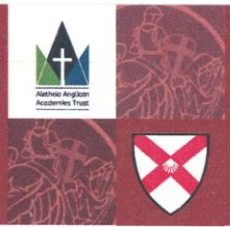
Dear Parents/Carers, we know that, sometimes, the festive season can provide additional challenges and as a result we are including the attached link of additional support networks should you need them: -

 [Useful Contacts December 2023.docx](#)

### Looking after yourself

- Be gentle and patient with yourself. It might help to think about what is best for your wellbeing during Christmas and prioritise what you need.
- Remind yourself that it won't last forever. You could set a 'start' and 'finish' time for what you count as Christmas.
- Set your boundaries. Try to say no to things that aren't helpful for you.
- Let yourself experience your own feelings. Even if they don't match what's going on around you, they're still valid. For example, if you don't feel like celebrating Christmas when everyone else does.
- Take time out. Do something to forget that it's Christmas or distract yourself. For example, you could watch a film or read a book that's set in the summer. Or you could try learning a new skill.
- Let yourself have the things you need. For example, if you need to take a break instead of doing an activity or need a little bit of quiet time.





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**“I don't really celebrate Christmas and always enjoy taking the day as time just for me, a whole day of self-care and selfishness!”**

### Managing relationships

- Think about how to end difficult conversations. It's ok to tell someone you don't want to talk about something, or to change the subject. It might help to practise what you'll say.
- Suggest an activity or an easy way to move on if you want to help end an unwanted conversation. For example, this could be playing a game, or taking a screen break if you're on a video call.
- Talk about your plans. It might help to agree on things such as budgets or timings beforehand. For example, you could agree not to give presents this year, or decide a set amount to spend.
- If other people don't seem to understand how you're feeling, you could share this information with them. You could also think about writing down how you're feeling and sharing this with them if conversations are difficult.
- It's ok if there are people you don't want to see at Christmas. If you can't avoid spending time with them, try to think of ways to keep a distance while you're there.

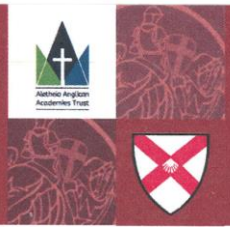
### Coping with money worries

It can be tough to cope with the financial pressures of Christmas. This can be especially difficult if you're already struggling with money. And for many of us, rises in the cost of living will have made things even harder. How you cope with the costs of Christmas will depend on your circumstances. You might not find all these tips realistic. But it may help to try some of them:

- Access financial support. You could use the Turn2Us benefits calculator to work out what support you're entitled to. Citizens Advice has information on how to get help if you're struggling to pay your bills. And you could call Trussell Trust's free helpline for advice on accessing financial support.
- Make lists, plans or a budget. Noting things down can make them feel a bit more manageable or help you think more clearly. Creating a budget could also help you feel more in control of what you can spend.
- Be open with others. It can be hard to talk about money. But being honest with others can help. You may be able to agree ways to make Christmas plans free or low cost. Or they might be able to offer other kinds of support. Step Change's festive support has information on talking to other people about money worries.
- Look for local offers or events. Local organisations, such as charities and community centres, may have free or low-cost events for Christmas. Or they may be able to offer support with things like gifts or food.







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- Look for free or low-cost items online. You may be able to find free items to use as gifts or decorations online, for example through websites like Freecycle.
- Try to avoid comparisons with the Christmas you see in adverts and social media. These often do not reflect reality and can make us feel bad about ourselves. It may help to take breaks from social media.
- Be kind to yourself. Money worries can have a big impact on our mental health. They might make us feel concerned, embarrassed, or angry. And they can affect our self-esteem. Try not to blame yourself for your situation or how you're feeling about it.

### Getting support

If you're struggling this Christmas, you may want to find support for your mental health. There are a few ways that you can do this:

- Call Samaritans on 116 123 (freephone). Their English language line is always open. They have a Welsh language line too, which is open daily from 7pm to 11pm.
- Text SHOUT to 85258. This is a free 24/7 crisis text service run by Shout.
- Visit our **useful contacts** page for a list of organisations who can support your mental health or help with practical problems.

### For Immediate Safeguarding Concerns: -

- Please call The Front Door Team if you are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a young person 03000 411111 or 03000 419191 (out of hours)
- Call 101 if you suspect a crime.
- Call 999 if there is a danger to life.

**We would also like to remind you that Mrs Hartley, Lead DSL, and Mrs Alpnar, Deputy Lead DSL, will be holding 'drop-in sessions' throughout the academic year for you to come in and discuss any current trends or concerns, or just seek additional information, in an informal get together over a cup of tea/coffee. These 'drop-in sessions' will be advertised to all parents from Years 7 – 13 via Parent Mail.**

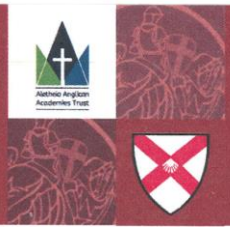




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## Careers

We had the privilege to welcome BBC Bitesize to our school on Friday! They delivered four panel style sessions to our Year 7s to 10s led by Kiss FM UK Presenter Alex Mansuroglu with Videographer, Alex Durham of Vava Voom Videos, Martin Whiskin Voiceover Artist and BBC Radio Kent presenter Leo Ulph.

Each creative professional shared their career path, their qualifications, personal anecdotes, advice on work experience and key soft skills for the workplace. At the end of session, students were given the opportunity to ask the panel questions.

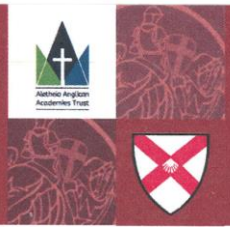
The aim of the Bitesize School Tour is to raise career aspirations in secondary students across the UK and give them practical advice on how they can pursue a career in a variety of settings. Our students left the sessions with a greater awareness of potential career paths and lots of tips on how to prepare themselves for the future world of work.

Many thanks to everyone who made such a motivating event possible!

#BBCBitesize #STEM #CreativeinCareers #FlourishintheFuture







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## Attendance

All students at Saint Georges are expected to aim for 100% attendance if they are to fulfil their learning potential. Of course, there are times when attendance is not possible through illness or medical needs.

Each year, for every 2 days a pupil is absent reduces their attendance by 1%. There is a direct correlation between high attendance and high academic attainment. Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell is not acceptable and will be questioned.

Children are required by law to attend school 190 days per year. The Government states that every pupil's attendance should be at least 95%. For pupils and parents this can be translated into the following missed learning time.

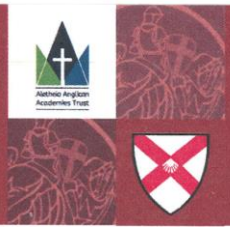
- **95%** – 9 days absent (approx. 2 weeks) which means 54 lessons are missed.
- **90%** – 19 days absent (approx. 4 weeks) which means 114 lessons are missed.
- **85%** – 29 days absent (approx. 6 weeks) which means 174 lessons are missed.
- **80%** – 38 days absent (approx. 8 weeks) which means 228 lessons are missed.
- **75%** – 48 days absent (approx. 10 weeks) which means 288 lessons are missed.
- **70%** – 57 days absent (approx. 11.5 weeks) which means 342 lessons are missed.
- **65%** – 67 days absent (approx. 13.5 weeks) which means 402 lessons are missed.

90% attendance sounds quite positive until it is viewed like this. We want to make every lesson count, please help us to do just that by aiming for a 100% percentage attendance.

### IS IT EVER OKAY FORMY CHILD TO BE OFF SCHOOL?

- Sometimes children have to miss school if they are ill. You must let the attendance office know if they are too sick to go in. Children might need to attend a medical or dental appointment in school time.
- You should always try to make appointments such as dental check-ups during the school holidays or after school hours if you can. Other reasons that your child might not be able to go to school could include the death of someone close to them or taking part in an agreed religious activity. Your child's headteacher will decide whether to agree to them being out of school or not. You must tell your child's school if they cannot go in, and why not. If the school agrees that it is okay for them not to be at school, it is called an 'authorised absence'. That





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means they can be off school. YOUR CHILD'S ATTENDANCE MATTERS Learn Make friends  
Increase their confidence Build on social skills Develop future goals It is really important to  
talk to us if your child is worried about coming into school.

**WHAT CAN HAPPEN IF YOUR CHILD MISSES LOTS OF SCHOOL?**

- Find lessons difficult.
- Do less well in their exams.
- Will be worried about going to school Have lower self-esteem and fewer friends.

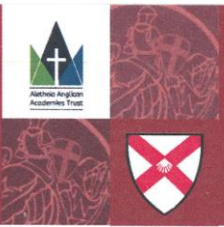
**WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?**

The law says that all children of 'compulsory school age' (between 5 and 16) must get a suitable, full-time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering your child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide a suitable full-time education.

Parents Support

- Communicate.
- Ask for help.
- Encourage and develop.
- Routine.
- Be positive.





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# EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

*Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning.*

**Attendance percentages can be misleading.**

<b>100% Attendance</b>	0 Days Missed	<b>EXCELLENT</b>
<b>95% Attendance</b>	9 Days of Absence 1 Week and 4 Days of Learning Missed	<b>SATISFACTORY</b>
<b>90% Attendance</b>	19 Days of Absence 3 Weeks and 4 Days of Learning Missed	<b>POOR</b>
<b>85% Attendance</b>	28 Days of Absence 5 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	<b>UNACCEPTABLE</b>
<b>80% Attendance</b>	38 Days of Absence 7 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	<b>UNACCEPTABLE</b>
<b>75% Attendance</b>	46 Days of Absence 9 Weeks and 1 Day of Learning Missed	<b>UNACCEPTABLE</b>

**For some parents 90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance, but the reality is that 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during the school year – that's nearly four school weeks.**

