

# Saint George's Church of England School Secondary Phase Termly Newsletter

Term 1

Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024



Dear Saint George's Parent,

Thank you for your great support during the first term of the year. I am writing this precisely one year after our visit from Ofsted! They told us about all of the good things that were going on in our school and also challenged us to make the way in which we assess pupils' work more meaningful. When you receive information about the progress your children are making this year, you will notice this change particularly if your child is in Year 7, 8 or 9. We have dispensed with the numbers we used to use. We found that they were not really useful to either us or to parents. Mr Baker will write to you all again to remind you that we will be using key words to describe how each pupil has handled the knowledge they have been taught in each of their subjects so far. Each descriptive word represents a different level of understanding, they include developing, remembering, knowing, reasoning and excelling; the descriptions of what each word means will be key when you receive your child's latest data at the end of next term.

Staying with school improvement, we are also working hard to improve the quality of form tutoring in the secondary phase and the quality of worship across both phases, our Chaplain Louisa Parrales is instrumental in this change, she is also working hard to improve student leadership across the school. Other leaders right from reception up to Year 13 are working harder to quality assure what is going on in classrooms more regularly; despite the multiple strategies that we implement across the school, there is nothing more impactful than good teaching to transform outcomes and of course life chances. The Aletheia Trust also carries out such review activities, in June for Year 12 and in September for the entire primary phase. Both activities highlight great practice and suggest ways in which we can improve still further. This commitment to continuous improvement pays off and it was a pleasure to hear from Mr Lillie at open morning about our successful summer outcomes and from Mrs Taylor in the primary phase about the great progress that pupils made last year.

In other news it has been a productive term right across the school as always. There are too many to list here but to name just a few that spring to mind, we have seen our auditions for Romeo and Juliet take place, our successful secondary phase open mornings, the launch of our new school skirt, the election of our first Year 6 head pupils, singing in worship into Year 7 (we have always sung in the primary phase!), the re-launch of the Duke of Edinburgh Award in Year 9, our culture day and a number of continued sporting successes against other schools, of particular note here was our first primary phase trophy for winning a recent Saturday morning football tournament.

Looking forward to next term, I'd like to remind parents that our push for high standards of attendance, punctuality, uniform and behaviour continue, with tightened strategies around punctuality in particular. We would appreciate your support in ensuring pupils right across the school have all items of uniform and equipment and that you continue to talk to your children about what high standards looks and sounds like in a successful and flourishing school; we will certainly back this up here on site.

Wishing you a happy and safe half term break.

Mr Murphy - Executive Head.

## Online Safety

Please find new guidelines/information regarding Social Media for Teens

### Vault Apps

These are secret apps that are concealed by looking like a normal app - i.e., an app may look like a working calculator when it is opened, however, once a password is entered, it reveals photographs, videos, documents and contacts. As a parent, ensure that parental controls are set up so that you can review all app purchases. More information can be found from:-

<https://www.bark.us/blog/find-hidden-apps/>

<https://www.safes.so/blogs/vault-apps/>

In addition, Instagram have introduced new Teen account features. This means that contacts on phones can be limited and any content that they access will be set to the most restrictive setting to reduce their exposure to sensitive content. To override any of these settings, then they need their parent's permission. These new settings are in place for all new users with immediate effect if they are under 16. Existing Teens will be moved across to Teen accounts within the next couple of months here in the UK.

New Supervision settings in Instagram also have added:-

- The ability to see who your child has messaged in the past week but you will not be able to see the contents of these messages
- The option to block your child from accessing Instagram at certain times e.g., during school or at night
- The ability to see what topics your child has chosen to view

Further information on new changes to Instagram for Teens, can be found:-

<https://about.fb.com/news/2024/09/instagram-teen-accounts/>

### You must be over 13 years of age to set up an account

## Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health

We are very excited to launch a new partnership with NELFT & NHS Foundation Trust here at Saint George's CofE School.

We are now officially a 'training school' and part of Kent Emotional Wellbeing Team. This entails 2 final year students from Sussex University who will spend 2 full days in Secondary Phase and 1 colleague for 1 day per week in Primary Phase to support our students with mild - moderate mental health issues. This will encompass CBT sessions for identified students around anxiety, low mood, friendship difficulties and exam stress. In addition, they will offer workshops and interventions to parents/carers via online sessions.

With mental health continuing to increase and waiting lists becoming never ending, I am sure that you will agree that this is a very worthwhile and needed service which we are most grateful to have secured. Watch this space for more information once it takes off in Term 2.

# Traffic in Meadow Road

We noticed this term that a small minority of parents were driving at speed along Meadow Road when dropping their children off at the secondary phase site. This clearly places those pupils who are crossing the road in danger and is therefore completely unacceptable.

We highly recommend that, if you do use a car for school travel, you drop your children off in an area away from the school site and allow them to walk the rest of the way. Thank you in advance for helping with this and allowing only those with a genuine need to access the site at this time.

# Uniform

We would like to thank you for supporting the school in ensuring your child is wearing the new school skirt. Students choosing to wear the school skirts are wearing them with pride and are looking very smart.

As the colder weather approaches and students will be wearing coats, can we remind students that blazers should be worn underneath, and not instead of.

Uniform & Equipment reminders for term 2.

Students should wear v-neck plain black jumpers or Saint George's School v-neck jumper under their blazers.

Black leather school shoes should be always worn.