



St Edward's School

Unity - Achievement - Faith

22 October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have arrived at the end of the first half of the autumn term, and I am writing with an update, together with some information regarding the return after the break.

Firstly, can I thank you for your support this half term. We have received so many supportive messages from families, and these have been much appreciated by staff. Since March our community, parents included, has had to adjust on multiple fronts, to new ways of working. Together I think we have brought our children through the COVID storm fairly well, thus far. It is clear that more change is ahead, and all of us continue to be surrounded by uncertainty. Preventative measures in school will be easily undermined by thoughtless behaviour, especially in social contexts. I have asked staff and students, and can I now ask you, please, to help us over the half-term break by ensuring that your child or children follow current COVID advice very carefully. This especially applies where students may want to meet up in large groups outside of school. I am especially conscious of Halloween, and the pressures on young people to gather and move between households.

In the space of one week we have given out over 300 facemasks to students who have not brought one into school, or have 'lost' it during the day. We cannot sustain this, and I ask that you check that your child has a mask, and a spare, every day. For the sake of the safety of the wider school community, we will ask parents to bring a mask into school before the child is admitted to their bubble, if we have to provide a mask more than once. We have to, together, teach children to take responsibility for their own safety, and to have a regard for the wellbeing of others.

Classrooms must be kept well ventilated, and so please ensure that your child wears a school jumper and coat to school, as well as their blazer, as temperatures drop, and we seek to balance the need to ventilate teaching spaces with keeping everyone warm.

Academic progress and parent-tutor evenings



In recent weeks we have completed initial evaluations of student academic progress, and their wellbeing. I am pleased to say that the vast majority of our students have fared very well. I have seen some of the work achieved during lockdown, and this is such a credit to your supportive role as parents and carers. Thank-you. I hope that you found the recent parent-tutor meetings helpful. We have learned a great deal from these, and will continue to work hard as a school to do our very best for your child. I was struck by the polite and positive responses from our student wellbeing audit, despite many of the challenging situations that

so many of our young people have found themselves in. We will try and help our students to reflect on their growth in personal resilience through their experiences this year.

Staffing update

At the end of this half term we say farewell to Estelle Kinzett, our HR Manager, who has served the school well for many years. We wish her a happy future as she begins a new life in Bath. When we return we will be welcoming Kirsty Buxton, our new manager for alternative provision and attendance strategies; Tyler Harris, Anthony Matthews and Max Hammett, who join us as TAs; Becky Sim who joins us as a Learning and Behaviour Support, Emma Acott as cover supervisor and Kathryn Tennant as RE Teacher. We also welcome Howie Cummings, who joins us as an IT technician and Sue Clarke as Sixth Form administrator. These new appointments will strengthen our work as a school, and we wish them every success in their new roles with us.

Academic performance



You may know that St. Edward's has been in the top 10% of schools nationally for academic outcomes for the last two years now, and it is good to know that our staff continue to combine excellent teaching, with great pastoral support. It is for no small reason that there are more applications per place in St. Edward's than for any other school in Poole; and we now hold waiting lists in most year groups. Although we are operating under restrictions, we are trying hard to sustain the happy, safe and successful school that you chose for your child.

Remote learning preparation

Ahead there may be greater restrictions and challenges. You will have received information regarding remote learning from Mr Henry. Please let us know if any aspect of that would present problems for your child, as soon as possible; and remember that our ability to sustain provision for every year group may change at short notice. St. Edward's is one of a dwindling number of schools where, at the time of writing, there have been no outbreaks of COVID.

Finally, some new developments. From Monday 2nd November **Year 8** will leave school at 3.00pm, and Years **12 and 13** will leave at 3.20pm. This is a switch of the current arrangements. Furthermore, 6th Form tutor time will begin at **8.40am**. This is to allow tutors a greater amount of time to support their tutees; and especially those applying for Higher Education. In the meantime, amidst the overwhelming number of positive credits being awarded to students, we are noticing some issues with home-learning completion emerging. We will be working on ways to improve our communication of home learning for parents, but could we ask that you ensure that your child allocates the correct amount of time to work set, or private study, in accordance with our home-learning policy.

Celebrating the Eucharist



Thanks to the support of local clergy, we will soon be celebrating the Eucharist in school every week, according to the Roman Catholic and Church of England rites. It is important to continue to place our Christian faith front and centre; and to provide opportunities for students to pray, give thanks, and be still, is all the more important during these times.

Further information about these services, which will be offered to each year group bubble on rotation, will be sent home after half term.

SIMs Parent App

Thank you for your patience as we have prepared the roll-out of the app for our new information management system. I hope that you will find the information on the app useful. If your email address has changed, please inform the school of the new email.

It has been a good half term. We loved seeing our students return, ready to learn. We look forward to welcoming them again in November. Until then wishing all of our families a good break, and with our thanks,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Antram', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mr M Antram
Headteacher

