



Year 9 Director of Learning Letter

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a pleasure getting to know Year 9 students over the past seven weeks. I am so pleased with the way that they have stepped up in such an important year in their education. In our first Collective worship of the new school year, we considered the parable from Matthew, about the wise and foolish builders – so many of our Year 9 students are choosing to be like the wise builder and construct foundations that will enable a smooth transition into their GCSE studies next year.

Over the half term Year 9 have been involved in so many activities – the student leaders have established themselves and elevated their presence around the school; students with new tutors have built excellent relationships, and settled so well into their new teaching groups. Students have also received invaluable information from Dorset Police about Road Safety, had an introduction to our Chapel, and have been recognised collectively over 7,000 times for their many virtues!

Uniform and behaviour standards are always a significant focus, and I would like to extend my thanks for your support in helping us achieve high standards. This in turn has allowed for greater focus on their learning and academic progress. Please note that after the October half term break the summer uniform option ends, and we will expect students to comply with the normal school uniform. If you have any queries about the uniform policy it can be found on our website. <https://st-edwards.poole.sch.uk/parents/uniform-policy/>.

As a school we have started to use SIMS to share information between school and home. Please can I ask both yourself and your child to download the SIMS app from the App store, if you have not managed to already, so that you can receive an up-to-date view of attendance, behaviour, and homework. If you are experiencing issues with SIMS please email simsparenthelp@st-edwards.poole.sch.uk to raise your concerns and our IT department will give you support.

I would also like to request your support with regards to your child's attendance. Having high levels of attendance is vital for a child's successful education. Research demonstrates that a decline in attendance of just 10% can lead to students underachieving by 1 GCSE grade, and we know that being in the classroom allows students to receive the best level of education with a specialist teacher. If there are genuine reasons for your child to be absent from school, please call the school absence line to notify the school.

Next half term we are focusing on the virtue of *reflection*. This can sometimes be a challenging virtue to develop, but we hope that the journey that your child is now on with us will help them to develop their own individual spirituality.

In the meantime, I hope you all have a restful half term break, taking time to recharge from a busy first half term. School will return on Monday 31st October, and will be on Week B of the timetable.

Yours faithfully,

Luke Kemish
Key Stage 3
Director of Learning