

January 2024

Welcome to my first newsletter of 2024! Last year, 2023, was on balance, a great year for the St Anne's community, most notably the Ofsted judgement, the best Progress 8 measure ever and improved attendance. I hope that 2024 is another successful year for St Anne's.

Catholic Life of St Anne's

Mr Regan and his team continue to ensure varied opportunities for student formation. I share these below for your perusal.

- Reformed 'ex-gangster' John Pridmore spoke to Yr10 students this month. Students listened intently to John's story of a misspent youth and the transformation in his life at the age of 27 when he experienced God's love and forgiveness for the first time. John is now an international speaker and author and so we were very grateful he made the time to visit St Anne's. His message of God's love and forgiveness was a timely one as we prepare for the season of Lent.
- The final total of the Advent appeal for The Wellspring in Stockport was £750. It was a real team effort across the school with forms using their competitive spirit to come up with new and exciting fund-raising ideas. Mrs Hanley-Parchment and Mrs Bentley will now visit The Wellspring with members of the Caritas Team to learn more about the work of the centre in supporting people who are struggling in life. We are now looking forward to our Lenten appeal which will start soon. We will be rising money for the charity 'Mary' Meals'. Our target will be to raise £1000 during lent. Can I thank the community for their generosity.
- Mr Sharples joined the RE Department in January and will be with us until the summer. He is a very experienced teacher who has taught RE for 29 years, most recently in a Catholic school in Lancashire. The students are responding very well to Mr Sharples and both the RE team and myself are impressed with his knowledge and enthusiasm with the children.
- The *Lighthouse Group* continues to meet every Tuesday after school from 3.15pm – 4.15pm in the school chapel. Each week Beth from the charity 'Christians in schools' and Andy from the Coach House Church lead fun and meaning sessions with Yr7 students. As the evenings get lighter we hope more students will attend this really positive opportunity.

Safeguarding update

- *Audit.* An external safeguarding audit has recently been conducted which reviewed the safeguarding culture at St Annes. I am pleased to report that staff understand and follow our mantra of the 4Rs; Recognise, Respond, Record and Refer and that this mantra is embedded and students feel safe in school. Concerns are dealt with effectively and referrals are made accordingly to support students.
- *Social media.* May I remind you that social media platforms have age restrictions, and it is parental responsibility to ensure platforms are appropriately used. Unfortunately, we are dealing with incidents involving social media than ever and we ask kindly for your support. We continue to have assemblies, PHSE and discussions with students around social media use and staying safe online. Many devices have settings for parental controls which enables you to track and monitor what sites are being used. For more information you can visit: <https://saferinternet.org.uk/online-issue/parental-controls>
- *Safer Internet Day 2024.* This will take place on the 6th of February 2024, with celebrations and learning based around the theme '*Inspiring change? Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online*'. Safer Internet Day falls in Mental Health week [5th-9th February] and research shows the negative impact social media and the internet can have on young people. Please monitor your child's internet use and contact school if you feel you'd like further advice and support. You can also visit: <https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers> for information.

Yr11 update

Following on from the letter I sent in early January, I reiterate key messages.

- *Assemblies:* Time really is of the essence now as the GCSE exams are fast approaching. I delivered an assembly early in January where I outlined the importance of attendance, having a positive attitude, the importance of managing stress and that there is 'no substitute for hard work'.
- *Intervention.* Period 6, after the school day, continues to take place for Yr11 students to support their learning. Spanish intervention is arranged by Senorita Todd at various times, and these will be communicated with students during lessons. Art intervention is arranged individually with Mr Wroe on various evenings with the children.
 - **Week A:** Monday – Maths, Wednesday – RE and Thursday – Science
 - **Week B:** Monday – English, Wednesday - History or Geography and Thursday - Option subjects
- *Half term intervention.* The following table is extra intervention during the half term break. I ask that parents support us in ensuring your child attends if applicable.

Date	Subject	Times
Monday 12 th February	Maths	9am - 11.30am
Monday 12 th February	Art	11.30am- 2pm
Tuesday 13 th February	Drama	9am - 12.30am
Tuesday 13 th February	Science	9am - 11.30am
Tuesday 13 th February	Art	11.30am- 2pm

- *Final key messages presentation.* On **Thursday 21st March** I ask that all parents of Yr11 attend a final presentation followed by a Q&A session. This will be the last opportunity prior to the exams to hear about support for your child.
- *Prom:* I am delighted to say that Prom is confirmed for **Thursday 4th July 2024**. Details are to be finalised and students/parents will be informed in due course. The estimated cost is £40 and will include room hire, welcome drink, red carpet, photobooths, food and a DJ. As repeatedly said, this is by invite only and not an entitlement: behaviour, attendance and punctuality are requirements to receive an invitation.
- Yr11 Creative students are in full swing for their practical exams. The focus for the Art exam is either grotesque or natural beauty for their project. Drama student's final performance exam is on 7th March and rehearsals are well underway, along with line learning. Thanks to all the parents who are learning these lines along with their child! The music performance exams will take place just before Easter and again pupils are practising regularly to ensure they reach their full potential in this element.

Finally, **attendance of Yr11 students**. Attendance is both a local and national issue. Apart from the obvious safeguarding issues, putting it simply, if your child is not in school then they are NOT learning. In the end, that means that they will not achieve their potential in their forthcoming GCSE exams. If I take a random day of Yr11 attendance, 19th January, it showed that attendance of Yr11 was 86.9%. This equates to 16 Yr11 students not being in school. These students will have gaps in their learning and are unlikely to catch-up on the missed work. Furthermore, erratic attendance develops poor habits for the future work of work. For avoidance of doubt, your child needs to be attending every day in the next few months to have the best opportunity to

achieve. I ask that parents do everything to ensure that your child is in school, which is the safest place to be, learning for their futures.

Spotlight on Yr9 [Note the dates below]

Yr9 is a crucial year for students and every lesson sets the foundation and prepares them for Key Stage 4. Again, I stress that good attendance is imperative to achieving their potential, and Mr Donnelly and Mrs Kouser are working hard to ensure each student reaches the **school target of 97%**. Mr Donnelly has been impressed with the attitude and behaviour of Yr9 and will be robust in his approach to ensure high standards and expectations are the norm. There are many Extra-Curricular activities for Yr9 including Art club, Duke of Edinburgh and a variety of PE activities. Taking part in these show commitment, engagement and a sense of belonging to our community and Mr Donnelly has encouraged students in Yr9 to participate in at least one extra-curricular activity. Students who participate have the opportunity to develop and build character which support future college and job applications.

- **Yr9 Parents' Evening** will take place on **Thursday 21st March** from **4pm – 7pm**. On the evening you will hear from the subject teachers but also will be advised on options choices that Yr9 will be making soon.
- **Yr9 Options Evening** will take place on **Tuesday 26th March** from **6pm- 7pm**. This is an excellent an opportunity for you to listen to Mr Ostmeier explain the process and how you can support your child.

I ask that Yr9 parents make every effort to attend both of these where much information will be shared.

Staff profile

This half term we have moved from Head of Houses to Heads of Year. Therefore, it is appropriate to 'profile' each of these HOY.

- *Mr Murphy, Head of Yr10/11.* I have worked at St. Anne's since January 2012, and I can honestly say I am proud to be part of this community. We are finally on the right path to becoming an outstanding school. As HOY my primary objective is ensuring students feel supported, safe and receive a quality education. I studied Law, Business and Sport at college, before studying Quantity Surveying at University. After leaving university, I travelled to the U.A.E. and upon returning to the UK, I began my Journey at St. Anne's. I started as a Teaching Assistant, before becoming a cover supervisor and then becoming a HOY. My hobbies include football, cooking and spending time with my little boy. I am a proud Manchester United fan and I have represented football clubs at county level and played for Blackburn Rovers until the age of 14. I have also represented Lancashire in senior Gaelic football and have won all Britain medals. I am currently spending my spare time looking after my little boy, walking my dog and preparing for my wedding in 2025! My advice to any student is to try your best to increase your life opportunities.
- *Miss Baird, Head of Yrs7/8.* I grew up in Peterborough and always knew I wanted my career to centre around helping others. I studied Politics at the University of East Anglia and, after returning to Peterborough, spent much of my spare time volunteering with local charitable organisations doing youth work. I found that I really enjoyed working with young people and went on to complete a youth and community work degree. Following this I worked as a youth worker and crisis manager for 8 years in South-East London. Following Covid, I made the decision to move closer to family in Manchester and came to work at St Anne's as a HOY, and then joined ELT in September 2022. I have been at St Anne's for two and a half years and have really enjoyed being able to support the students with their pastoral needs and help make school a happy, safe place for them. I am passionate about looking after students' pastoral needs to support them in being able to attend school regularly and engage in their learning so that they are able to achieve their best possible GCSE grades and have lots of choice as to their next steps after St Anne's. In my free time I enjoy water skiing, reading, and spending time with friends and family.
- *Mr Donnelly, Head of Yr9.* I recently profiled Mr Donnelly in a previous newsletter. As our Music Teacher, Mr Donnelly is committed to securing success and improvement for this year group. He will be focussed

on ensuring high quality education and high standards for all students. Being a teaching HOY is a challenging yet rewarding role in school. I wish Mr Donnelly the best success in his new role.

Personal Development

- *Next stages.* In December we received great news from our Education and Careers Advice Worker that all our 2023 Yr11 students have secured a place in college, apprenticeship or training since leaving St Anne's. This shows that our careers education, support and guidance is fit for purpose as our students were all equipped for the next stages of their education or work.
- *Sports Leader applications.* These were of a fantastic standard and over 30 students applied via a formal letter outlining their suitability for the role. It was incredibly difficult to choose, but students who highlighted their passion for sport and St Anne's really stood out. Successful students will be awarded badges in upcoming assemblies.
- *Introducing our new literacy club.* This term, a group of Yr10s will take part in an English tutorial programme run by the Brilliant Club. The programme is called 'Make Your Mark' and is designed to provide focused tutoring for the English curriculum and boost attainment at GCSE. Good luck to all those concerned.
- *PE update.* Various table tennis teams competed at St James's recently. The students were impressed by the quality of the opposition but are keen to improve their skills and recently we have bought eight brand-new high-quality tables for students to practice. The girls' extra-curricular numbers have continued to increase, and I hope this is a trend that will continue to grow! Finally, our sports hall looks fantastic after its refurbishment with new equipment and basketball nets giving the sports hall a rejuvenation. Mr Martin, Head of PE, was delighted with the work. Finally, the boy & girls athletic squads competed recently in the Stockport School's indoor competition with the girls securing third place, an outstanding achievement demonstrating how much they have improved and bonded as a team. Well done!
- Our *PSHE lessons* have changed topic this term with a focus on RSHE and following the Ten-Ten curriculum. This curriculum helps us to educate students on relationships that are based on the Catholic faith. We are also revisiting the 9 protected characteristic and British Values to ensure students have excellent knowledge of these and how we promote them at St Anne's.
- *Student Council Elections.* We elected our new Student Council this month with over 25 students putting themselves forward. Each student gave a manifesto speech to their year group in assembly before the voting commenced and students decided who they wanted to represent them. The standard was incredibly high, and it was obvious effort and thought went into the speeches. Early impact of the student council is improving the rewards system, which will come into effect soon and requesting more extra-curricular clubs, some of which have already begun!
- Our *extra-curricular programme* has over 35 different activities providing students with great opportunities including local and national competitions, art exhibitions, performances in prestigious venues as well as learning new skills. These promote social interaction, improve mental health and create a sense of belonging to St Anne's.
- Our *business breakfasts* continue. This month's visitor is from CGI Technology, who will speak to students about careers in this sector who work with companies internationally creating CGI electronic solutions from the seabed to space. The February breakfast is already booked, with an A&E doctor.
- We are fortunate to have Youth Workers from *R-Time* joining us once a week at lunchtime to speak to students, referee football matches and build relationships. The two workers have a great knowledge of youth activities in the area and are raising awareness locally.

- We have partnered with *Audacious Church Youth* to support a Mentoring Programme. Students have been referred by their HOY for these sessions which focus on building self-esteem, supporting mental health and other areas where support may be needed. We are thrilled with this partnership and there has already been impact on the students they have been working with.
- There are lots of activities planned for *Children's Mental Health Week* in February including yoga during form, mentoring programmes, our mental health ambassadors will be delivering assemblies alongside the charity, Kooth.
- Our *raising aspirations* focus continues with trips to Salford University for our linguists, Manchester University for our Business Studies students and a day working as a criminal lawyer at JMW law for those interested in the legal sector.
- *SACRED day* is taking place on 9th February, and as usual, there are a range of exciting enrichment opportunities including lessons from the police, workshops about diversity, a session looking at tax and pensions with the Money Charity, creating Lego robotics with Computer Xplorers, looking at marketing to improve the brand BooHoo, and creating a fair-trade chocolate brand which obviously will involve some chocolate tasting! My thanks to Mrs Simmons for organising and co-ordinating these brilliant opportunities.

Head Boy and Head Girl

Following on from interviewing Yr10 for prefects, Ms Sutcliffe and I interviewed for Head Boy and Head Girl. It was great to hear the students express themselves, their aspirations for their futures and their desire to ensure that St Anne's is an outstanding place for learning. The Head Boy, Will Barlas, said *"It is an honour to represent St Annes in this role and over the next year I look forward to serving with knowledge, service and integrity to support St Anne's be the best school it possibly can be"*. Erin McLaughlin, our new Head Girl, was equally proud and enthusiastic saying that she would *"like to see the school focus more on disabilities, introducing British Sign Language lessons and raising money for disability charities"*. I look forward to working with all the prefects to ensure that they contribute positively to the ongoing journey of becoming outstanding.

Celebrating our great children

As I have repeatedly said, St Anne's has many children with extraordinary talents. One student with such a talent is Ava Barton. She has started her 10th year at *Jason Bairds Black Belt Academy* and is now a third Dan Black Belt. This is an incredible achievement and shows dedication and commitment of the highest order. It has also come with its struggles and failures. However, Ava, kept her belief and has achieved these goals because of this self-confidence. At the academy she has completed mental and physical challenges to gain the belts. This has allowed Ava to gain teamwork skills, build resilience and have a positive attitude to achieving goals and to never give up. As well as fighting and training, Ava also coaches others to help them achieve their best and never give up. Ava is currently a British Champion from her last competition and this has allowed her compete in Greece later this year. Well done Ava and good luck. Watch this space!

A lovely comment...

I will finish my January newsletter with a comment from the public. This was from someone who watched her child play basketball using our vastly improved sports hall. The comment said, *"I visited your school with my daughter's basketball team last weekend and I loved your display on Literacy and Sport in the corridor - I am going to beg some space on the noticeboards in our school to do the same. Thank you for the inspiration"*.

It was pleasing to read this and for an external guest to recognise and acknowledge the improvement of the St Anne's environment!

As always, thanks for your support.

Mr Logue
Executive Headteacher