

October 2023

Dear parents/carers

Welcome to my third newsletter of the year. Again, I am delighted that we are continuing to provide a holistic education for our great children.

Catholic Life of the school update

Mr Regan and his team continue to ensure formation opportunities for our students.

- The *Yr7 Welcome Mass* was celebrated on Friday 13th of October at 2.15pm by Fr Damien from St Joseph's, Reddish. Students sang a new school hymn '*My Lighthouse*' with great energy! Mrs Hanley Parchment led the team of Yr7 readers who proclaimed the Word and lead prayers of intercession. Thank you to the few parents that came to celebrate the Mass with us.
- The RE Department celebrated *Black History Month* by leading whole school assemblies, highlighting the achievements and contribution of Black people throughout history. This links with our **SACRED** value of *Equality* which is an important value of our school community.
- At the start of the new academic year, we welcome a number of new faces from all year groups to the **Caritas Ambassador** Team. The New Team is excited for our first campaign which is to raise the profile and funds for a charity to celebrate Black History Month.
- Our new daily mediation is now taking place in our School Chapel. Week by week more students are attending this popular new time of prayer. It gives form groups a chance to visit the school chapel, reflect and pray in a calm and peaceful environment. Students are enjoying having this opportunity to mediate and centre themselves at the beginning of the day.
- The Yr7 retreat days have been a massive **success**. These are about 'taking time-out' to reflect on what it means to be part of St Anne's. Feedback from the facilitators of the retreats reflected their huge success. Dave Fitton from '*Good News Ministries*' said the students "*all proved themselves to be excellent ambassadors for St Annes and I am very glad to have met them*" and Andy Jackson stated "*The teachers and students have been a credit to the school in both their determination and involvement with retreat, but also with their general attitude towards helping each other*". I hope that parents are as proud of these comments as I am! These comments merely reflect that St Anne's SACRED values! A massive thanks to Mr Regan for organising these. Watch this space for further retreats.

Staying safe on-line

Staff and students have been updating their knowledge about how to stay safe online. This will continue throughout the year in Computing lessons. E-Safety is about protecting yourself when using technology, and we believe that students are able to do this best when they understand the how the technology works. At the start of the year students in all years are reminded about how to stay safe online and how to report any concerns they have. Our Computer Science curriculum promotes e-Safety across both Key Stages. Yr7 learn how we program robust computer programs that keep data safe. Yr8 learn about networks and consider the impact technology is having on our society. Yr9 learn how technology is used to promote positive messages and engage people to support a cause, as well as the need to conduct oneself as a Digital Citizen who is aware of the impact their online activity has on their future prospects and personal well-being.

Attendance

I can't stress enough the importance of school attendance. It is crucial that your child attends to fulfil their potential. At present too many children are not attending school regularly and this will have a detrimental

on both their academic achievement and their personal and social development. Students should make the effort to be in school every day. We reward good attendance by recognising those with excellent attendance in our celebration assemblies. All students with 100% attendance this half term will be rewarded with a breakfast. If attendance falls below 97% you will receive an initial letter of concern asking you to contact us to discuss your child's attendance. If a child's attendance continues to drop, parents will receive staged letters and ultimately an Educational Penalty Notice (EPN) issuing a fine for continued poor attendance. Parents who chose to take their child on holiday during term time will be issued with an EPN on their return from holiday. Please contact the pastoral team if you have any concerns about your child's attendance.

Yr7 Mental Health provision

This term all Yr7 students have completed a workshop on '5 Ways to Wellbeing', which taught them how to support ongoing positive mental health. This was delivered by the MHST team who provide external expertise to the St Anne's community. They commented that their behaviour was exceptional and how much they had engaged with the workshops. We are working with the MHST team to provide workshops on managing exam stress as well as referring students for support for low mood and anxiety at an early stage.

Open Evening

Our Open Evening was the busiest one for many years and this reflects the confidence of the local community. It provided an opportunity to showcase this proud and confident community. As Executive Headteacher I was really impressed with both students and staff who worked seamlessly together to create an enjoyable evening for all. I loved the buzz around the school and, without exception, all prospective parents I spoke too were positive about the evening. Prior to the evening I visited St Winifred's, St Mary's and St Joseph's to speak to Yr5 and Yr6 students and I was warmly welcomed to those schools. I seek to engage further with these primary schools to ensure a joined up 4-16 year old catholic education.

Young Carers

The national statistic shows that **1 in every 12 young people** are 'Young Carers'. Young Carers in Stockport have around **380** Young Carers active in their service at present. This year young carers have added to the school census in England for the first time. It's really important that school know if your child is a Young Carer, or you believe that they might qualify as one. This is so school can **recognise and support** them. Young Carers will be doing assemblies for all year groups this year to encourage those to seek support and to raise awareness. Click this link for more information. <https://www.signpostforcarers.org.uk>

Teaching & Learning update

Term 1 foci for teaching and learning has been to integrate the 'WalkThur' guides across the whole school. The aim of this is to make teaching consistently outstanding, linked to our vision of being "outstanding in everything we do". The foci this half term has been positive relationships, establishing expectations, positive framing and rehearsing routines within the classroom. These techniques are the pre-requisite of effective teaching and learning. Embedding these techniques will improve the outcomes and results of students within St Anne's and prepare them for post-16. **Additionally**, to support teaching and learning we use a number of online platforms including sparx, gcsepod and classcharts.

We have also implemented the following homework timetable. Please ensure that your child completes all work set as this consolidates their learning in school.

Week A				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
English	Technology	Science	PE	Creative Arts
Week B				

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Maths	RE	MFL	Humanities	

Reading Groups

At St Anne's we understand that the ability to read is fundamental to accessing the academic knowledge rich curriculum that we provide. 50 students are in these reading groups. Below is a synopsis of these groups.

- Mrs. Sutcliffe, Head of School, is reading '*Lord of the Flies*' to a fantastic group of Yr9 students. The challenging vocabulary in this text will deepen their knowledge of tier 2 words.
- Mr Osteimer, Deputy Headteacher, is reading '*The Dark Lady by Akala*'. It follows the life of Henry, a young pickpocket, who also happens to be magic. Set in the Elizabethan era, students enjoy learning about sights and smells of London during that time.
- Mrs Simmons is reading 'Ghost Boy' with Yr7 students. The aim of this is to develop pupils' vocabulary and ability to follow a longer novel.
- Miss Rees is reading '*Thief*' to a small group of Yr7. The book has got them gripped and already the group are able to discuss the story line between themselves and provide comprehension answers to questions. Their understanding on some more complex words is also developing.
- Mr. Byrne is reading '*A Jigsaw Of Fire And Stars*' with his Yr9 group. Today, they learnt the Tier 2 words '*improvise*' and '*jubilant*' and were able to accurately embed these into a written sentence!
- Miss Baird is reading '*Black Flamingo*' with Yr10. The students are exploring themes around identity and are engaging brilliantly with the group.

The Learning Support Assistants and our librarian will be delivering targeted interventions including phonics and reading comprehension throughout the week. Additionally, literacy lessons take place once a fortnight as part of the English curriculum.

Update on students' attitudes

The behaviour and attitudes of our wonderful students ensures that at St Anne's they continue to learn. Yr11s are working exceptionally hard in Period 6 intervention each day and are being rewarded with '*Jump The Queue*' passes. Additionally, Yr11 Prefects have taken on lunch duties in the canteen to support duty staff. This builds their confidence and leadership skills! Mr Byrne is reviewing our *SACRED Behaviours* to ensure behaviour is at least good. I am particularly proud that student-teacher relationships have never been so strong. Relationships are rooted in our SACRED values. Finally, the conduct of all student helpers at the recent Open Evening was uplifting for the whole school, as well as all of the potential new families we hope to welcome in September 24 – a real credit to the St Anne's community!

Parental Evenings

Over the past few weeks, we have engaged parents with several parental information evenings that are designed to impart pertinent information to each year group. In the Yr11 presentation there was a focus on revision and the importance of working hard both at home and school. Yr7 focused on introducing parents to the school, reminding them of our core values and high expectations. Parents were also signposted to our curriculum documentation and had key dates highlighted to them. Yr10, led by Ms Sutcliffe, focused on the expectations of GCSEs and how St Anne's and parents can work together to ensure the children achieve their potential. In all the parental evenings, high expectations, high standards and working together were the key messages. Yr8 and Yr9 parental evenings will take place next half term; see below for the dates. These were **much better** attended than in previous years. It is important that we work together to ensure that your child achieve their potential. Thanks to the parents who attended.

Staff profiles

In this newsletter I have the profile of *Miss Rees*, our Designated Safeguarding Lead, and *Mrs Potts*, our Higher-Level Teaching Assistant.

- *Miss Rees*: I was born in Oxford, growing up with 107 foster brothers and sisters. My Mum fostered since I was 3 and I loved every second of it! I would say that this is the reason I passionately do what I do today. I studied Police and Criminal Investigation at the University of Central Lancashire, specialising in Child Protection. I managed a nursery in Hazel Grove, but then I got a job as a behaviour mentor in a high school in Wigan. It was there I found that working in a high school was my vocation. St Annes' is my third high school, having been head of year in my previous school. I am now working as St Anne's Safeguarding Lead and I am part of the extended leadership team. I absolutely love the challenges and no two days are the same. I know my job makes a difference to those students who need extra support, boundaries and care. I feel very lucky to do and enjoy the job I have. Finally, I love to spend time travelling, exploring new countries, eating their cuisine and spending weekends with my nearly 3 year old son, and on long dog walks with my cocker spaniel.
- *Jane Potts*: I am a member of the SEND Department supporting students with a variety of special educational needs. I am passionate in ensuring SEND students at St Anne's are given the support and opportunities needed for them to reach their full potential. I believe this is best achieved through a 'holistic' approach based around strong support, targeted interventions and outstanding teaching. I have worked within SEND for 15 years and have extensive knowledge of SEND strategies. I am pleased to have joined St Anne's as they continue on their journey from being a good school towards becoming an outstanding school. My career in schools began after I had my children and went back to work after previous working for Barclays Bank. It was a revelation to have a job that I truly loved, working with high school students. As a mother and hopefully soon to be grandmother I will always consider how I would like to have had my own children educated and would not expect anything less for other students.

Yr11 update

- *Parents evening*. This is arguably the most important parents' evening where teachers will update you on your child's progress. This is on **Thursday 9th November, 4pm to 7pm**. Reports will be sent out the week before. It is vital parents attend to discuss their child's progress.
- *Academic mentoring*: 30 Yr11 students have been assigned a mentor to support them in preparation for their GCSE's. Staff have volunteered their own time to support these students in order to help them make outstanding progress. They will have weekly meetings to set targets, monitor engagement in intervention sessions and monitor attendance. Students and staff are looking forward to working together to ensure it is a successful year for our students!
- *Yr11 Drama exam*: The Yr11 Drama GCSE class performed their devised pieces on 6th October. This was a superb evening with parents and students supporting the performances. Our drama students worked incredibly hard to create theatre using a wide range of techniques and showcasing various practitioners.
- *Period 6*. Yr11 students continue to attend period 6 intervention in high numbers. In recent feedback students said they felt more confident as a result of going to intervention and find the sessions useful. Staff have commented on how impressed they have been with the attitude and application of students. This hard work will be highly beneficial as they work towards their mock exams in November/December. I ask parents to support this initiative, it can only benefit your child.
- *Yr11 Mocks*: These take place between **27th of November and 8th of December**. Students with access arrangements will sit their exams in an alternative venue within school. Mock exam timetables will be available immediately after half term so students can plan their revision. These exams mirror the final

GCSE exams and give a good indication of how successful students will be in their final exams. Please ensure your child has a revision plan in place so they have the best chance of being successful.

- *Prom.* The preparations for the end of year Prom to celebrate 5 years at St Anne's is underway. However, can I remind parents that this is by invitation only and students need to attend school and have a positive attitude to their learning. Thus far, all Yr11 students have retained their right to attend the Prom which is very reassuring and a reflection on their positive attitudes.

Curriculum. Spotlight on Science

There is an exciting buzz around the Science department since the appointment of a new and experienced subject leader, Mrs Rogerson. Below is an overview of activity in the department.

- ✓ At KS3, Yr7 are currently studying Chemistry and Particles, Yr8 have been learning about Waves and Pressure and Yr9 have been learning about Cell Biology.
- ✓ At KS4, Yr10 are learning about Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table and Yr11 are studying Bioenergetics and Chemical Change. Practical work has enriched the taught curriculum with an abundance of practical work.
- ✓ To support student progress Science staff have undertaken external CPD, attending Physics teaching courses delivered by the Ogden Trust on Waves and Electricity. This professional development will continue throughout the year.
- ✓ All staff have been running intervention sessions for Yr11 students after school each Thursday Week A and some lunchtimes. I ask that parents support this.
- ✓ A Science club occurs every Monday after school; the theme this half term is 'forensics' where students have using scientific knowledge to solve a murder by becoming Scene of Crime Officer undertaking a range of forensic techniques such as fingerprinting and chromatography. After half term the focus of will move to engineering and will encompass activities such as bridge building.
- ✓ The department are also liaising with the '*Industrial Cadets Bronze Project*' in order to complete a larger project with themselves as part of Science club.
- ✓ Mr Swift has been organising activities for British Science week already booking a flash bang event and working on a visit to Chester Zoo.
- ✓ WildED is a charity based working group who will visit St Anne's next half term working with Yr9 to raise awareness for conservation.
- ✓ Science taster days have been planned with two 2 university visits with one to Salford university in January and one in April to the University of Manchester.
- ✓ Mrs Rogerson has booked a Minorities in STEM workshop for Yr10 delivered by the Physics outreach team at the University of Manchester on the 29th of November and is also arranging for a STEM speaker for International Women's day.

Finally, I appointed an experienced Science teacher yesterday. The Science department reflects the transformation of St Anne's at departmental level. The Science department now consists of a new Head of Subject, a new Lead practitioner, a new second in department, a new ECT and the appointment of an experienced new teacher to ensure that the Science department is now fully staffed with at least 'good' teachers and leaders. I hope that you agree that this is an exciting time to be a student studying Science at St Anne's!

PE department update

- The Yr10/11 girl's football team played Parrswood, a large school with almost triple the numbers on roll, in the Greater Manchester Cup. The girls were fantastic and played with skill and St Anne's spirit throughout, winning the game 2-1 after goals from Ruby Moore and Lily McEleney. In the next round they will face either Tottington or Moorside.
- Lola Sheehan qualified for the Greater Manchester XC Championships after a great run at the regional competition at Hazel Grove School. Well done Lola!

- Ava Joyce winning the World Kick Boxing Championships winning belts in the 13/14 division. A massive personal achievement!
- Shay Dennehy and Ruari Kavannah winning the -15 Gaelic Football Championship played at St Bedian's last weekend. Well done lads, a sport close to my heart!
- The Yr8 football team beating Reddish Vale 5-2 with goals from Wilsyn Sprigg, Josh Quansah, Bryan Lapoza and Josh Robertson - this was their first ever win!!

A massive well done to all the above. The PE staff and St Anne's are right behind you!

Personal Development updates

- *Poetry:* Yr7 have been writing poems to celebrate *National Poetry Day*. They have written poems that reflect something about themselves, and they are so honest and wonderful! The poems will be sent forward for a national competition and some students performed their poems at the Yr7 Proud evening.
- *Black History month:* We celebrated Black History Month in October through literacy activities. In form we read an article about inspiring black figures with great discussion and debate. In the library, we are promoting the work of black authors Yr7 – Yr10 will take part in Drop Everything and Read to celebrate a diverse range of literature by black authors.
- *Yr7 concert:* Last night was our first Yr7 'Proud' Event. Students sang a variety of songs including our school song 'Our Lighthouse' and the title song 'Proud' by Heather Small. Yr7 students work was showcased from all subject areas, and it was a lovely celebration of all they have achieved in the past 7 weeks. Mr Donnelly, who organised the event with Mrs Simmons, was extremely proud of the student's maturity, conduct and participation.
- *SACRED day:* Our SACRED Day was a resounding success. The Careers fair with over 40 employers and providers was visited by pupils in Yrs9-11. An aim of this was to raise aspirations of our children. The school was filled with workshops from Apprenticeship providers, Barclays, Odd Arts Theatre company, Drums of the World and Coding for Race Cars. There was a performance for Yr8 and Yr10 by local singer Bronnie, who highlighted the importance of mental health. It was a great day developing learning and enriching our PHSE curriculum and we know the lessons learnt today will have a huge impact on our great children.

Improving the facilities at St Anne's continues

- *Sports Hall:* Our renovation starts in November and will look spectacular when complete. We already have several basketball clubs asking to make St Anne's their home ground. As well as being a huge upgrade for our students and local community it will bring in additional revenue to the PE department which will, in turn, allow us to make additional upgrades to benefit your children's education.
- *IT infrastructure:* Our procurement exercises have started to replace key parts of our IT facilities to improve teaching and learning, including interactive screens, data cabling and upgrading our broadband speed tenfold.

General updates

- *Heads of Year [HOY].* After half term we will be implementing a HOY pastoral system. Although the house system will still be in operation, eg, for sports day, the day-to-day pastoral needs will now be monitored by a HOY. Assemblies will take place in year groups and students have been instructed where to go. Miss Baird will be HOY7 and HOY8, Miss Millward will be HOY9 and HOY10 and Mr Murphy will be HOY11.

- *Revamped St Anne's website.* Mrs McGloin continues to work on the work she started over the summer reinvigorating the website so that it now reflects the high standards expected at St Anne's. Our website includes key dates, school policies and important curriculum information for parents. You will see that we captured students' experiences of learning and extra-curricular activities to give you a glimpse into an average day in our school. We are grateful to receive feedback and encourage you to do so via admin@stannescrcvoluntaryacademy.com. We also invite you to follow us on our Facebook and Twitter social media accounts for daily updates about the St Anne's community.
- *Upcoming Parental information evenings.* Yr9 is on **Thursday 2nd November at 6pm**, will be led by Mr Ostmeier. The evening will be an opportunity for parents to understand our expectations as well as information about the options process. Yr8 is on **Thursday 16th November** and will be led by Miss Baird. Parents and carers will have the opportunity to understand our expectations and values, particularly concerning behaviour and attendance. I ask that parents attend the appropriate evening as working together is the best way to ensure your child gets at least a good education.

Finally...

This half term has been a really great start to the academic year as we continue to build upon and consolidate the **good** Ofsted judgement we received in June. I am proud that the St Anne's community, both students and staff, have risen to the challenge of meeting our vision which is to be '*outstanding in all we do*'!

As always, your support is very much appreciated.

Mr Logue
Executive Headteacher