



October 2022

Dear parents/carers

A very warm welcome to my October newsletter that gives a flavour of life at St Anne's. As a catholic school it is important to both recognise and celebrate the many positive aspects of St Anne's. I hope that you enjoy reading this letter.

Catholicity

This month has been another busy month for Mr Regan and his RE team. The Yr7 Welcome Mass was celebrated on Friday 14th of October by Fr John from St Joseph's Reddish. Singing was led by the music department and readings and prayers of intercession were read by Yr7 members of our GIFT Team. The RE department is celebrating Black History Month through inspirational figures who have put faith into action such as Muhammad Ali, Desmond Tutu, and Rose Hudson-Wilkin. Students have been learning about how faith can sometimes cause opportunities in our lives but more importantly how it is a driver for success and support. Weekly Friday meditation is up and running, with all Yr7 and the majority of Yr8 forms participating, allowing students a chance to visit the school chapel, reflect and pray in a calm and peaceful environment. Looking forward, Fr John will be in school on Thursday 3rd November to run sessions with Yr7 classes where they will hear about the story of his vocation, his work as a parish priest and his work as a chaplain in the RAF. They will then ask Fr John questions they have prepared in a '*grill the priest*' Q&A session.

Caritas Team update

After our summer appeal to raise donations for 'The Wellspring' in Stockport, three of our Caritas Ambassadors got the opportunity to visit the centre and see it in 'action'. The students received a tour of the centre seeing the facilities and services they offer. Now the Advent appeal has begun, we are collecting shoeboxes as the Caritas Ambassadors agreed they would also like to partner with The Wellspring to create Christmas necessity boxes for the homeless of Stockport.

Safeguarding update

- ✓ Recently we have signed up to *The Safeguarding Network*, allowing us to access training opportunities and a wide range of the latest safeguarding resources. This is to strengthen our safeguarding culture
- ✓ All staff have completed their safeguarding quiz [Keeping Children Safe in Education] and all Governors have all attended their annual safeguarding training
- ✓ Our online portal '*Tell Us*' continues to be used across all year groups, allowing pupils to express their concerns confidentially for staff to address and act accordingly

Update on staffing

Further to staffing updates in my September newsletter, I would like to share that there have been further staffing appointments at St Anne's and who will be starting the school in January 2023. I know you will give them all a very warm St Anne's welcome and that they will quickly become part of our team. Our new teachers are Mrs McGloin [Head of Creative Technology], Mr Swift [Lead Practitioner in Science and part of our Extended Leadership Team] Miss Murphy [Maths with a leadership responsibility] and Miss Zakaraite [Spanish]. These new staff will further strengthen a dedicated teaching staff who are united in ensuring your child gets a great education!



Staff Profiles

In this newsletter I include a staffing profile of a member of support staff and a teacher for your perusal. I hope you enjoy reading them.

- ✓ *Mrs McQuillan: Admin Officer/Receptionist.* I am delighted to be celebrating 10 years of being part of the St Anne's family. My job entails reception, admin duties, dealing with visitors, parents and students on a day-to-day basis. I really enjoy my job and I have seen many changes over the years. Hand on heart I can see improvements and the atmosphere around school is much improved, the students are happy and are definitely learning more.
- ✓ *Miss Riley: Head of Geography.* I started at St Anne's in January this year and it's my absolute privilege to serve the students of St. Anne's. The department has seen massive improvements, with a big increase in students opting to take GCSE geography and the curriculum has been completely overhauled with 'real time' examples in lessons such as Hurricane Ian. We have some exciting trips planned for later in the year, so the students can get out and witness our amazing landscapes at first-hand. I'm incredibly passionate about my subject and I often share my 'travel tales'. I'm looking forward to ensuring that Geography continues to deliver a great education!

T&L updates

- This first half term *lesson visits* showed many improvements and strengths in teaching across the school. Subject knowledge and lesson delivery is good across departments and is supporting students in understanding key concepts. Teachers were observed giving clear instructions to support students' understanding. Excellent visual resources were seen in many lessons, especially Geography, History, RE and Art. Our improved GCSE outcomes in the recent exams are testament to the quality of teaching in the classroom. I am very proud of our teachers who are working tirelessly to ensure your children get at least a good education. Our teaching staff will be strengthened further with more new appointments starting January.
- *SEND updates:* GCSE outcomes in 2022 for SEND students improved significantly when compared to 2019. For example, the percentage achieving grade 4 in both Eng/Maths increased from 23.5% to 50% and grade 5 passes in both Eng/Maths from 7.7% to 37.5%. Undoubtedly, this is a direct result of higher expectations and better teaching. Indeed, in a recent school visit by the SENDCO Lead at Stockport Local Authority, she commented "*so pleased to hear how far the school has come in the last 12 months (and GCSE results have improved as well I see)*"! This external validation is always great to hear. Our SENDCO, Miss Morgan is focused on ensuring that our SEND provision, including outcomes, is at least good.

Update on Parental Information Evenings

- ✓ *Yr11 Parental Evening, Thurs 6th Oct:* I am pleased to report that this was well attended, reflecting the fact that there is a growing partnership between parents and school. Topics covered included, revision techniques, dealing with stress and expectations at St Anne's. Can I personally thank parents [and students] who listened intently to the key messages. Working together is the only way forward.
- ✓ *Yr10 Parental Evening, Thurs 20th Oct:* Parents and students attended well and received key information regarding the KS4 course structure with a focus on the importance of establishing home learning habits and routines as early as possible. Parents were introduced to the St Anne's



Independent Learning Strategies and Knowledge Organisers and trialled ways that they can engage with these to support their child's revision.

Parents/carers and supporting the St Anne's community

Overall, I am increasingly pleased that more parents are actively supporting the school. This can be seen in numerous ways, for example better attendance at parents' evenings or less complaints [formal and informal]. This is great news, and your children will benefit from this strong partnership. However, I know, and accept, that there is a long way to go but the Leadership of the school are determined to overcome all barriers to making St Anne's a place we can all be proud of. Remember that you, **parents and carers**, are a key part of the St Anne's community and although I don't ask, nor expect, you to agree with everything that we do, I do ask that you support our rules and expectations. This is YOUR school, and you should be proud of it. Yes, I agree it is not perfect [*no school is*] but working together is the only way that we can achieve our vision, which is to make St Anne's a **great caring catholic community** where all stakeholders, students, staff, parents and governors are proud to call 'St Anne's 'our school'.

Other parental evenings will take place on the following evenings: Yr9: 17th November, Yr8: 24th November and Yr7 on 1st December. Please make every effort to attend these meetings. I also ask that if you have an issue, please make an appointment to meet me at my next Headteachers surgery which will be on **Tuesday 22nd November** between 7.00am and 3.30pm.

Black History Month

October is Black History Month and the focus this year is '*Action not Words*'. At St Anne's lessons focused on the many incredible and influential black people who contributed to the advancement of the subjects. For example, on Monday 10th October, over 100 students took part in a lecture from Professor David Olusoga, about the influence and importance of black people in our nation's history. In the afternoon of Tuesday 11th October, Odd Arts Theatre group performed a play entitled 'Going Home' which focused on the impact of racism in society and how one comment or idea can spread hate. It was an excellent performance enjoyed by all. During PSHE the Big Hair Assembly was broadcast in school on Monday 17th October, the drama studio was standing room only to celebrate Afro Hair and how amazing it is.

Careers update

At St Anne's we aim to provide independent and impartial careers advice. Yr11 have had a presentation each week from a range of college providers to prepare them for their 'next steps' post-16. We will be having a *careers fair* for students in Yrs9, Yr10 and Yr11 on November 30th followed by a mock interview for Yr11 students. Watch this space as more information will be sent closer the time. If you are part of a business that wishes to support our careers fair or the mock interview process please contact Mrs Simmons, our lead on careers.

Attendance and achievement

At St Anne's we promote high levels of attendance as we know that there is a **strong correlation** between good attendance and good GCSE outcomes. As an example of this, I will show real outcomes of 2022 GCSE results. Students that had attendance of over 95% had an average progress score of +0.63. This is excellent and well above the National Average. Contrast this with students with attendance below 90% who had an average progress score of -0.65. This is poor and will seriously hinder their options post-16. This difference



in attainment is stark! The key message is that good attendance equates to good GCSE outcomes. Furthermore, good attendance ensures your child is safe and socially interacting with their peers.

Changing the school day

Last year the government announced that each school should deliver a school week of **at least 32.5 hours** by September 2023. At St Anne's we are currently slightly below this minimum expectation with 5 minutes per day needing to be added. I am currently consulting staff on changes, including the option of starting earlier or finishing later or a combination of both. For example, the school currently starts at 8.40am but an option would be start at 8.45am and finish at 3.15pm. As part of this consultation, I would like to know the views of parents. If you want to comment on the change to the school day, please **email** your views to admin@stannesrcvoluntaryacademy.com.

Sports update including Amsterdam Trip

I am delighted to share the fabulous news that Ruby Moore, a Yr10 student, was selected for the Greater Manchester School Girls Football Squad. This was after attending a number of trials over the past few weeks and being up against some super talented girls. She is a wonderful player, and we are all proud of her achievement. She joins Dan Carling, Shay Dennehy, Callum Dakin, Harry Kane and Si McDonagh who all now represent St Anne's in Stockport Schools Football Teams. A big congratulations and we look forward to future successes. Furthermore, The Amsterdam football tour in March 2023 has had a great response and we now have 40 students signed up to go.

Barcelona Trip 2023

The Language Department are currently planning a trip to Barcelona, Spain in October 2023. The trip, lasting 3 nights and 4 days was open to Yr10 Spanish GCSE students and Yr9 students looking to take GCSE Spanish. This trip will also provide an excellent opportunity for students to engage with the Spanish culture and provide the chance to practice their Spanish language skills. There was a limited number of places available, and the trip is now full. Students must demonstrate good punctuality, attendance, and behaviour in the months prior to the trip. **I reserve the right to withdraw any pupil whose behaviour and/or attendance is not good.** Further details will follow in due course from Miss Todd.

Showing off our Musical Talents...

- ✓ Our recent Music auditions were hugely successful, and we are delighted to showcase our extremely talented St. Anne's students in a series of performances of music, singing and dance in our first Showcase since 2019 on the **14th December 2022**. Keep the date free and further details will follow after October half-term.
- ✓ Music instrumental lessons will be returning after half term. Tuition will be £45 for 6 individual 15-minute lessons. We will be offering these peripatetic lessons on piano, vocals, drum kit, guitar, and bass guitar. Students can have lessons on more than one instrument should they wish to. Payment is available now via parent pay and we are wanting lessons to commence after the half term holiday. Should you have any questions, please see Mrs Simmons or Mr Donnelly.

St Anne's expectations

Our rules are *fair, transparent, accepted and enforced*. The rules are part of ensuring the St Anne's community is safe, welcoming, and conducive to learning. As I said before, the vast majority of students arrive at St Anne's on time and are ready to learn. They should be commended, and it is a joy to see! However, there are still a small minority who believe that the rules don't apply to them. As I have repeatedly said, St



Anne's standards are rapidly improving [thanks to the vast majority of parents who support our increased standards] and students who undermine our rules are at risk of losing their place. Sadly, I have to report that some students are no longer at St Anne's.

Brief updates

- *Gardening Club* has been busy putting the garden to bed for the winter, clearing the outside garden beds and covering them with cardboard to stop the weeds growing. We also now have a covered polytunnel (thanks to Stockport council for the funds and Mr Clarke and the site team for fitting it over the Summer). We have great plans using the polytunnel next year, watch this space!
- *NSET day*. Just to give forewarning that the school will be shut for students on the 25th November when the staff of St Anne's will embrace ongoing professional development.
- *GCSE drama* students visited the Lowry Theatre on October 20th to watch the national tour of Blood Brothers. This famous show, telling the story of twins split at birth, was incredible and the students, whose behaviour was impeccable, thoroughly enjoyed the performance and experience.
- *St Anne's Yr10 girls football team* beat Rainhill in St Helens 5-2 last week to reach the 3rd round of the ESFA cup competition. This is a national competition and the highest standard you can play at school level, so it's a real achievement for this talent bunch. Well done to the girls!
- *An activity day* for our Cared for Young People will be held at Woodbank Youth Centre on Tuesday 25th October 2022 from 10am to 3pm. There are lots of activities such as rock climbing and graffiti art with pizza in the afternoon. The day is free and open to all 11+ Cared for Young People.

Can I take this opportunity to personally thank all the stakeholders at St Anne's. Collectively, this is *their* school. Our students are great and the overwhelming majority love coming to school to learn. The staffing body is getting stronger each term as we add strength, depth, and experience at all levels. As I said above, parents are more supportive, and I love working with them to ensure they feel that St Anne's is their school. And finally, the Governors, who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure St Anne's becomes the catholic community we want it to be!

Have a great break.

Mr Logue
Executive Headteacher