



ST. ANNE'S
R.C. VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

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Executive Headteacher
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January 2023

Dear parents/carers,

A warm welcome to my first newsletter of the year. Again, it gives me great pleasure in sharing all the positive energy at St Anne's.

A real buzz

After a long autumn term of after school rehearsals, the Christmas Extravaganza show was well worth the wait! It was a real joy to see great students performing and a great turnout by parents was very welcome. In fact, it was a sell out! However, what impressed me most that bodes well for the future was the sense of community. There was a real buzz about St Anne's and seeing children enjoying themselves whilst performing to such a high standard was a joy to behold. There was also a seamless bond and mutual respect between the students and the staff. I look forward to more evenings like this! Below is an email that I received from a parent the following day.

"Good evening, I just wanted to get in contact to congratulate you, the staff and most importantly all of the students that were involved in the show tonight. From start to finish it was fabulous to watch, the talent on show was just amazing, the effort and work that staff and pupils have put in over the past few months to put it together shows their enjoyment, their passion and they are a credit to the school and community. Thank you to all. It was a pleasure to be able to attend".

It is always great to receive such feedback that focuses on our great students and staff.

Communication

At St Anne's we believe that clear and regular communication will strengthen the relationship between parents and the school. Below are three major ways that we aim to communicate effectively.

- **Class charts.** This is our primary vehicle for communication with parents. Parents can access Class Charts via their app or the website once you have your parent access code. Class Charts allows you to track your child behaviour, achievements, homework, and any announcements. We encourage all parents to check their Class Charts accounts each day as there may be important information that we need to share. If you need your access code, call reception who will talk you through the log in process.
- **New web site.** I am delighted to officially launch our new website. I am hoping that this is parent friendly, up to date and shares important information. The new website address is www.stannes.academy. As always, feedback is always appreciated.
- **Social Media:** Our social media is alive with the many great things happening at St Anne's. I ask that you follow us on Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram. It is an excellent medium that celebrates the many incredible achievements of the St Anne's community and to see us celebrating the incredible achievements of our pupils, staff, and community daily!





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Safeguarding update with a focus on Mental Health

We are very lucky to have been selected as one of only 30% of UK schools to receive specialist mental health support from our new Mental Health Worker. Our mental health worker will be in weekly, and this will increase our provision to promote good mental health. This will include increasing support through group and individual sessions, helping our pastoral team and signposting to appropriate services. We are delighted this provision has already had impact including meeting our mental health ambassadors and supporting the awareness of mental health during Children's Mental Health Week (6-12 February). The focus this year is theme 'Let's Connect' encouraging children to consider how we can make meaningful connections and how these connections are able to support good mental health. Our mental health ambassadors have designed posters to promote their role and share a passion for mental health and want their St Anne's to be a happy environment for all students.

Staffing update

I would like to briefly introduce you to three new leaders who started St Anne's in January. They are Mr Swift, who is a Lead Practitioner in Science, Miss Murphy who has a responsibility as a leader in Maths and Mrs McGloin who is our new leader of the Technology department. Another member of staff, Mrs Bowden has also recently joined us as a teacher in Technology. All 4 of these new staff have already made impact and further strengthened the school. Personally, it is great to see such committed and experienced staff joining the existing team here at St Anne's. I wish them well and I have no doubt they will quickly get to love the students here. I did!

Staff Profiles

In the last letter I focused on 2 members of the Maths department. In this letter I focus on the profiles of 2 members of the *Extended Leadership Team* [ELT]. Again, I hope that you enjoy reading them.

- *Miss Morgan, SENDCo:* After completing my degree in English Literature and Creative Writing, I initially began searching for jobs in journalism and publishing. While job hunting, I signed up to a university programme placing students in schools for tens weeks to support young people in the classroom. I was paired with a tough secondary school in Hull but immediately fell in love with the fast-paced nature of a school environment and the clear rewards gained from teaching and supporting young people. I applied for my PGCE that Summer and have taught English ever since in Greater Manchester. Throughout my time at St Anne's, I have had the privilege of also being a Head of Year, a Director of Learning and more recently the school's SENDCo. The best bit about my job is getting to know our wonderful students, spotting their potential, and helping them to reach this by ensuring they have access to high quality teaching in the classroom.
- *Mrs Simmons, Leader of Personal Development:* I loved school as a child, especially music and drama. Being in performances are some of my best memories as a child and I wanted to go into education so that I could hopefully enable children to fall in love with the arts the way I did. I went to Brunel University and studied Music with Drama and despite being drawn to London at 18, as soon as university was over, I headed straight back 'up North' and trained to be a teacher in Manchester. As well as my passion for my subjects, I love Personal Development - for me it's the 'best bits' of school, it's what you remember and it's what makes it a community instead of a building. I've only been at St Anne's for a short time, but the children, staff and community are amazing, and I feel very lucky to be a small part of the journey we are on to be the best school possible.



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Curriculum, Teaching & Learning and Assessment Updates

- *Curriculum update:* Last week Mrs Sutcliffe and I met our Subject Leads as part of our ongoing evaluation and monitoring of our KS3 Curriculum. Our strategic aim is to deliver a rich knowledge rich Curriculum across a range of subjects. All curriculum overviews can be found on our new website alongside knowledge organisers. This should inform you as a parent what we intend your child to be taught.
- *T&L update:* Our Teaching & Learning group continues to result in further improvements in teaching practice across a range of subjects. Key principles of this group include sharing good practice and mentoring fellow teachers on improving their teaching toolkits further. We are effectively using our *coaching triads* to develop areas of expertise, for example, one coaching triad is researching how we can support our students to develop their metacognition. Our learning walks have highlighted how teachers are continually using practices to check students understanding which is fundamental to securing good progress. Teaching is our core purpose, and I am delighted that this continues to improve. Your child deserves to be taught well in all lessons.
- *Teaching & Learning: A focus on assessment.* Mrs Critchlow is currently reviewing whole school assessment procedures in line with our curriculum plans. Assessment at both key stages 3 is vital to track progress and inform teachers of what content students have learnt and importantly, what content may need to be revisited. At KS3, students are assessed against the Curriculum content and at KS4 students are set challenging, but attainable, targets based on Yr6 SAT scores. This year we are introducing a full exam series ALL years. These exams will be linear in nature and prepare them for their GCSEs. Progress of students will be reported three times a year.

Unwanted books?

Currently, we are running a book drive where students and staff can bring in books they no longer want. These will be gifted to a charity run by Manchester Libraries who will distribute to families and individuals who wouldn't normally have access to books at home. If you have any unwanted books, please give them a new home by bringing them to the library.

End of year REWARD trips

As I have repeatedly said over the past 12 months, the vast majority of students at St Anne's follow our simple, accepted and transparent rules. This ensures that St Anne's is a safe and calm environment that is conducive to learning. If any pupil is suspended from school, it is unlikely that they will be able to participate in the end of year reward trips.

Update on building investment

I am delighted that the new roofs, windows, and doors installed have given school a huge uplift in security, energy efficiency and appearance. But work does not stop there! As phase one ends, phase two begins. We have started planning with architects the design and installation of fire door replacement and heating replacement schemes, costing another £1.3M. We will endeavour to ensure the majority of this work is out of school time. On that note, I cannot commend your children on their patience during the works. All this work ensures our great students and staff have an environment that is fit for purpose!



Personal Development updates

- **SACRED Day:** Our second SACRED Day will take place on **February 17th**. This is shaping up to be yet another incredible day for our students that will further educate them about the wider world. Overview of the plans are;
 - ✓ Yr7 pupils will be creating their own Parliament including learning about political parties.
 - ✓ Yr8 will be learning about Healthy Bodies including workshops on First Aid and Mocktails.
 - ✓ Yr9 are learning about Keeping Safe with workshops by the police, gambling awareness and the nursing team.
 - ✓ Yr10 will be taking part in a 'Stock Market Challenge' focusing on understanding finance and banking.
 - ✓ Yr11 students will be sitting Mock exams in English and Maths in preparation for their GCSE exams.
- **Prefects:** In the last week of the autumn term, Mrs Simmons and I had the pleasure to interview 24 outstanding Yr10 students who want to become prefects. They really impressed us both with their ideas for improving St Anne's and their dedication and commitment to the school. We are thrilled that they were successful to become prefects at St Anne's. In essence, this means that they are ambassadors for our school and must always uphold our rules and values. Currently, applications for Head Boy and Head Girl are underway and the group have already met to discuss the impact they are going to have in school, starting with Mental Health Awareness week in February.
- **Yr10 Music trip to Liverpool:** Earlier this month Mr Donnelly, our Music teacher, accompanied a group of Yr10 Music students to Liverpool where they absorbed themselves in 'The Beatles Story', the world's largest permanent museum telling the story of the lives and times of The Beatles. They also visited the British Music Experience where they actively participated in music workshops. Mr Donnelly praised the children on their impeccable conduct describing them as 'mature, well-mannered, and highly engaged ambassadors for St. Anne's'.
- **Raising Aspirations:** 18 students attended Hazel Grove High School on 23rd January for the afternoon listening to a presentation on progression to Higher Education and Oxford, focusing on subject choices at GCSE and study skills which was led by students from Corpus Christi College. It is hoped that it will raise aspirations for our students and increase their motivation to work harder and achieve their potential.
- **#BeeWell:** In November Yr9 and Yr10 students took part in the Greater Manchester #BeeWell survey which is a programme that annually measures the wellbeing of young people. The results are back and show that St Anne's students are within the average recommendations for all areas. A few areas, however, were lower than others. For example, the amount of exercise students do and the amount of fruit and vegetables they eat. Over the next few weeks, I will ask Heads of Year to share these results in House assemblies.
- **Duke of Edinburgh [DoE] update:** Mrs Bowden recently attended a DoE conference at Gorton Monastery where she participated in a series of workshops exploring the organisation's 5-year strategy; 'Youth Without Limit' which is aimed at making a difference for all young people. With 41 students signed up to Bronze level at St. Anne's, it is hoped that participation in the award will inspire the students to explore who they are, to grow in confidence and to develop the skills they need to successfully navigate life.



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Curriculum subject updates

- *English.* Yr10 have started their study of Romeo and Juliet, 20% of the English Literature GCSE exam, with a screening of the Globe Theatre's 2020 performance. All students were enthused and engaged in the text, which uses real life statistics to highlight the relevance of the play's themes to a modern audience. We are also launching our 'Poetry By Heart' competition for KS3 pupils to learn and perform a poem in line with their poetry study. This national competition offers exciting prizes for the winners, such as an opportunity to perform live on stage in London! Watch this space as we might have a Seamus Heaney in our midst!
- *PE:* I am delighted to report that numbers continue to increase in our extra-curricular PE clubs where attendance at Basketball, Football, Cheerleading and Badminton have all been good. I ask parents to encourage their child to attend where they will be made most welcome. The Yr9 netball team had a fantastic tournament at Reddish Vale High, winning 2 out of their 3 matches and our Yr10 football team played Dean Trust Ardwick in an entertaining game that ended 2-2. Results aside, the excellent attitude of our students and their pride representing St Anne's was evident. Well done to our students and the PE team.
- *Art.* Yr10 have started their GCSE Art project and they are responding to a past exam question 'Human Figure' looking at the following artists: Lucian Freud, Francis Bacon, Catherine McCarthy, Cathy Cullis and more. While our Yr11 students are putting together the final touching to their previous project and will begin their Exam question project at the end of January. I wish them and Mr Wroe great success with the exam.
- *Construction.* Students have recently started their next coursework unit, covering Mathematical and Scientific applications in the construction industry. Students are really using their skills and knowledge taught in their Maths lessons, to complete their work. Students are showing evidence of real-world applications including calculations of areas and volumes, plotting graphs and using algebraic and graphical methods to solve problems. A previous unit has been moderated by Mrs Brophy from St Damian's who was impressed with the quality of work produced.

Attendance

Undoubtedly our school is improving in all key aspects of what would constitute an effective school, most notably leadership, the quality of the curriculum and teaching, safeguarding and positive pupil engagement. However, an area that does not seem to be getting better is attendance. The importance of good attendance must not be under-estimated: it is vital so that your child has the best possible chance of achieving their potential. It is also a safeguarding issue as the best place for your child is in school. **I ask that parents make every effort to ensure that your child attends school.**

A nice comment...

As Executive Headteacher, I am pleased to state our community is strengthening all the time. This includes the key areas of culture, leadership, teaching and our ethos/values which are based on our SACED values. Although we are heading in the right direction, I am conscious that we still have a long way to go to ensure



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that all our parents have confidence in the school. I received the following from a parent in Yr7 and sought permission to include it in this letter. I enjoyed reading it, as I hope that you do.

*"I promote you all the time. I tell people, I know they are in special measures, but they are amazing. You all helped my child with her transition from primary school so well.
I have to pinch myself because I can't believe how well she is getting on"*

We are not perfect, where is, but the staff [and governors] of St Anne's are working hard to ensure our improvements continue so that the St Anne's children get a great education, and the parents/local community are proud of St Anne's!

Finally, a reminder...

In my December newsletter I informed you of 2 very **important parental evenings**; one which will focus on Yr11 and the other evening for parents of students in Yr7-Yr10. I want as many parents as possible to attend and, as I have said many times, your child will achieve more if we have a great working partnership. I outline these dates again for your perusal.

- *Yr11 only* information evening for Yr11 parents. This was originally planned for **Thursday 16th February at 6pm** but due to the fact I want to share information sooner I have decided to bring the meeting forward a week to **Thursday 9th February at 6pm**. This evening will focus on revision, what support the school offers and expectations of students. The purpose of the evening is to ensure your child reaches their potential in their forthcoming GCSE exams. Despite the change in date, I would still want a massive turnout for the evening. Please make every effort to attend.
- *Yr7-10* information evening where I will be able to give an update of the schools' strengths and continued areas for improvement. This will largely focus on our '*Eight Pillars*' which are at the heart of our school improvement strategy. This will also be an excellent opportunity for you to ask questions in an open forum. This evening will be on **Thursday 2nd March at 6pm**.

I am hoping for full houses at both these important evenings!

As always, thanks for your support.

Mr Logue

Executive Headteacher

