



11 September 2019

Dear Year 7 Parents and Carers

Firstly, we would like to take this opportunity to formally welcome you to the St Nicholas family. After many weeks of waiting, your child's first day at Nicholas finally arrived last Wednesday and we are glad to say that as the newest members of our community, Year 7 students have already settled in to their new Form Classes and have made an excellent start to their first year at St Nicholas.

I would like to highlight a number of events for Year 7 students, parents and carers over the coming weeks:

- **Year 7 Welcome Mass**

Our Year 7 Welcome Mass will be celebrated on Thursday 10th October at 6pm with a warm welcome extended to all family members as the perfect way to begin our school year together as a Catholic community. We very much hope that you will make this a priority in your family diary so that you are able to join us.

- **Year 7 Information Evening**

Our Year 7 Information Evening will take place the following week on Thursday 17th October with the opportunity for you to meet your child's Form Tutor and also be given further information regarding our Year 7 residential trip. I very much hope you can join us at these events and further details will follow in due course.

- **Year 7 Family Quiz**

Our annual Year 7 Family Quiz will take place on Thursday 26th September and is organised by our superb PTFA here at St Nicholas - it would be wonderful to see as many families as possible coming along to test their knowledge across the different subject rounds and spending time with staff as well as other students and families in Year 7.

St Nicholas celebrated a summer of continued success and we offer congratulations to our Year 11 and 13 students who secured another excellent set of examination results. The dedication of staff, parents and of course the students themselves has enabled them to progress smoothly on to further and higher education, employment and training.

Welcome to New Staff

We welcome a number of new staff to key positions within the St Nicholas community this Term. Mrs Yeates joins us as our new Year Leader for Year 8 and as well as being a Maths specialist, bringing with her a wealth of experience as a pastoral leader from a highly successful school on the Wirral. Mr Deakin joins us as Subject Leader for Physics, and we welcome back Mrs Riddell to the Maths team with specific responsibilities supporting teaching and learning across the department alongside Mr Hesketh, Mr Martin and Mr Barnes. Mrs Davenport joins the English Department as



Assistant Subject Leader and Mr T. Brown takes up post as our newly appointed Subject Leader for Chemistry. This year we also welcome Mr Bradley and Mrs Pardoe to the school's Senior Leadership Team. We wish all members of staff joining us this September a very long and happy time here at St Nicholas.

Teaching and Learning

As a school, we have spent the last few years strengthening and developing our classroom pedagogy and practice together as a staff community at St Nicholas and in partnership with other schools across the Diocese. We are excited to announce that this coming year we are looking to have a renewed focus on evidence based teaching and learning strategies that will be shared with students and parents. Mr Wycherley and Mrs Pardoe will be leading 'Foundations for Learning' sessions for students across all year groups which will focus on the science of learning and include a termly whole-school focus to support student progress. We will also be holding Parent and Carer information sessions and posting information on our VLE so that you can fully support your child at home. Further details to follow.

All parents and carers will be aware that students are currently given a 'score' for each lesson. These scores are recorded using 'Lesson Monitor' which is an excellent tool to monitor individual student attitudes to their learning. Following extensive discussions with staff and students, the tool has been revised this year to include recording when a student has behaved well but not demonstrated total commitment to learning, and '*coasted*' throughout a lesson - full descriptions of the scores can be found on the School Website. As previously, there is a range of rewards and interventions to support students with their learning, including Reward Trips: full details regarding this will be provided in due course.

In addition to our new website launched last year we are looking to 're-launch' the school's Twitter account this term which will complement our weekly newsletter with regular information and updates. If you are not already a follower of our Twitter feed then please do follow us at @StNicholasCHS.

Summer Building Works

A number of exciting improvements have taken place over the summer holidays here at school. Following discussions with the School Council both sets of toilets in the Crypt have been completely refurbished with new flooring, tiling, vanity units, cubicles and lighting. We have also redecorated every classroom in the English, Maths and RE blocks thus ensuring that the learning environment is as positive as possible for our students on their return.

Extensive work has begun 'behind the scenes' supporting Phase 3 of our ICT plan. New cabling and networking is now underway, and we anticipate all works to be completed by the October Half Term. This will see wi-fi throughout the entire school campus, a significant uplift in network and broadband speeds and the introduction of new portable laptops and chromebooks for students to use within their lessons.



Attendance, Punctuality and Uniform

We would like to thank you for your support in ensuring that your child began the Advent Term with the very highest standards of uniform - the students looked exceptional as they began their first week of the school year.

As always, attendance at school is clearly one of the most important factors in ensuring that students excel academically, socially and spiritually. I would once again like to remind you of our policy surrounding term time absences, and ask that medical & dental appointments are taken outside of school hours where possible.

As we continue our partnership together, we are, as always very interested to hear the views of students, parents and carers on all aspects of school life here at St Nicholas and we will be holding another of our regular Parent Focus Groups on Wednesday 20th November at 6pm. Please 'save the date' and I will write to you with more details soon.

We look forward to another successful year ahead and full details of school events are included within the 'Key Dates' area of the school website.

Yours sincerely

Richard Woods
Headteacher

Emma Dale
Head of Year 7

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