



September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As another school year begins, there is once again much to celebrate and much to look forward to as we start the Advent Term together.

We celebrate a summer of significant success and offer congratulations to our Year 11 and 13 students who secured a fantastic 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. I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to all of the staff here at St Nicholas for their efforts in supporting the Teacher Assessed Grades process and for parents and students for their patience and understanding as we navigated through yet another 'first' for everybody.

#### **Welcome to New Staff**

We welcome a number of new staff to key positions within the St Nicholas community this Term. Mrs Hardman joins us as an Assistant Subject Leader for Religious Education, Mr Oliver joins us as teacher of Law, Mrs Pacitti joins the Technology Department as teacher of Food Nutrition and we welcome back ex St Nicholas student Miss Roberts as a teacher of Geography. We also welcome Mr Watts to the History team, Miss Vernon to the RE team and Mr Lynch to the Science team.

#### **Teaching and Learning**

This year, Mr Wycherley and Mrs Pardoe will continue to lead '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 school website so that you can fully support your child at home. Further details to follow.

Following feedback from parents, carers, students and staff, we are no longer using the 'Ruler' online platform for the setting of your child's homework. Mr Wycherley has written to you this week outlining how all homework will now be set using your child's MS Teams account and he has provided an easy read 'how to' guide to support you as we transition to a new platform. Students will still be required to record all homework set in their Student Planner and if there are any questions regarding the setting of homework, then please do contact us at school.

We are very much looking forward to students participating in the many co-curricular and enrichment activities that will be offered once again this term. It was incredibly disheartening to see so many events deferred or cancelled during the last school year but now we are able to open up the many exciting opportunities for your children during lunchtimes and after school. Details of all activities will be given during your child's form time, in the weekly newsletter and on the school website.



### **Summer Building Works**

A number of exciting improvements have taken place over the summer holidays here at school. A complete refurbishment of our Technology suite is nearing completion, an area which has not been refurbished since the school's opening back in 1965. We have created a new reception area and visitor meeting room at the front of school to facilitate parent and visitor meetings, and Phase 3 of our internal improvement plan has been completed with department specific images, scripture passages and inspirational quotation manifestations installed around the school site. I very much hope you are able to join us on site for the usual school events this year and see for yourself what a difference our continued commitment to the school learning environment is making to our students' daily experience here at St Nicholas.

### **Covid Update**

We have now completed our on-site testing for students and we have ensured that home testing kits have been given to all families who have requested them. If you have not received your home testing kit then please do contact us in school.

We are continuing to ensure that students clean their hands on entry and exit to every classroom and our one way system remains in place to support a smooth transfer between lessons. We have also ensured that ventilation within classrooms remains a priority and have continued to deploy additional cleaning staff throughout the school day to regularly clean frequently touched surfaces across the school site.

### **Attendance, Punctuality and Uniform**

I would like to thank you once again, for your support in ensuring that your child returned to school 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 17<sup>th</sup> 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.



# ST NICHOLAS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr R Woods, BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQH  
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We look forward to another successful year together and thank you as always, for the support you continue to offer the St Nicholas community.

Yours sincerely

**Richard Woods**  
Headteacher

