



De La Salle School

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Dear Parent / Carer,

Welcome to Academic Year 2021/22

I hope you and your family were able to enjoy a refreshing summer break, as we turn our attention to the school year ahead of us. I offer all parents, and particularly the parents of our new Year 7 Intake, who are joining our Lasallian community, a warm and enthusiastic welcome.

The past 18 months have been difficult and challenging for everyone, in particular our young people, therefore we are excited to be able to welcome students back in a way that will allow us to safely re-instate many of the experiences that they have been deprived of during lockdown.

As always, I have broken my letter down into sections for ease of reference (please could all parents read part 4).

Return Dates

All students have been offered two COVID tests as part of the staged return to school. The dates for starting back at school are:

- **Year 7** Students ONLY Return - Friday 3rd September
- **Years 8, 10 and 11** students return - Monday 6th September
- **Year 9** Students return - Tuesday 7th September

COVID restrictions

I am delighted to say that many of the previous COVID restrictions, including bubbles and contact tracing and isolation, are no longer required. However, we are still very aware of COVID and so some controls will remain in place, in addition to the pre-start testing:

Twice Weekly Testing: we encourage all staff and students to continue to test for COVID twice a week. Test kits are being distributed as part of the pre-start testing but can also be accessed from reception or the pastoral teams.

Hand and Respiratory Hygiene: all staff and students are encouraged to wash their hands regularly, and catch it / bin it / kill it when coughing or sneezing.

Enhanced Cleaning: we will continue to be in place.

Ventilation: we encourage all rooms to have windows open to allow good ventilation into a classroom or office.

Vigilance for Symptoms: if staff or students have any of the following symptoms: a high temperature, new, continuous cough or loss / change to sense of taste or smell, they should self-isolate and take a PCR test immediately to confirm if they have the virus.

Face Coverings: though no longer required in school they are still encouraged on public transport, and all staff or students are welcome to wear them whilst in school.

You can perform miracles by touching the hearts of those entrusted to your care.

3 Year Plan

Before the summer I shared with you our 3 Year Plan to make us a school of excellence in all areas. For those parents joining the school, it can be accessed here:

<http://www.delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/welcome/three-year-plan/>

Student Standards

A big part of the plan is about having higher expectations of staff and students. Your support, particularly around aspects of uniform, attendance, punctuality, mobile phones etc is crucial if we are to be successful with our plans. I know how supportive our parents are and want to thank you in advance for working with us. The key areas we need your support with are:

- **Uniform:** all students should now be coming to school in full uniform. PE kits (that meet the PE Kit criteria) should be brought in the students' bags and they will once again get changed in school before and after PE. No students should be coming into school wearing their PE kit.
- **Mobile Phones:** These are the source of most issues in school. Students are allowed to have mobile phones with them, but they must be **turned off and out of sight between** arriving at school and leaving school. Students caught checking or using a phone during the day will have them confiscated until the end of the day.
- **Jewellery:** Students should not wear jewellery in school, including earrings. These will be confiscated until the end of the day.
- **Earphones** (airpods etc): these are not allowed in school and will be confiscated until the end of the day if worn.
- **Hair / Nails / Make-up:** student hair should be their natural colour (pink or neon blue are not considered natural colours!), students should also not wear make-up or false eye lashes or nails.

GCSE Results

It was a very strange year for our outgoing Year 11 students, but we were delighted by their performance at GCSE. We saw our highest ever results across the board, results which, even pre-pandemic, we were expecting. It is quite right that we should celebrate the students' achievements and they shouldn't be diminished by COVID, indeed every grade we awarded had very clear and rigorous evidence for it. Well done Class of 2021 and we wish you all well on the next stage of your learning.

Buses

The school buses start again Friday and will run as normal (students are encouraged to wear face coverings on public transport). Can I also remind parents that these are public service buses run by Merseytravel and not under school control.

Parking on Alder Hey Road

Can I ask all parents to please be considerate if dropping off or collecting students on Alder Hey Road. Please avoid parking near the school gates and, if possible, look to pick your child up at an agreed location away from Alder Hey Road. When parents do this, things run smoothly, when they do not, with over 1000 students exiting, the situation can quickly become dangerous and gridlocked. **Parking near the school is selfish and inconsiderate PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE be considerate.**

School Activities

We are really excited to be able to start to run the many clubs, activities and trips that were put on hold during the pandemic. We are keen to recreate the magic of school, that was lost. Most we can start to implement very quickly though others, such as overseas trips, will take a little longer. Details of all opportunities will be shared with students and parents as and when appropriate.

House System

This year we have introduced a house system to the school. This will allow inter-house competitions in sport, art, performing arts and many other activities across the year as each house competes for the House Cup. The 4 houses have been named after our 4 founding schools:

- Edmund Campion
- Mount Carmel
- Notre Dame
- West Park

Students will be finding out which house they are in when they arrive back into school.

I think that is more than enough information for now, we have a busy year ahead of us and we look forward to working alongside you and your child to not only continue to improve the school but to make school magical once again.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Rannard
Headteacher