



De La Salle School

Mill Brow, Eccleston, St. Helens,
Merseyside WA10 4QH

Telephone: 01744 20511
Email: delasalle@delasalleschool.org.uk

Headteacher: Mr. A. Rannard BA (Hons) NPQH

17th September 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

Parental Update: Friday 17th September 2021

Thank you to all the parents who completed the recent Big Ask, we are going through the responses from staff, students and parents to see what we can learn. A particular thank you to the parent who pointed out that they had heard more from the school about parking than their child's progress! This did make me smile, and is a very valid point – though to be fair, not much has changed with the students' progress since the summer's reports, but I do promise not to mention parking this week.

Today's update, as usual, is in sections for ease of reference.

Freshers' Fair

Next week, on 22nd September at lunchtime, we will be holding our Freshers' Fair for our Year 7 and 8 students. This is an opportunity for them to learn about and sign up to the many clubs and activities that will be taking place in school. This is by far my favourite event of the year, and a key part of bringing the magic of education back for our students.

Vaccinations

The government have announced that vaccinations will be offered to 12-16 year olds in the coming weeks. As with all immunisations, it is the Local Authority and School Age Immunisation Service (SAIS) who have legal responsibility for the delivery of the vaccine. We are awaiting information on how, when and where this process will take place, we will of course keep you informed.

I am very aware that this is a very contentious issue which generates strong feelings on both sides with a wealth of information both accurate and inaccurate. As a school, we will help facilitate information etc, but we remain neutral on the topic. The DfE have asked me to share the following link to provide information for parents on the matter.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-children-and-young-people>

Open Evening / Early Finish

Our school Open Evening is on **Thursday 7th October**. As usual, to facilitate getting the school and departments ready for the event, the students will have a compressed day **finishing at 1.30pm** (students are able to wait in school for buses at 3pm if they wish). For new parents, this means the students still have 5 lessons, but we combine break and lunch into a brunch service.

The Open Evening will run from 4.30pm till 8:00pm, with parents of Year 5 and 6 children able to come and have a guided tour of the school in small groups. To help keep everyone safe, we will have COVID safety measures in place including encouraging visitors to wear masks whilst in the school and I will deliver 4 talks, rather than 2, at 4.45pm, 5.15pm, 5.45pm and 6.15pm.

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

House System

Our new House System is now up and running, and the students and staff now know which house they belong to. House points are earned through attendance, activities and competitions. Our first set of competitions are netball and football. They are:

- **Mount Carmel Vs Campion**
- **West Park Vs Notre Dame**

Next week it is Year 11, the week after Year 10, then each week through Year 9, 8 and finally 7. We are also planning many other competitions including a Bake Off, quizzes, debating competition, talent show and many others. Students representing their house earn their 'colours' in the form of a pin badge.

School Dinners

I was aware that the Liverpool Echo ran a 'story' this week that featured some local secondary schools and concerns from parents regarding the lack of food, lack of time etc at dinner time. I cannot speak for those schools but I thought you might be interested to know the situation here.

At the moment all students have a 50 minute dinner time, with access to the dining room by year groups on a rota across the week. The exception being Year 11, who are allowed in first every day and, at the moment, Year 7 who are allowed down 20 minutes earlier – to allow them to become acclimatised to the dining room, food choices and tills. Students are welcome to stay in, sit and eat, or grab and go, whilst students with packed lunches can also come in with their year groups and sit in the dining room.

Taking yesterday as a fairly typical example, all the students were in and served by 1.40pm, leaving plenty of time for them to stay in the dining room if they wished to (lunch finishes at 2:00pm). With regards to the choice of food, obviously this reduces slightly by the end of the service (even restaurants have some items run out before the end). For the very last students in to lunch yesterday the choices available were: the daily special (roast dinner), pizza, variety of wraps, jacket potato, burgers, hot pasta, cold pasta salad, choose your own salad and a range of cold sandwiches and baguettes.

Year 7 CATS

Sadly, not a new petting experience. As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure the students' education is built around their individual needs and abilities, all Year 7 pupils will be completing Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs) in the week commencing Monday 20th September. These are used routinely in most secondary schools to help us to understand the students' ability and potential.

Prefects

Our Year 11 Prefects have now started their work around the school. I am keen that they are given a meaningful opportunity to show and develop their leadership skills in order to help improve our school even further. Thank you to all of them for stepping up in this way.

Finally, the positive start to the school year continues and the attitude of the students has been refreshing and positive. This is still only early days, but fills me with great optimism for the year ahead.

Have a good weekend.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Rannard
Headteacher