



De La Salle School

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5th November 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

Parental Update

Welcome back after what I hope was a restful, if slightly damp, half term break. Sadly, we remain under COVID restrictions, but our rates have fallen considerably and I am hopeful that we will be allowed to ease back on restrictions soon – in particular allowing our students to compete in inter-school activities and competitions.

This first week back has, as always, been busy. Staff completing the marking of the Year 7-10 assessments that were done before half term, the Year 11 students starting their first set of mocks, and our clubs and activities back in full swing.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Despite the restrictions, the extra-curricular life of the school is very strong with 100s of students taking part in activities before school, at lunch time or after school. Some of these are regular weekly activities (see the link to our timetable below) whilst others have been special occasions like our activities for Mexican Week this week and COP26 work for the next couple of weeks.

Of course, academic studies are a crucial part of education, but these extra activities are what bring that bit of magic to school life. The timetables of our current activities can be accessed on the website at: <http://www.delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/school-life/extra-curricular/> though these can change.

Visits and Trips

As well as the usual extra-curricular activities, we are also now looking to re-start our off-site trips and activities. Some of these are fairly easy to set up, such as the Year 7 retreats at Lowe House, which take place week beginning 15th November, and the Youth Climate Conference on 17th November.

Some of the other trips are bigger and more complex but I have now given the green light to begin planning and booking for a ski trip, Iceland trip and Italy trip, with other trips also in the pipeline. Obviously, these will be for next academic year (to allow for the logistics to be planned and allow a reasonable length of time to spread costs for parents).

Details will be going out over the next few weeks of these and other trips, to the appropriate year groups. Of course, there are risks, as a result of COVID, in looking to run these trips, but there is also a bigger risk that we will have generations of young people who will miss out on some wonderful opportunities.

Change of Menus

Over the half term the local authority catering team who provide our break and lunchtime food and drink, have implemented considerable changes to their menus here and across the town. Some of these changes have related to improving healthy options for students

and others to Natasha's Law which has now come into force. The changes have had a mixed response from our students, some aspects they really like, others much less so! All of which we are feeding back to the LA Catering team to ensure as many young people as a possible have a high-quality meal each day. I have attached the menus, price lists and themed days for you to see.

Vaccinations

We have now had information regarding the offer of vaccinations for 12-15 year olds in our school. I will be writing out next week with the information we have been given and the link to the consent form for you to complete if you wish for your child to be vaccinated. Of course, young people can also access many NHS vaccination sites as well. Obviously, only where consent has been provided, will students be vaccinated.

House Competitions

The students and staff have really embraced the new house system and all the houses have now chosen their titles:

- Mount Carmel Crusaders (MCC)
- Team Champion (TC)
- West Park Wonders (WPW)
- Notre Dame Raiders (NDR)

Draft design for their logos and being made and, as with the names, the houses will again have the chance to choose their favourite.

In terms of competitions, we move on to the next set of house sporting fixtures this half term with MCC vs WPW and TC vs NDR in netball and football. We are also exploring other sporting competitions, including rugby 7s. Beyond sport we have:

- on Tuesday, the Harry Potter Quiz, with 4 students per house selected to compete
- the Year 8 Bake Off will take place on 24th November with 2 students from each house taking part
- a Year 9 engineering challenge on 2nd December
- a year 7 DT challenge on 2nd December

And further ahead, a staff Ready Steady Cook competition in Jan, a choir competition late Spring, debating competition in May and public speaking competition in Jun.

Current scores after half term one are:

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	House Total
Notre Dame	95	116	72	94	115	492
Campion	97	123	80	93	76	469
Mount Carmel	121	27	74	54	70	346
West Park	87	34	64	59	39	283

Dates for your diary (items in bold indicate a change to normal school day)

Year 7 Retreats at Lowe House (please note students make their own way to and from the venue as per the information being sent out)

Monday 15th November - Mount Carmel (J&B)

Tuesday 16th November - Campion (O&D)

Wednesday 17th November - West Park (H&L)

Thursday 18th November - Notre Dame (S&N)

Friday 3rd December: INSET Day – students do not attend

Tuesday 7th December - Year 9 parents meeting with form tutors (virtual)

Wednesday 8th December - Year 8 parents meeting with form tutors (virtual)

Thursday 9th December - Year 10 parents meeting with form tutors (virtual)

Wednesday 22nd December: school closes for Christmas at 12.10pm (no buses after school)

Wednesday 5th January 2022: School re-opens (usual time)

And finally...

It is great to be back in school and we are keen that all students continue to remain in school as much as possible, therefore please continue to test your child twice weekly to help stop the asymptomatic spread of the virus.

Best wishes,

Andrew Rannard

Headteacher