



De La Salle  
School

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11<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Parental Update – Week 8

I am writing today's update on Thursday, as I am away at a meeting of Lasallian headteachers on Friday and Saturday. As I write, we have just held our in-school service of remembrance, prepared by Sam our Chaplain with excellent readings from our students and then some very poignant singing from our new school choir. Even though it was virtual, it was a very moving service, finished by Chloe playing the last post on the school bridge. A very fitting memorial.

We have also had good news with our rates of COVID falling within school since coming back, our daily rates averaging out in low single figures. Sadly, this isn't the case across the wider town as rates remain very high, and there has been discussion around blanket measures in all schools. Hopefully we will be able to scale back some of the measures, though of course we would respect any borough-wide controls – I will keep you updated.

### Vaccinations

You should already have received a letter regarding COVID vaccinations for 12-15 year olds in school. I met with the vaccination team this week to plan for the vaccinations and clarify some points on your behalf (some of which are below).

- The vaccine is being delivered by the NHS's School Age Immunisation Team, who deal with all of the paperwork, clinical controls and delivery.
- They can only deliver the vaccinations to students who are currently **12-15 years old**. The vaccine isn't licensed for use with under 12s, and over 15s are required to attend an NHS vaccination centre to receive theirs. There are no exceptions to this.
- Students will be kept under observation for 15 minutes following vaccination.
- They will only vaccinate where permission has been given by the parent and the student is happy to be vaccinated. If a student does not have consent but wants the vaccine, then the team will not vaccinate, but will contact the family to discuss future options. The same applies if a parent provides consent but the student refuses. At no point will the Gillick Competence Test be applied, as suggested is some of the disinformation that has been circulated on social media.
- Students who have had COVID within 28 days cannot be vaccinated.
- The vaccinations will take place in late November, with the exact date being shared with parents nearer the time.
- For security reasons we will be limiting access to the site on the day of vaccinations.

If you wish your child to have the vaccine, please use the link below:

<https://forms.merseycare.nhs.uk/immunisation-consent-forms/covid-19-vaccination/>

## GCSE Arrangements and Adaptations for 2022

Today additional details of the arrangements and adaptations for GCSEs were published. This is helpful and we will be acting upon the guidance. As part of the publication, there is a letter for students (and parents) from the Ofqual Chief Regulator. This can be accessed through the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-letters-arrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022/letter-to-students>

## Curriculum Plans – what is my child studying and when?

Our curriculum plans are now mostly complete and in the process of being uploaded to our website. The long-term road maps are already in place and worth reviewing to provide a clear guide to what students study from primary school, through years 7-11 and beyond, in each of our subjects. They can be accessed for each subject here: <http://www.delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/school-life/curriculum/>

## Homework

Parents should now be able to access homework information via Satchel One (formerly Show My homework). Staff have been encouraged to have online submissions as well, to enable a clearer picture of when work is submitted.

## School Trips – change to arrangements for allocation of places

I mentioned last week about many of our trips starting again. With the re-launch of trips, we have had a re-think on how we allocate places to students when a trip is oversubscribed. From now on, if a trip is oversubscribed, places will be allocated **according to the number of times students have been late to lessons and school**. Those with no lates, or fewer lates being given priority over those who are more persistently late. This is part of our work to encourage students to make good choices and to reward positive behaviours. (This supersedes any information that may already have been sent out for any trips).

## Christmas Meals

Teresa Mercer who works for the St Helens Council is always exploring how people and families can create exciting and notorious meals that are affordable and she has been working hard focusing on Christmas.

Please find the link to the resources and meal planners that she has created and asked us to share with you. <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/recipes>

## 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 3<sup>rd</sup> December: INSET Day – students do not attend**

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December - Year 9 parents meeting with form tutors (virtual)

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December - Year 8 parents meeting with form tutors (virtual)

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> December - Year 10 parents meeting with form tutors (virtual)

### **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December: school closes for Christmas at 12.10pm (no buses after school)**

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022: School re-opens (usual time)

**And finally...**

Our students have shown great interest in the COP26 summit. Each day we have looked to share a clip or reflection on the summit and the science of climate change. There is a definite sense that this is watershed moment in time, which our students understand well. This is encouraging and reminds me of the Neil Postman quote I return to so often: "Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see".

Have a good weekend when it comes.

Yours sincerely,

**Andrew Rannard**

Headteacher