



De La Salle  
School

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

Telephone: 01744 20511

Email: [delasalle@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:delasalle@delasalleschool.org.uk)

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

14<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Dear Parent / Carer,

### Parental Update 32

As the exam windows come to an end (Year 8 and 10 this week and Year 11 next week), our attention turns to our planning for the next academic year. This ranges from planning the transition week in July, finalising trips and events for the year, sorting out form tutors, finishing the curriculum and timetable right the way through to planning for our whole school improvement.

This year there is the added factor of our upcoming academisation, which produces a considerable amount of extra work, but will hopefully provide us with a strong, secure and enriching foundation for the years ahead. The final few weeks are incredibly busy and I have updated the key dates at the end of this letter.

### Whole School Focus – Election #EducationMatters

I am sure you will have noticed that we are in the middle of an election campaign, with the main parties sharing their plans and promises for the future. As a headteacher, I am careful to remain neutral on political affiliations, but I am watching closely to see what each party has planned for education, should they be successful.

You are, of course, free to vote for whoever you wish, but schools are encouraging parents and families, under the hashtag **#Education Matters** to have children and education in your mind when considering each of the parties. To help with this, I thought it useful to share some of the key points that the Headteacher Union, ASCL have highlighted as key issues facing schools at the moment:

- **High levels of child poverty:** over the past 10 years this has become an increasing problem (estimated at 4.3 million children currently living in poverty). This leaves children cold, hungry and living in unfit accommodation – far from ready to learn.
- **Special Educational Needs:** the SEND system is severely damaged and on the brink of collapse. Children are missing out on support because of delays in Education Health and Care Plans; schools are struggling to afford the costs of SEND provision, schools cannot recruit the necessary staff and there aren't enough places in special schools to meet demand.
- **Education Funding Crisis:** Schools across the country are having to set deficit budgets and plan further cuts to provision. This is not sustainable. All schools must be funded sufficiently. Education should be treated by policymakers as an investment – in children and our country – rather than a cost.
- **Support Services for Children and Families:** The closure of Sure Start centres and lack of capacity in children's social care and mental health support services have left schools picking up the pieces as an unofficial fourth emergency service. Vulnerable children need specialist support services and schools should be allowed to focus on education.
- **Teacher Shortages:** Long term erosion of teacher pay has made it uncompetitive, the role is increasingly challenging and high levels of workload are driven by the underfunding of education and punitive accountability (Ofsted inspections and performance tables). The solution is better pay and conditions to improve recruitment and retention.
- **School Buildings:** Years of underinvestment have left around 700,000 students learning in schools that need major rebuilding or refurbishment. All schools should be safe, comfortable environments.

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

- **The Forgotten Third:** The exam system we have in England means that every year about 1/3 of children will not achieve at least a grade 4 in English and Maths GCSE. This rules them out from many education and career options and results in a cycle of resits.
- **Single Phrase Ofsted Judgements:** These are unhelpful far too simplistic to capture the true strengths and concerns within complex organisations as schools are. They drive stress and anxiety, damaging wellbeing and morale of school staff. Negative ratings stigmatise schools making improvements harder to secure.
- **Celebrate schools:** some politicians are quick to snipe at schools over various issues such as sex education, gender questioning children and policies on mobile phones, when schools are already doing a good job on these matters. This denigration should be replaced by a more positive discourse about education.

Having highlighted some key issues, you can look at each manifesto to see what solutions and policies, if any, each party might introduce:

[Conservative Party](#) [Labour Party](#) [Liberal Democrats](#) [Green Party](#) [Reform Party](#)

### Important Dates

The final run-in to term is incredibly hectic so I just wanted to highlight some important dates to ensure parents don't miss anything (a fuller list is available later in the update):

- Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June: Art, Photography and Graphics GCSE Exhibition (5pm – 7pm)
- Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June: students will be **finishing at 12.10pm** (there are no buses at that time, though students are welcome to wait in the dining room until 3.00pm)
- Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June: **INSET Day** (students don't attend)
- Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June: Founder's Day: a full day of mass, events and activities for the students
- Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July: School closes for summer at 12.10pm for students

### Bus Strike

I am delighted that the planned industrial action that would have impacted on the buses serving the school, has been cancelled. This means normal services will continue up until the end of term.

### Beat the Students

A reminder that each week I will include a few questions from a subject which would be tackled by our Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) students. You can pit your wits against your child and see if you still remember the skills and knowledge you learnt at school.

This week, we move to RE. Can you answer the following questions?

- Which is the primary symbol of Judaism?**
- Who is the founder of Buddhism?**
- Where do Sikhs gather to worship?**
- Who leads prayers in a mosque?**
- Which festival celebrates the resurrection of Jesus in Christianity?**

Answers at the end of the update.

### Sporting Updates:

- Well done to our Year 9 netball team who beat Cowley 15-6 last week in the St Helens Plate. Player of the match: Davies
- Well done to our U15 rounders team who had an excellent afternoon this week showing great teamwork in the district competition. Player of the match: Pennington
- **WINNERS:** Congratulations to our U13 rounders team who won the St Helens District Competition this week. The girls have had an excellent year representing the school in this and other sports! Players of the match: Jones, Cottom and Challinor - well done girls!

### Holidays

You should have received communication from us regarding changes to the way the government wants schools to deal with holiday requests and parents who take their children out of school for

holidays. Obviously as a school, we will need to follow the government guidance and would again urge parents not to take children out of school for holidays.

### **Student rewards**

Additional Awards go to:

- Lasallian Star: Dylan Cross
- Top Star point winner: Elijah Scott
- £10 voucher: Aaron Greenall

### **Attendance**

Apologies this has been missing over recent weeks as the external data system we use was not working properly. Attendance continues to be a priority. Please continue to do all you can to ensure your child attends school every day.

Latest attendance data from 4<sup>th</sup> September to 24<sup>th</sup> May:

- DLS Attendance: **91.9% (no change)**
- National Secondary Attendance: **91.0% (down -0.1)**
- Difference: **+0.9% above the national (up +0.1)**

### **Forthcoming Events** (dates in **bold** indicate a change to normal finish times)

Mon 10<sup>th</sup> – Fri 28<sup>th</sup>: Discovering Careers Events for Year 9

Wed 12<sup>th</sup>: Governors' Personnel Committee

Mon 17<sup>th</sup> – Fri 21<sup>st</sup>: Spanish Exchange Visit

Tue 18<sup>th</sup>: Geography Fieldwork Trip 1 (Year 7)

Wed 19<sup>th</sup>: Governors Standards Committee (5pm)

Thu 20<sup>th</sup>: Geography Fieldwork Trip 2 (Year 7)

Thu 20<sup>th</sup>: GCSE Art, Photography and Graphics Exhibition (5pm – 7pm)

Thu 20<sup>th</sup>: Parents as Partners Confirmation meeting (5.30pm)

**Fri 21<sup>st</sup>: School Finishes for students at 12.10pm (staff training)**

**Mon 24<sup>th</sup>: INSET Day (school closed to students)**

Mon 24<sup>th</sup> – Fri 28<sup>th</sup>: Mission Week

Tue 25<sup>th</sup>: Careers Visit (Year 10)

Tue 25<sup>th</sup>: Vaccinations (Year 9)

Tue 25<sup>th</sup>: Carmel College visit 1 (Year 10)

Tue 25<sup>th</sup> Colomendy Parents' Meeting (6.00pm)

Wed 26<sup>th</sup>: Vaccinations (Year 9)

Wed 26<sup>th</sup>: Governors Finance Committee (5.00pm)

Thu 27<sup>th</sup>: Founders' Day

Thu 27<sup>th</sup>: Carmel College Visit 2

Fri 28<sup>th</sup>: Blackpool rewards Trip

Fri 28<sup>th</sup>: Junior SVP Youth Conference (all day)

Mon 1<sup>st</sup> – Fri 5<sup>th</sup>: Year 6 Transition Week

Tue 2<sup>nd</sup>: Year 10 St Helens College Taster Day

Tue 2<sup>nd</sup>: Belgium Trip Parental Meeting (5pm)

Wed 3<sup>rd</sup>: Year 8 and 9 Performing Arts Trip

Wed 3<sup>rd</sup>: Transition Meeting for Year 6 parents (4pm)

Thu 4<sup>th</sup>: Year 11 Prom

Fri 5<sup>th</sup> – Sun 7<sup>th</sup>: Lasallian Camp

Fri 5<sup>th</sup> – Sat 6<sup>th</sup>: Year 10 History Trip to London

Wed 10<sup>th</sup> – Fri 12<sup>th</sup>: Year 9 Residential to Colomendy

Wed 10<sup>th</sup>: Water Safety Assemblies lessons 1 and 2

Wed 10<sup>th</sup>: PSHCE Lesson 1

Wed 10<sup>th</sup>: Full Governors 4.30pm

Thu 11<sup>th</sup>: Scholars Programme Graduation (all day)

Thu 11<sup>th</sup>: MVP Diversity Conference Year 10

Sat 13<sup>th</sup> – Wed 17<sup>th</sup>: Year 8 Belgium Trip

**Fri 19<sup>th</sup>: School finishes for summer: students finish at 12.10pm**

## **Mon 22nd and Tues 23rd: INSET Days**

### **Beat the Students Answers**

So how did you do? Here are the answers for this week:

- a) Star of David**
- b) Siddhartha Guatama (Buddha)**
- c) Gurdwara**
- d) Imam**
- e) Easter**

### **And finally... We're All Off to Sunny Spain**

As I mentioned last week, I was fortunate enough, in my role as the GB Headteacher representative on the Lasallian Mission Council, to visit our fellow Spanish and Portuguese District (ARLEP) for a series of meetings. Like most of the staff you will be thinking – that cheeky shirker, off on a jolly, though the reality is slightly different.

This should have been a relatively low-key event – staying in the Lasallian accommodation and attending meetings both days. That was until Mrs R decided she quite liked the idea (as her school has a 2 week half term). Then, as there is no show without Punch as they say, Charlie, my eldest, who has just completed his final degree exams, also decided he wanted to come along. This was lovely to have them coming along (and the Lasallian family are always welcoming of our families), but it did cost me an extra 4 flights! Added to that, religious communities only have single rooms, for obvious reasons, so I had to find us a local Airbnb which was another extra cost.

So, over the 2 days of the Conference, I was in attendance at the various meetings which, to make the most of our time together, ran from before 8.00am through to 7.00pm. Following which we had a 30 min break before meeting for prayer and then dinner together, with our families invited as well.

As I mentioned last week, these were very productive and important meetings, but equally very intense, especially those in Spanish. The only distraction I had was my phone kept pinging with photos of Mrs R and Charlie enjoying Madrid: walking tour, tapas tour, performances in the parks etc. So, it was a bit of a jolly, but for Mrs R and Charlie rather than me, just at my expense! (Though I did get to do the tour of the Bullring before our flight home on the Saturday).

Have a good weekend,

**Andrew Rannard**  
Headteacher

# Student Rewards

This week's Lasallian Star Awards go to:


| Form Class | Year 11 | Year 10            | Year 9              | Year 8         | Year 7                          |
|------------|---------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| J          |         | Eve Doodson        | James Palathingal   | Arabella Evans | Summer Waites / Veronika Pascoe |
| O          |         | Halle Meredith     | Daniel Stott        | Heather Munro  | Francesca Shepherd              |
| H          |         | Daniel Dinov       | Lucie Derbyshire    | Beth Hirst     | Grace Catterall                 |
| N          |         | Tom Pelham         | Toby Ginnelly-Smith | Rosa Graceffa  | Holly Spencer-Storey            |
| B          |         | Aidan Cooney       | Fabian Grabowski    | Max Salvatore  | Hollie Hughes                   |
| D          |         | Harvey Myers       | Leo Jackson         | Skye Jones     | Tobias Bunting                  |
| L          |         | Ryan Melville      | Imogen Simpson      | Niamh Harris   | Dylan Campbell                  |
| S          |         | Yasemin Vatansever | Daniel Lomax        | Sophie Kay     | Tess Mullen                     |
| Engagement |         | Phoebe Weldon      | N/A                 | N/A            | N/A                             |

# CAREERS NEWSLETTER




This newsletter is a collation of all the opportunities we have heard about from employers and universities. Please use the links included to read more information and apply to anything you are interested in. Links are underlined.


## OPPORTUNITIES



One for the parents... "Is your child gearing up for the exciting journey to university? Are you a proactive parent eager to ensure they embark on this new chapter with confidence and readiness? Look no further! Join us for an exclusive webinar hosted by My Swiss Story in collaboration with From HighSchool to Uni." Taking place on 14th June at 10am, parents can book their place here.




The latest version of the UCAS Tariff Tables is now available. Points included in the update are applicable to the 2025 application cycle. Download a copy of the Tariff Tables. If you don't know what UCAS Points are, you can read more here.



Are you keen to take part in a virtual work experience placement, but not really sure where to start? This new guide from Springpod will help you to understand how to create your account, apply for and take part in immersive experiences to help you make informed choices about your future.

Once you know how, why not apply to one of Springpods many amazing opportunities? Here are a few...

- Offshore Wind with RWE: Students will explore the innovative world of offshore wind - from creating offshore wind farms to environmental factors and cutting-edge engineering projects taking the offshore wind sector by storm.
- Sustainable Farming: Students will learn more about sustainable food production process and take a closer look at animal welfare and environmental management. By the end they will understand how the farming and growing industry is more important than ever.
- Primary Teaching: Students will learn how a teacher can help a pupil achieve, considering their learning environment and their relationships with their peers. Students are tasked with planning a lesson which caters for all abilities.



If you have any questions or need support, please contact [moranh@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:moranh@delasalleschool.org.uk)

## JOB OF THE WEEK



This week's video focuses on the job role of a Financial Advisor.

They are a qualified person who is able to provide expert guidance to people when they have important and potentially difficult financial decisions to make, such as approaching retirement.

Watch the video to learn more.

## LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION FACT

The EngineeringUK STEM report showed that 15% of young students had done a STEM related work experience, with a further 26% keen to do so but unable to secure a placement.

Source



# CAREERS NEWSLETTER



## OPPORTUNITIES

OuterCircle is a new apprenticeship support community. "Our mission is to provide an authentic, in-person community for Aspiring Apprentices & Young Professionals to form lasting connections, share experiences, and engage in meaningful conversations, while continually adapting to meet their evolving entertainment and social needs." - You can join their [Aspiring Apprentice Discord here](#).

GoCareers is a recruitment company dedicated to empowering young individuals by connecting school leavers with tailored opportunities in key industries such as Finance and Accounting, Sales and Marketing, IT, Business, and Administration. [Check out their website here](#).

Business vs. economics at university: What's the difference and which degree is right for you? In this engaging online event with University of East Anglia, we will take a theme common to both Economics and Business degrees, Globalisation, to illustrate how you might expect to explore this crucial topic during your undergraduate studies. [Read more and register here](#).

Among the many skills that humans evolved to design their environments, art-making is among the oldest, existing far before evidence of written communication. However, we are still in the early stages of understanding how and why individuals create and respond so powerfully to works of art. In this webinar we will explore how people become art experts, looking at the role of practice and talent. We will also discuss the psychological value of art creation and appreciation, and its link to mental health. [Read more and register here](#).

"A United Kingdom?" is an interactive webinar, hosted online by the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University. The aim of this webinar is to support students in questioning and challenging our thinking about current and topical subjects in politics. [Read more and register here](#).

## EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

"We believe that the best jobs make you fly. So, what better way to take off on your career path than with a Virgin Atlantic apprenticeship. With over 100 apprentices across 25 different learning programmes at Virgin Atlantic, you'll be part of a team and community that shares your values in learning something new every day." You can read more about Virgin Atlantic's careers [here](#).

## UNI SPOTLIGHT

"From the moment you join King's as a student, you'll also become part of the best student city in the world\* with our campuses making us the most central university in London. With world-class teaching facilities, a cosmopolitan student community and historic architecture, there's so much to explore." You can read more about King's College London courses [here](#).

If you have any questions or need support, please contact [moranh@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:moranh@delasalleschool.org.uk)