



De La Salle
School

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7th March 2025

Dear Parent / Carer,

Parental Update 21

A very busy week around school as we started our Lenten journey with our ashes services on Ash Wednesday. With the hall being out of action, the ashes were taken to the form classes by school leaders – this made the moment a much more intimate and meaningful experience – maybe a way forward in the future.

As I mentioned, the rostra seating has been replaced and is now signed off, so we held our Year 9 options evening last night (using the seating) which went very well. We also had World Book Day, SENDScope in school providing SEND development training with our key staff, our Year 8 assessments began, a range of fixtures, rehearsals and practices, it was National Careers Week and we had 50 Year 10s go to the Health Care and STEM Show.

Next week, more of the same with Year 8 assessments continuing, a Year 9 HAP trip to Cambridge University, Year 9 Parents' Evening, the Mock Magistrates Competition and a weekend trip to Flame for around 30 staff and students to watch our own Br Chris Patino speaking in front of tens of 1000s of young people at Wembley.

With today's update there is:

- Weekly Careers newsletter
- Chaplaincy newsletter (issue 13)

Whole School Focus – Ofsted Consultation

This week I was asked to attend a Headteacher Reference Group, which is part of the ongoing Ofsted consultation on future changes to the school inspection system. Though I, like most heads, am far from being cheerleader for Ofsted, I do recognise the importance of schools being externally quality assured and held to account.

Of course, results are very important and the currency for a child's next stage of education but my biggest issue has always been the narrow view Ofsted have sometimes adopted and the single word judgement: neither provide an accurate or holistic perspective of what a school is really like. This often skims over or misses out the wider development of students, which is just as important as results.

So, I am quite supportive of the new direction of travel that Ofsted seems to be taking (brief summary below) and the wider, fuller picture they want to use to report on schools. What was interesting that the small number of headteachers at the meeting yesterday, who are currently judged as outstanding, were not so keen on the wider view being taken – I think this was telling in itself.

Below is a summary of the proposed changes, more details can be found here: [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

1. Replacing Single-Word Ratings with Detailed Report Cards

Currently, Ofsted assigns schools an overall grade such as "outstanding," "good," "requires improvement," or "inadequate." The new proposal suggests eliminating these single-word

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

ratings and introducing comprehensive report cards. These report cards will assess multiple areas of a school's performance, including:

- **Leadership and Governance**
- **Curriculum**
- **Developing Teaching**
- **Achievement**
- **Behaviour and Attitudes**
- **Attendance**
- **Personal development and wellbeing**
- **Inclusion**
- **Safeguarding**

This change aims to give parents a more nuanced understanding of a school's strengths and areas needing improvement.

2. Introducing a New Evaluation Area for 'Inclusion'

Ofsted plans to place greater emphasis on how schools support all students, especially those who are disadvantaged, have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or are particularly vulnerable. A new evaluation area called 'inclusion' will be introduced to assess how well schools cater to these students' needs.

3. Implementing a 5-Point Grading Scale

To provide clearer insights, Ofsted proposes a 5-point grading scale for each evaluation area. This scale will help parents understand the specific performance levels of different aspects of a school's operations. The judgements proposed being: Exemplary, Strong, Secure, Attention Needed and Causing Concern.

4. Enhancing Communication with Parents

The proposed report cards aim to be more user-friendly, making it easier for parents to compare different schools and understand the quality of education provided. This initiative stems from feedback indicating that parents prefer detailed information over a single summary grade.

These proposed changes are currently under consultation, with Ofsted seeking feedback from parents, carers, professionals, and learners to refine and improve the inspection process. I would urge parents to engage with this consultation which can be done here: [Improving the way Ofsted inspects education - GOV.UK](#)

World Book Day (Thu 6th March)

It was wonderful to see those students and staff who dressed up for World Book Day with a wide range of characters factual and fictional, including Gru, Florence Nightingale, Thelma (Scooby Doo), Minions, a couple of footballers and Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz to name just a few. Students were able to complete a quiz, Literary Labyrinth, take part in a book swap and attend the Scholastic Book fair. A big thank you to those who engaged with the event and Mr Ingham who led the organisation.

Year 7 Admissions

The Year 6 into 7 school place allocations have now gone out, and I hope all those Year 6 families got the schools they wanted. This year and next couple of years sees a drop in the school population across the borough (about 10% drop). As a result, we have a small number of places still available if you know of anyone that hasn't been allocated an appropriate school, they can contact Mr Hale on halep@delasalleschool.org.uk

Sporting Updates

Another busy week of fixtures and practices this week, as our U13 girls continue in the cup beating Alder Grange 9-0 with 8 goals from Phoebe and 1 from Erin. POM shared between Phoebe and Annie.

School Vacancies

We currently have 3 posts out for advert:

- Science Teacher
- Cover supervisor
- Teaching Assistant

So, if you know someone who would be a positive addition to our school community, please direct them to this link: [Vacancies](#)

Laetare CMAT Updates

The advert for the permanent CEO Of the Trust is now out and interviews will be taking place next week which myself and the other Heads will have a part in, though it will be the Directors who will make the final decision. Let us hope for a strong field and a good appointment. I will of course update you when I have more information.

Year 9 Options Process

Great attendance last night at the Year 9 Parents' Evening. Options Online is now open for students to make their Option Choices, this will open for parents next Friday (14th March) to confirm those choices.

The Powerpoint from the Option's Information Evening has been sent to all Year 9 parents via ParentMail, as have the instructions for students and parents to log in (please make sure you use the right instructions). All the relevant key information can also be accessed here: <http://delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/parents/year-9-gcse-information/>

Year 10 College Days

Below are the upcoming college and 6th form open events that Year 10 (and younger) students and families may be interested in.

- Carmel College: 11th March 5pm-7.30m
- Riverside College: 11th March 5pm -7pm
- St Helens College: 12th March 5pm-7pm

In addition, Cowley Sixth Form have asked school to inform Year 11 students and parents, that if they have not yet applied to college, they can book to attend an admissions appointment to assist in their choices post-16: The next Admission Interviews are taking place: 13th March [Book a slot on this date](#) or 17th March [Book a slot on this date](#)

Messages from St Helens Young Carers (repeated item):

a) Parent Carer Session Supporting Emotional Regulation

Thursday 13/03/2025 (Morning 10:30am – 12:00 /Evening 5.30pm - 7.00pm)

Does your child/young person struggle to regulate their emotions? Do you need support, advice and strategies to understand these behaviours and support their self-regulation at home?

If you are a parent carer and need help to understand emotional regulation difficulties, this session will enable you to pick up some useful tips and strategies to harbour your child's emotional resilience and create a calmer home environment.

Come along to our friendly session, make contact with other parent carers and share experiences to support each other. We will look at and discuss 'What makes us fizzy, visual feelings charts, creating a pre-agreed plan for times of dysregulation, creating a calm and safe space in a busy environment, calming strategies and breathing techniques, recognising a trauma response, reflecting on triggers, crisis points and the recovery phase, to enable you to identify barriers,

motivators and strategies to be tried in the future. We will also touch on, transition support, soft landings and mindfulness activities.

b) Parent Carer Session Person Centred Planning

Thursday 08/05/2025 (Morning 10:30am – 12:00 /Evening 5.30 - 7.00pm)

Are you a parent carer worried about your child/young person's transition to a new school/ educational setting? Are you hoping their teachers fully understand their strengths, areas of difficulty and what is important to them?

Come along to our friendly session, make contact with other parent carers and share experiences to support each other. We will look at and discuss useful Person-centred Planning tools to identify what is important to and for your child/ young person. We will discuss the use of 'A good day / bad day' resource to identify triggers and solutions, identifying any strengths and difficulties to be later included in a 'One Page Profile' which can be shared with school and other professionals involved. We will also look at and discuss useful tips and visual supports to prepare your child for transition. Both workshops will need to be booked on through the following link [Carer Clubhouse Events](#)

Lateness (repeated item)

A reminder that since half term, that the **registers close at 9.00am and anyone arriving after 9.00am will get an unauthorised absence**. Previously they closed at 9.30am but this change brings us in line with national guidance.

Upcoming Events

Tue 11th: Year 8 Think Fast educational visit

Thu 13th: Year 9 Parents' Evening

Sat 15th: Flame festival educational visit

Sat 15th: Mock Magistrates Competition

Wed 19th: Blood Brothers visit (Year 10)

Thu 20th: Aspire Liverpool EV (Year 10)

Thu 20th: Song Writing Workshop (Year 9)

Fri 21st – Sun 22nd: Faith Formation EV to Carfin Grotto Glasgow (Year 9)

Sat 22nd – Sun 23rd: DofE Bronze Expedition (Year 10)

Wed 26th: Experience of the Workplace EV (Years 8 and 9)

Wed 26th: Local Governing Board Meeting (5pm)

Mon 31st – Fri 4th: Big Lent Walk

Mon 31st – Fri 4th: Shakespeare's Italy EV (Year 10)

APRIL

Tue 1st – Thu 3rd: Year 8 Careers Insight Days

Thu 3rd: Peripatetic Music Concert

Fri 4th: School finishes for Easter (3pm)

And finally...Tapioca

Most of you will probably not be old enough to remember tapioca as a school pudding. Often referred to as 'frog spawn' it was a regular delight, along with other puddings from the day such as school cake, semolina and the very suspicious pink custard.

So at the start of half term, I saw a recipe for a tapioca and rhubarb dessert – it looked lovely (very much not like the 1980s school dessert). Mrs R also liked the look, so all we needed was some tapioca. My eldest suggested we just order it from Amazon, but after a short lecture from me about the terrible ills of globalisation and these big tech companies, Mrs R and I popped out to the local shop to get some.

This was similar to that moment when Bilbo sets off with the dwarves, Frodo sets off with Sam, Luke meets Obi Wan, Dorothy steps on to the Yellow Brick Road, JR Hartley looks for his book, Sir Galahad begins his search for the Holy Grail (you get the picture). Thus, began what became a week-long epic search for tapioca.

The local independent shop sadly didn't have any, nor did the one in the next town. So, we moved to the bigger retailers: Tesco (3 different stores), 'the' ASDA (2 different stores), Aldi (1 store) and Sainsburys (2 different stores). All had pudding rice, Jasmine rice, pilau rice, semolina and most other forms of rice-based products but no tapioca.

Half-way through the week, we decided to up our game and go for the posher shops – surely, they would have some: Marks and Spencer Food Store, Waitrose and even Booths – no joy. Then towards the end of the week we switched to health food stores across Liverpool. Eventually we found one that stocked it. Mrs R and I hot footed it round and after explaining to the owner the lengths we had gone to he said they did have it and went into the back, coming out holding a bag above his head like Simba being presented to the Gods in the Lion King.

Our joy was very short-lived, however, as it was tapioca flour not tapioca pearls (no I didn't know they were different things either). So we got back Friday evening, rather deflated that our week long crusade had been in vain. Only for the doorbell to go a few hours later, with a delivery.

After the usual "who has been ordering more stuff from Amazon?" questioning, we opened it, and there was a bag of tapioca pearls my son had ordered earlier that day. He said he couldn't bear to watch us 'boomers' and had put us out of our misery! So that Sunday, Mrs R spent hours preparing the dessert and – well it was ok.

Have a good weekend.

Andrew Rannard
Headteacher

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

Happy National Careers Week 2025! National Careers Week (NCW) is a one-week celebration of careers guidance. The aim is to provide a focus for careers guidance and provide talks and activities to support you to develop awareness and excitement about your future pathways.

You can search #NCW2025 on social media to find events from organisations and employers.



From 3rd-8th March, you can access the Virtual NCW2025 Careers Fair. You do not need to register to take part and there are 100s of opportunities for you to read about, apply to and take part in.

BBC Bitesize have a suite of resources that can help you to consider your future career. Here are some of our favourite resources:



- Quiz - Which apprenticeship would suit you best?
- Quiz - How could AI affect your job?
- Watch Dr Ranj swaps jobs with Radio 1 DJ Charlie Tee – can they smash it in a totally different role?
- Meet three young people who turned their passions and interests into jobs.



Are you considering a career in Activism? Check out this "Planted with Purpose" Substack which is updated weekly with opportunities like work experience and internships. You can subscribe here for updates.

"Your Guide to Apprenticeships 2025" is a recorded webinar run during National Apprenticeship Week. The session is brought to you by Not Going to Uni and features Bentley Motors, ICAEW, BAE Systems and the MET Police who share more information on their apprenticeship programmes.

PLAY

JOB OF THE WEEK



Historian

A historian is a scholar or expert who studies and writes about the past. Historians seek to understand and interpret historical events, trends, and developments by examining various sources of evidence.

Watch the video to learn more about how much you could earn, working hours and pathways into the industry.

LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION FACT

Did you know that the employment rate is different for people who have been to university vs people who haven't?

The employment rate for uni graduates is 87.7% vs the non graduate which is 69.7%.

Source: UCAS

If you have any questions or need support, please contact moranh@delasalleschool.org.uk

CAREERS NEWSLETTER



OPPORTUNITIES



OuterCircle have an online community for aspiring apprentices. They also run a range of events, upcoming sessions are with NHS, British Airways and In2Science. You can access the information on [their events and community here](#).



Have you heard the term “contextual offers” when it comes to university applications? You might be wondering what this means and if it’s something you should be considering. [Here is a guide from UCAS](#) about contextual offers.



If you don’t meet the criteria for contextual offers, there may still be scholarships, grants and bursaries that you are eligible for. You can learn more and find opportunities on [The Scholarship Hub](#).



If you’re still deciding whether or not university is for you, we would recommend taking part in a [University Summer School](#). This allows you to stay in university accommodation, take part in taster lectures and see what uni life is like. You can find a lot of opportunities using [UniTasterDays](#) or search the name of a specific university that you’re interested in followed by the term “summer school” to find more information.



[From High School to Uni’s student guide](#) is designed to be your ultimate companion to help you transition to university. From not knowing what to pack, to how to get organised preparing for university, or even how to create a budget to help you plan and manage your finances.



Tescos and The King’s Trust have come together to bring you the “[Stronger Starts Retail Apprenticeship](#)” programme. The apprenticeship is delivered entirely in store and takes a minimum of 12 months to complete. You’ll spend time doing a range of activities such as marketing, business and technology and completing learning on a tablet device you’re provided with. This is a level 2 apprenticeship, which is equivalent to 5 GCSE passes. You can read more [here](#).

EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

“At Tesco, we welcome diversity, individuality and uniqueness. We’re building an inclusive workplace, where we actively celebrate the cultures, personalities and preferences of our colleagues who share the same purpose, to serve our customers, communities and planet a little better every day..”

Read more about [Tescos Careers here](#).

UNI SPOTLIGHT

“At Birmingham, we encourage bold, independent thinking and offer a high-quality academic experience to stretch and challenge you. By studying with us, you will be an active part of a diverse university community as you pursue your own interests and develop the career path that's right for you.”

Read more about [University of Birmingham’s Courses here](#).

If you have any questions or need support, please contact moranh@delasalleschool.org.uk

Catholic Life at De La Salle



1st Week of Lent



MEMBERS OF SVP IN FORMATION

A very busy week this week and the start of the somber season of Lent. We tried a new way of distributing ashes during Ash Wednesday and found that it was an all round positive experience. Initially our plan was as last minute change due to our new rostra seating but it turned into something wonderful!

A busy Tuesday

Changes within the Liturgical calendar are always super busy. We have to find creative new ways to inform people of the changes, we have to make room for prayer and celebration and often we have to mark the occasion to raise awareness and transition the community into a different focus.

On Tuesday, many families will have gathered together to fill their boots with pancakes. This is a tradition that dates back to the 6th or 7th century, around 1,300 to 1,525 years ago (although today's celebrations look a little different). It was a time for people to use up their rich ingredients ahead of the Lenten fast. We are a family here in school too so we were no exception to the rule of pigging out on pancakes to acknowledge the pause in Ordinary Time.

Over break students could purchase loaded pancakes and other sweet treats. The money raised is going toward our FLAME trip so a huge thank you to the students who engaged with the sale!

Tuesday also saw Chaplaincy and Mrs Millea meet to plan an exciting offer for students across the school. As part of the formation offer, we're running a Lenten retreat entitled "Walk to the Peripheries". This theme is a big focus within our Lasallian family and the day that students are invited to take part in will be a day to explore what peripheries look like and how we can reach out, we'll do this through art. This will help us to express ourselves creatively, but will also contribute to a Lasallian exhibition in Scampia, Italy all about reaching our brothers and sisters, the lost, the least and the lonely. We can't wait to see how the day goes, we have had a wonderful uptake from students so far!

After school we had a mad dash around the place to make sure all of our Sacred Shelves in form classes were dressed in the appropriate liturgical colour, we have transitioned from green to purple now for the season of Lent!

Ash Wednesday!

Ash Wednesday is a day that normally challenges our students the most as it is something so unfamiliar to many families. For those who don't know, palm ash is placed on the forehead to mark the start of Lent because ash was used as a sign of repentance and remorse in the days of the Old Testament.

The tradition has changed over time and in our modern world we use a small cross of ashes to show that we're ready to acknowledge our shortcomings and take time during Lent to journey with Jesus in a bid to make improvements to our lives and relationships with ourselves, the wider world, and God.

This year, owing to our new rostra seating, we didn't gather as year groups in the main hall. Instead, students have a pre-recorded service in form and then a whole team of staff visited each form room, office and work space to distribute ashes to our community.

We had nothing but positive feedback. Students felt more at ease as they were in their own form space and had been given the very clear message that they could receive ashes on their head, their hand or none at all. Free from judgement, our community made their own decisions and we collectively brought to mind the changes that we can all make during this season, whether embarking on a spiritual journey or otherwise.

Next week

There are a few big things happening next week, with a visit from one of our Lasallian brothers, SVP taking part in some environmental work and our interview with Rev. Kate Botley... (from Gogglebox!!) before our big trip to FLAME on Saturday 15th March.

Our Next Theme

Next week we continue our Lenten journey. At this time of year we use the colour purple within our displays and materials produced for times of prayer and liturgy. When we use purple we do so to emphasize the "gloomy" and dark nature of the time within the liturgical year. We use this colour during Advent and Lent as they are seasons of penance and preparation for change in our lives. The theme of our prayer and liturgy will be; **Into the Wilderness**. SLT will lead us through our reflections of Jesus' time in the desert.

Catholic Life Team

Mission Week (June 2025)

- We're very much thinking about our plans for Mission Week this year and would love your help if you could! If anybody has any contacts or particular skills we would love to welcome you into school, as part of Mission Week this year we're looking for gardeners, singers, dancers, yoga instructors, public speakers, facepainters. We want a real community feel and you're very much invited! Please get in touch if you'd like some more information!

Sacrament of Confirmation

- The registration for Confirmations is now open for Students in Year 8+ To register visit liverpoolcalled.co.uk and follow the details.

Prayer for Pope Francis

We continue to join our global family in prayer for the healing and comfort of Pope Francis. Whilst he seems to be making improvements, he is still very much in ill health.

We lift up to You our Holy Father, Pope Francis, as he faces illness. Grant him strength in body, peace in mind, and comfort in spirit. May Your healing hand rest upon him, restoring him to health so that he may continue to lead Your Church with wisdom and love.

Pray for us...

Loving God, As we prepare for the start of Lent, we give thanks for the gift of your son, Jesus, who loves us with unmovable love. May we be mindful of our efforts to become closer to you this season. Amen.