



St Mary's Catholic School

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where everyone can succeed



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Dear Parent or Carer,

I hope you and your families are well. I wanted to thank you for your continued support throughout this term. We really appreciate it. We have had a great term in the Sixth Form, with students continuing to work hard in lessons and contributing exceptionally well to the wider life of the school.

I wanted to express my delight at the attitude and maturity with which students have approached the new academic year this term. I have been incredibly impressed by the copious reports from teachers praising Sixth Form students' continued effort and commitment to learning, along with the vast number of Class Chart points they have accrued this term. As well as seeing our students adopting effective study habits after the summer break, some of the other highlights of the first term have included seeing the Sixth Form students taking on leadership responsibilities in school to help and support students in other year groups through our Student Leadership Scheme, and enhancing their employability skills by participating in our weekly Super-Curricular activities. The number of students seeking opportunities to develop in other, non-academic ways has been pleasing to see, with a number of students opting to take on the challenge of the John Paul II Award, which will see these students take on significant work in their school and parish communities. In addition, it has also been pleasing to see an increased number of students take part in our Sixth Form Charity programme, completing activities such as donating to local foodbanks, completing charity bake sales and donating their spare change. I would encourage students to immerse themselves further in Sixth Form life and take any opportunity that will allow them to develop a broad skill-set, to prepare for upcoming applications to university, apprenticeships and the workplace.

One of the aspects of the Sixth Form we are extremely proud of is our Sixth Form Dress Code. The Dress Code allows our Sixth Form students to represent our school community in a smart and distinct way to others. Unfortunately, in the past, we have had the odd student returning after a holiday without full dress code, or with inappropriate shoes or an extreme hairstyle. I would be grateful if everyone can ensure that all students, without exception, adhere to the Sixth Form's expectations in this area. The students will be reminded about this too. Please contact me if any clarification is needed of Sixth Form Dress Code expectations.

Lastly, we know that many students wish to become more financially independent and so are seeking part-time employment. Whilst we want to encourage students to develop financial responsibility, we would strongly advise your child to work no more than 6-8 hours a week, to ensure their demanding academic studies do not suffer. In our experience, taking on more work than this, can have an adverse effect on academic achievement for some students, especially if they also have a busy social life and wide range of interests. Some employers will offer more and more additional shifts and hours to reliable, hard-working students. We strongly advise that the temptation to agree to these is avoided, especially during the week and in term time. If we feel that a student's part-time work load could be affecting their studies, we will alert you to this. Like most things, this is really about getting the balance right and I am confident our students will be sensible.

Many thanks again for your ongoing excellent support. I am sure that next term will continue to build on the successes of the first. If you have any queries at all, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me through the e-mail stated on the letterhead above. I wish you a happy and peaceful Christmas with your friends and families.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Turnbull - Assistant Headteacher Sixth Form