



St Mary's Catholic School

Shining together in faith, joy and love



Tel: 0191 2153260 Fax: 0191 2153279

admin@st-marys.newcastle.sch.uk

www.stmarysnewcastle.co.uk

twitter.com/StMarysNew

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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 have had an excellent first term in the Sixth Form, with students continuing to work hard and excel in lessons and contributing significantly to the wider life of the school.

I wanted to express my delight that our Sixth Form students have consistently demonstrated outstanding dedication, maturity, and commitment to their studies. Teachers and support staff throughout the school have consistently praised our students' effort and their commitment to academic excellence and students have accrued a vast number of Arbor behaviour points over the term. As well as seeing our students adopting effective study habits, some of the other highlights of this term have included seeing the Sixth Form students taking on leadership responsibilities which have included helping, mentoring and supporting younger students through our Student Leadership Scheme, and enhancing their employability skills by participating in Enrichment workshops. The number of students seeking opportunities to develop in other, non-academic ways has been pleasing to see, with many 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, and our own Enrichment Award, which also includes the students providing service in the local area. It has also been pleasing to see an increased number of students take part in our Sixth Form Charity initiative, completing activities such as donating their spare change, completing charity sales and, of course, participating in Christmas Jumper Day. Their compassion and commitment to making a positive difference in the community have been truly inspiring. I encourage all students to continue exploring these opportunities and expanding their skill sets to prepare for applications to university, apprenticeships and the workplace in the future.

One of the aspects of the Sixth Form we are extremely proud of is our Sixth Form Dress Code. The Dress Code allows our 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 our 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 for when the students return in the new year.

Finally, we are acutely aware that many students wish to become more financially independent and seek part-time employment. Whilst we want to encourage students to develop financial responsibility and skills suitable for the workplace, we recommend that your child limits their part-time work to 6-8 hours per week to ensure their academic studies are not compromised. In our experience, taking on more work than this can have an adverse effect on academic achievement for some, especially if they also have a busy social life and wide range of interests, and have examinations upcoming. 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 have concerns about the impact of part-time work on a student's academic progress, we will contact you directly. Like most things, this is about striking the right balance and I am confident our students will be sensible.

Many thanks again for your ongoing excellent support and for fostering a supportive and encouraging ethos for our students. I am confident that next term will build on the successes of this one. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. I wish you a joyful and peaceful Christmas with your friends and families.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Turnbull - Assistant Headteacher Sixth Form

