



# ST MARGARET WARD CATHOLIC ACADEMY



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Principal: Mr. D. McKenna B.Soc.Sc. MA. PGCE. NPQH.

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01Y/EndofTermLetter/DM/EP

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian(s)

As the academic year draws to an end, I am writing to thank you for your continued support of the school.

This year has been a very busy and productive one and we have much to celebrate. Many of our students have been involved in events and competitions which have led to considerable success and most gratifying are the comments from organisers and other schools commending our students on their conduct, courtesy and commitment. Our students have shared their sporting, musical and performance talents throughout the year and our art work has been displayed at conferences in Liverpool, Cheshire and Birmingham. We have some wonderful students and we are very proud to celebrate their achievements.

We also congratulate our Year 13 and 11 students who conducted themselves with maturity and commitment throughout the exam season and we wish them well for the results days in August. (**A Level - Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> August, GCSE – Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August**).

However, it is also important to recognise that there is always more we can do as a school for our students and we should always look to find ways to continually improve. As staff we have spent time this year carefully evaluating how we operate and what we value and this has led to some thorough planning in order to make changes from September.

These changes are aimed at further developing the care, support and guidance that we offer to all members of our community and further improving the quality of learning. As a school, we place the importance of pastoral care and safety of all our students and staff as paramount. This is to ensure that our academy is a safe and secure place of learning and work for everyone; where we treat each other with dignity and respect in going about our daily work and routines.

As such, we have designed, created and will implement the 'St Margaret Ward Way' from September 2019 – this is simply how we do things in our community. This is the foundation of the new and revised behaviour policy which can be viewed and downloaded from the school website: <https://stmargaretward.co.uk/about-us/downloads/>

Our expectations are high and clear and the rationale for this is that:

- We want all of our students to be extra-ordinary, not just ordinary.
- We want all students to leave with an enriched sense of who they are, and a clearer picture what they have been called to do in their lives.
- We want to enable all students to have a high quality education so that every student in our community leaves with an excellent set of examination results, ready for the next stage of their lives.

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**If you require this information in a different format, please contact the school.**



## WHEN WILL MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER?

We will have a staggered start to the term for all students in September, so that we can spend dedicated time with each year group and orientate them into the new and revised systems, our expectations and induct them into the school as a new community.

- **Year 7 students will start on Wednesday 4 September at 8.45am**
- **Year 8 and 9 students will start on Thursday 5 September at 8.45am**
- **Year 10 and 11 students will start on Friday 6 September at 8.45am**
- **Post 16 students will start on Thursday 5 September at 8.45 am with their induction days**

## WHO WILL BE MY CHILD'S HEAD OF YEAR?

As always, your child's form tutor should be the first port of call in regard to any issues that may occur within school. However, so that you are aware, there have been some changes to the pastoral structure and the Heads of Year from September will be:

- **Head of Year 7:** Miss J Eardley
- **Head of Year 8:** Mrs K Salt
- **Head of Year 9:** Mrs V Lander
- **Head of Year 10:** Mrs K Van der Mijl
- **Head of Year 11:** Mr L Bland

## CHANGE TO THE FORMAT OF THE SCHOOL DAY

From September; whilst the timings of the start and end of school remain the same, the times of lessons, break time and lunch time will change. The rationale for this that we want to place a greater emphasis on the start of the day, ensuring that students are ready and prepared to learn and they will also cover a new tutorial programme. The school day will start promptly at 8.45am with either registration or assembly. It is absolutely essential that students are present for this registration period. All students will then have two lessons. Student break time will be from 11.10am until 11.25am. Students will then have one lesson until lunchtime for the whole school community from 12.25pm until 1.05pm – students will have the opportunity to eat their lunch and spend time with each other. Students will then have two further lessons and the school day will end at 3.05pm.

## CHANGE TO MOBILE PHONE USAGE WITHIN THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

There is an update to the school policy with regards to mobile phones. From September 2019, any Year 7 to Year 11 student who is seen using their phone for any reason, at any time of the day on the school site will have the device confiscated. It will be confiscated by any member of staff and taken to the office, where it will be placed in an envelope and kept safe for the remainder of the school day. The student can go to the main office and ask for their phone at the end of the school day. This rationale for this is:

- So that students can fully engage in the school community, in all lessons and during unstructured time.
- To minimise distractions to learning during the school day.
- To reduce the opportunity for cyber-bullying and minimise the effects of social media on students.
- To enable all students to feel safe around the school.

We understand that, at times, you may need to get hold of your child in an emergency. *We would politely ask you to phone the main reception and then we can handle all emergencies in an appropriate manner.*

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## THE HOME – SCHOOL AGREEMENT

We also wish to work more closely in partnership with you, we have established a clearer and transparent home school agreement that you will find in your child's planner in September. This sets out very clear expectations and what each party (the student, the parents/carers and the school) can expect from each other. We would ask you and your child to sign this within the first week of the school year. Your child's form tutor will also sign this on behalf of the school. Can I thank you in advance for signing this document as it is only by working in partnership with each other that we can achieve the best for your child.

## REWARDS

We wish to recognise the developing habit of excellence of all of our students and where possible, we will always aim to have positive discussions with our students; followed by sharing this information with you as parents. Students will be issued with rewards points recorded on the schools information system. Rewards will be given under the following categories: 'Recognition' and 'Privilege'. Further information on the revised rewards policy will be given to students in September.

## SANCTIONS

We know that the overwhelming vast majority of students at St Margaret Ward want to learn well and want to be in lessons where there is expert teaching and excellent student discipline. We also know that a vast majority of students do not like disruption to their learning. Where students do not meet our clear and high expectations the school reserves the right to and will issue students with a centralised same day detention in a staged approach.

During lesson time, a student will be reminded about our expectations; if this does not rectify their behaviour, they will then be warned about their behaviour. If this does not rectify the issue, then the class teacher will issue a Same Day Detention, which will last either for 30 minutes or for 1 hour (for more serious poor behaviours). Again, information about this can be found in the behaviour policy on the school website. The Same Day Detention will be written into your child's planner and also be recorded on the schools' information system. Incidents that warrant a detention during period 5 of the school day will be rolled over to the next day. You will be notified by a 'school comms' message, which will be sent out to parents at around 2.35pm on a daily basis. Students will be escorted to the Same Day Detention, which will take place in the school hall.

For more serious breaches of school conduct, or for repeat cases of poor behaviour, we are also introducing a 2-hour Vice Principal's detention, which will take place on a Friday afternoon from 3.05pm until 5.05pm. If your child is placed in this detention, a member of the Senior Leadership Team of the school will phone you and inform you of this decision. Again, further information about student behaviour can be found in the behaviour policy, which is available to view on the school website. Please see details above about how to access this.

## LUNCHTIMES

We will be changing the times and length of lunchtime, as I mentioned earlier in the letter. **From September:**

- Year 11 students will be the first group of students allowed into the dining room, then followed by students from other year groups.
- Unless they are involved in an activity with a teacher lunchtime pass, students will not be allowed on the top corridors of the main building.
- Students who buy food from the dining room will only be allowed to eat in areas specifically identified to them when they return in September.
- Students who bring packed lunches may eat their lunch in the main school hall.

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## UNIFORM

May I remind you to fully check the uniform policy of the school, which is on the school website and also in student planners. Where students do not have the correct uniform for the school day, they will be placed into the *Zacchaeus Centre* (the schools' internal seclusion area) until either the correct uniform is brought into school or this is corrected. Over the past year, this has especially applied to school shoes, and as such, we have liaised with 'Wynsors Shoes' and we will send out to you a list of suggested approved types of shoe for school. It is important to share that **you do not have to buy the shoes from Wynsors**, it is a guide on the styles that are appropriate for school.

There are two changes to the policy with regards to uniform:

- 1) Students may wear their hair down; but it must be tied back and away from the face in all Design Technology, Science practical, PE and Dance lessons.
- 2) We are gradually phasing out the clip-on school ties and replacing them with traditional ties: If your child needs a new tie, please can I ask you to buy a traditional tie.

If you have any concerns or queries about the school uniform or student appearance, please consult with the list in the student planner and also from the school website: <https://stmargaretward.co.uk/parents/uniform/>

From September St Margaret Ward will move towards becoming a cash free school, therefore we would request that all payments and dinner money is paid online using the following link:

<https://www.scopay.com/stmargaretwardcatholicacademy?redirect=true>

If you experience any difficulties accessing this or if you do not have access to a computer or bank account. Please contact our academy manager Mrs Stanway in school for assistance.

Also throughout the summer holidays, maintenance and improvement work will be taking place around the school site in order to ensure the safety of all our community, some of this will involve the perimeter fencing and school gates. Once complete only staff vehicles will be able to access the car parks. Please do not attempt to drive down the school driveway to drop your son or daughter off, instead, please use the layby or find a safe spot to drop off on Little Chell Lane. Visitors, or parents with an appointment will be granted access.

As we reach the end of another school year we also recognise and give thanks to all the staff that are leaving us this year. We are grateful to them all for their commitment and dedication to the school, the support they have given to their colleagues and the care they have shown to your children and we wish them very well for their futures.

Finally, we finish for the summer holidays on **Friday 19 July at the slightly earlier time of 1.00 pm**. Please can I ask you to ensure that your child has cleared their school locker by this date, as they will all be cleared and cleaned during the summer holidays. Any items left in school lockers will not be stored at all over the summer holidays.

A copy of this letter will be posted onto the school website and, as always, can I thank you for your continued fantastic support of St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy. If you have any questions about any of the information contained in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

I hope you have a happy, safe and enjoyable summer.

Yours sincerely,

D. McKenna  
Principal

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