



6 September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

As the first week draws to a close, I wanted to take the opportunity to welcome all members of the community to the new academic year and provide you with some updates.

It has been a pleasure to welcome our new Year 7 students to the school on Tuesday. The first few days in secondary school can often be daunting for some, with new routines, buildings to navigate and names of staff to learn. We have been incredibly impressed with how Year 7 have settled in almost effortlessly and I look forward to getting to know them individually over the coming weeks.

Students in all year groups have also made a positive start, arriving at school looking very smart in their uniforms and eager to learn. Similarly, lessons have been calm and purposeful with students working together alongside staff as they commence their studies. Over the past few days I have tried to speak to as many students as possible, hearing about their holidays and discussing their experiences of the school. It's been a pleasure to get to know the students, they are a credit to you as parents and the school community.

I would also like to thank all parents for your support getting the students ready for the new academic year. As a parent myself, I appreciate that uniform shopping and the preparations for the new academic year is an incredibly busy and costly time. Your support has been greatly appreciated and has contributed to the positive start.

Following our introductory assemblies this week, we intend to spend next week speaking to the students about how we intend to recognise and celebrate students for their effort and work in school. We are also keen for students to feedback and have a genuine input into the rewards and celebrations that are given.

As we begin the year, I would like to welcome a number of new members of staff to the community. We welcome Mrs Moon (Science teacher), Mr Bestic (French Teacher), Miss Atkinson (English teacher) and Mr Chadbone (ARC teacher) to our teaching staff. A warm welcome also goes to Miss Frew, Mrs Payne, Mrs Churchill, Mrs Baker and Mrs Foucher who have joined our team of support staff. Ms Haden has moved into the role of Deputy Headteacher whilst retaining her position as SENDCo. The school is continuing to recruit staff into key positions in order to strengthen our pastoral and SEND provisions. We will update you accordingly, to inform you of these appointments and welcome new colleagues.

In August, St Dunstan's students and staff were able to celebrate another fantastic set of examination results. These results were a testament to the hard work of the students as well as the support received from staff and parents/carers. Well done to all students on these outcomes and we wish them the best of luck in their next steps.

These outcomes also marked the end of an incredibly positive year for the school which included a 'Good' Ofsted judgement in all categories as well as the largest number of students joining our Year 7 for several years. I would like to congratulate Mrs Bevan on all that she achieved during her leadership of the school and wish her the very best for the future.



St Dunstan's School

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Looking forward, working alongside the staff and community, I hope to continue to build on this success. I believe that St Dunstan's school should be a place where all students should be supported to fulfil their potential, make a positive contribution to the community and leave prepared to make their mark on the world. High expectations alongside a genuine care and regard for each individual sits at the heart of this. This has been and will always be a school where every child matters.

Over the course of the summer months, myself and the leadership team, working with staff, have begun planning further developments, so that St Dunstan's School continues to be a place where students, regardless of ability and background, are supported, nurtured and challenged to flourish and succeed. I look forward to updating you over the next few weeks and months about these developments and the new opportunities for our students.

Finally, thank you to all the parents/carers who have come and spoken to me individually over the past few days to welcome me to the school community and offer some useful feedback. A positive partnership between the school and the parents is essential for the development of the school and supporting every student. The upcoming Family Forums have been intended to build this partnership and dates for these events will be shared in the near future.

Thank you again for your continued support. I look forward to working with you all in the weeks and months to come, to make sure that St Dunstan's school provides the very best opportunities and education for children to flourish and achieve their full potential.

Yours faithfully

Paul Balkwill
Headteacher