



4th September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Autumn Term Week 1 Headteacher Update

Firstly, I hope that you have had a wonderful summer holiday and had the opportunity to spend time with friends and family. On Wednesday we welcome the newest members of our St James' family to school, our new Year 7s. A reminder that school is open for all other Year groups on Thursday 7th September. We are very much looking forward to welcoming all of the children back to school ready to recommence the normal routines and rhythms of school life. Within our lessons we will continue to follow our broad, balanced and diverse curriculum in order to educate and develop our children to become global Catholic citizens.

We are looking forward to another incredible and productive school year. Our competent and dedicated staff are completing two days of INSET this week which will be spent planning and preparing for your child.

You may be aware from media coverage that the government has asked some schools to close or partially close due to the presence of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in their school buildings. We understand that this is an unsettling news story and that it may naturally have led you to wonder about the safety of our school building. The diocese, who own our buildings, have confirmed that our school building does not contain RAAC and is fully safe to open.

On 24th August our class of 2023 came into school for their results. It was a fantastic morning and an absolute privilege to see the happy faces of our young people as they collected their results. The gallery of pictures can be seen here: <https://www.stjamesheadle.co.uk/results-day-2023/>. The dedication and hard work came to fruition as 75% of our young people achieved a grade 9-4 in English and Maths and 54% of children achieved a grade 9-5 in English and Maths. The results are true testament to their efforts, and we sincerely congratulate them.

Each year brings positive change. There have been a few additions to our staffing team and continued development and updating of the school site. This has included updated iconography, new ceilings and LED lights have been installed in 12 rooms and the kitchen area, meaning 80% of the school now has more energy efficient lighting, grounds maintenance has been completed including sweeping of playground areas and car park, re-seeding of grassed areas in the front of the Drama and RE classrooms, additional new screens have been installed in classrooms and rejuvenation works have been carried out on the Astro turf pitches. Our site and ICT teams have worked incredibly hard for the children over the summer period.

The Gospel yesterday spoke of Jerusalem and the cross. Jesus makes it clear that a 'crossless' disciple is a 'Christless' disciple because a true disciple must take up the cross of Jesus whose cross is our cross. When life gets difficult, as Christians we have to believe that things will get better and that by staying true to our faith, our reward will be great in heaven. We know that throughout this academic year there will be high points and tricky points. What is important is how we respond to these trickier times safe in the knowledge that "With God all things are possible".

At the start the new academic year please keep all our children and staff, but especially our new Year 7s, in your thoughts and prayers. If you need anything, please do not hesitate to get in touch headteacherpa@stjamesheadle.co.uk



ST JAMES'
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Yours faithfully

Mr A Pontifex
Headteacher

