



# ST. AIDAN'S

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

It has been fantastic to welcome Year 8 back to school, and I'm happy to inform you that during the first few weeks we have seen students setting high standards for themselves. Feedback from teachers has been very positive and it seems most have settled very maturely into new routines.

I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself and outline a few key pieces of information about the year ahead. It is a real privilege to be heading up Year 8, having started at St Aidan's with them last September, and followed the journey of their first year alongside them as a Year 7 tutor. I am passionate about our school ethos, living life in all its fullness and walking in the footsteps of St Aidan. I have started the year telling Year 8 to aim high in all that we do and that will be one of our mantras as we progress through the school.

I am lucky to have an experienced and committed tutor team working with me, and we will be supported by Miss Rhodes as Student Support Officer for the year group. Collectively we will be working hard to support students when problems arise both academically and pastorally, and we will endeavour to be proactive in communication with you as needed throughout the year. Equally it is important students and parents know who they can contact if and when needed, so please do get in touch as outlined at the bottom of this letter.

One area we have focussed time and energy as we start the year is ensuring students are setting high standards in terms of their appearance. While the majority are consistently well turned out we would appreciate your support with a number of areas where some in Year 8 are getting it wrong. Please refer to planners or the school website for the full policy, but aspects I would like to improve include ensuring shirts are tucked in, wearing plain black socks that cover ankles, with pierced ears one single set of stud earrings and making sure that trousers are in a tailored style and not jeans or leggings. Skintight trousers are not acceptable. Your support with this is greatly appreciated.

In Year 8, students are taught primarily in mixed ability groups but not exclusively with other pupils from their form. In Maths, Modern Foreign Languages and Science students are taught in broad banded groups. Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and approach to learning within their subject areas.

We are expecting the students to use their planner daily in school to continue to record homework and important information. Form tutors will be monitoring and supporting students throughout the year, whilst also delivering PSHE content within registration time. In PSHE Year 8 students will begin with substance misuse input and move onto work on healthy relationships.

Subject teachers will be writing praise or concern comments in student planners which will be reviewed by form tutors on a weekly basis. Please continue to check your child's planner with them on a regular basis and sign it weekly. Encourage them to have a regular routine for checking their planner and sorting and organising their school bag for the next day. The planner is important for student organisation and parent communication.

Staff have been encouraging students to become involved in the excellent extra-curricular activities that the school provides. Information about our extracurricular provision can be found on the 'Extended Curriculum' section of our school website under 'Parents Info'. We are looking forward to

Headteacher: Mrs S Dover

the upcoming Outward-Bound trip to Ullswater and Howtown. Parents/carers will have already received communication about the trip, payments due and some initial information about kit and accommodation. Further information will follow in due course.

The Key Stage 3 Information Evening will take place on Wednesday 18th October and the first Progress Review for Y8 students will be in December; this will report both on your child's attitude to learning using the school's CODE and their current attainment in each subject.

I will be in touch regularly throughout the year, in the meantime, please keep in touch in the following ways:

- Check the school website and follow the school on social media for information and reminders about dates and events.
- Contact the Attendance Officer, Mrs Brown, for any matters relating to school attendance. She will pass on concerns.
- Contact the school admin team at [admin@staidans.co.uk](mailto:admin@staidans.co.uk) with any subject concerns or general queries and they will pass these on to the right people.
- Contact me, the Head of Year, Mr Huband, if you have a pastoral concern about your child's wellbeing in or out of school.
- Contact the Assistant Headteacher (Key Stage 3 Progress), Mrs King with curriculum matters.

I am excited about the year ahead and now settled I hope students are too. I am thrilled to be working closely with the inspiring and talented individuals in Year 8 and am very much looking forward to getting to know them better and watching their progress throughout this year and beyond.

With very best wishes

Mr Geoff Huband

Head of Year 8