

Friday 30th September, 2022



Dear Parent/Carer

### **Parental Update 98**

Where has September gone? The month seems to have flown by – our new Year 7s and Year 12s seem to have been with us for far longer than just four weeks! But we're delighted with the way they've settled in, getting used to the geography of the building, the two-week timetable, paying for lunch with a finger, *etc etc*, we're also delighted with the way they are (already) making a positive contribution to our school.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Last week I wrote about our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities ('SEND') provision. I'm now in a position to clarify some roles and responsibilities until Christmas.

- Mrs Penketh will continue to be the senior leader in school overseeing our SEND provision. Over the next few weeks she will be holding Annual Reviews for students with Education Health-Care Plans – so she is a point of contact for all parents of students with such plans.
- Mrs Wiseman is working on our Pupil Passports – the documents which give teachers information about each student with SEND.
- Mrs Malone will continue to support SEND administration for part of each week, for example by collating information regarding Year 7 students with SEND.

Our Heads of Year are available to support all students with any pastoral matters that may arise. If you have a query about our SEND provision, in the ongoing absence of our SEND Co-ordinator please contact the most appropriate member of the SEND team – or myself if you are uncertain where best to channel your enquiry. As I indicated last week, we will endeavour to get back to you as quickly as we can, and I would ask for your forbearance whilst we do so. A separate letter will be sent next week to the parents and carers of all the students on our SEND register.

I appreciate changes in the leadership of SEND here also occurred last year, and that the number of recent changes may well be unsettling both for our SEND students and for you, their parents and carers. I'd want to apologise for this and to reassure you that we are doing everything we can to secure consistent, strong leadership of this vital part of our provision.

### **Maths Escape Room**

Many of our Year 8 students enjoyed a Maths Escape Room experience on Wednesday this week. They were locked in the Drama Hall (well, not literally!) and had to solve a number of timed Maths puzzles in order to escape – much like the commercial Escape Rooms that nowadays provide an entertaining hour for the family. I particularly enjoyed watching a group of students trying to deduce the weight of a package given just some scales and three known weights! ...and I know a large number of our students enjoyed the challenges too.

Thanks to Head of Maths Mrs Geddes and the Maths team for organising a memorable day!

### Class Charts

Have you signed up for our new Class Charts app yet? If you haven't already done so, I'd warmly encourage you to – it's a very useful communication tool between home and school. If you need another copy of the access code, please email [officestaff@stmargaretsacademy.com](mailto:officestaff@stmargaretsacademy.com) and we will e-mail it back to you. (The same applies if your son or daughter needs another copy too). A copy of the Class Charts Parents' Guide is available on our website.

### Punctuality

Our new Class Charts software allows us to monitor students' punctuality to lessons more closely too. We're grateful to the vast majority of students who arrive punctually at their lessons every day, but for the small minority that don't, we will be introducing a system of detentions when certain triggers are hit (obviously making allowances where, for example, a new Year 7 has got lost, or a student with SEND needs support). Please remind your son or daughter of the importance of making their way promptly to lessons if you suspect they are one of the minority who can 'dawdle'!

### Job Vacancies

We're recruiting for several key posts in school at the moment – including a Cleaning Supervisor, for example. If you – or anyone you know – would be interested in working for us, please have a look at <https://www.stmargaretsacademy.com/vacancies.php>, where full details of the various vacancies are available. I've now worked at St Margaret's for much longer than I've worked anywhere else, and for good reason – it's a great place to work! I'd love to hear from anyone with the right qualifications who'd like to join our team.

### Finally...

The weather is not being kind to us at the moment – today was our first 'wet lunch' for some time. Hopefully the weekend's weather will be kinder, and our students (and their families) be able to enjoy some well-earned rest and relaxation over the couple of days ahead.

Yours faithfully



Stephen Brierley

Principal.