

Friday 23rd June 2023



Dear Parent/Carer

Parental Update 122

A warm welcome to another edition of *Update*, our fortnightly newsletter for parents. Many of our Year 11 and Year 13 students have now finished their exams, and I know what a relief they – and their parents and carers – must be feeling (not least from personal experience; my own son's last exam was on Wednesday). We wish each and every student a happy (early) summer break, and remind them that:

- **Thursday 17th August** is post-16 Results Day; and
- **Thursday 24th August** is Year 11 Results Day.

Please come early – especially for Year 13 students going on to University; if you haven't got the grades you need, you'll stand a *much* better chance of getting a good offer through Clearing if you start looking straight away! Whilst we hope that all our students will get the grades they need, please be assured that staff and a Careers Advisor will be on hand to offer support if it's necessary. Our doors will open to students at **8am**.

Peter Oliver OBE

I'm delighted to announce that our previous Chair of Governors (and old boy of the school), Peter Oliver, was awarded an OBE in last weekend's King's birthday honour list for services to young people. We're delighted Peter has been recognised in this way and send him our warmest, heartiest congratulations. Enjoy your day out at Buckingham Palace, Peter!

Farewell

- Mrs Draper, one of our Science teachers, left St Margaret's at the end of May after teaching here for nearly 10 years. We're very grateful for everything she gave to our school and wish her every success for the future.
- After almost 8 years of loyal service to the school, John O'Halloran left us at the end of last month to pursue fresh opportunities. Thank you, John, for everything you have done for our students; we wish you every success in your future endeavours.

Strike days

You may have seen in the media that the National Education Union has called two further days of strike action, on Wednesday 5th and Friday 7th July. After risk-assessing the likely impact of a high number of staff absences, we have regrettably taken the decision to close the school to certain year-groups.

- On Wednesday 5th July, we will be **open** to students in Years 9 and 12, but **closed** to most students (see below) in Years 7, 8 and 10.

- On Friday 7th July, we will be **open** to students in Years 8 and 12, but **closed** to most students (see below) in Years 7, 9 and 10.

However, we will remain open for 'vulnerable students' on both days. We will also remain open for vulnerable students in Years 7, 8, 10 and 11. We define vulnerable students to be:

- Looked After Children;
- students with an allocated social worker; and
- students with an EHCP.

If your son falls into one of the above categories and you would like him to come into school on either day, please [e-mail me](#) and we will make the appropriate arrangements.

Please accept my apologies for any inconvenience these partial closures may cause.

Open Evening

Our 2023 Open Evening takes place on Thursday 6th July, from 5pm to 7pm. Do please spread the word! Any parent/carers of boys in Year 5 (or Year 4) who may be interested in applying for a place in September 2024 are very welcome to attend. More importantly, and boys themselves in Year 5 or Year 4 are also welcome to attend!

As usual, there will be a slightly early finish that day so that we can prepare to welcome our visitors. School will finish for students at **2pm** that day – although if you would like us to provide some childcare for your son, especially if he is a younger student or has any additional needs, please let me know through [this e-mail address](#).

Last day of term

There'll also be a slightly shorter day on the last day of term, Friday 14th July. We'll finish at 12:30pm in order that we can say 'goodbye' to a number of colleagues who are leaving us.

Dr Silverstone writes...

"Do you think your child could be a Young Carer?"

"At St Margaret's, we are committed to supporting all children and ensuring their time in school is one where they learn and grow into well rounded individuals with a good sense of wellbeing. We recognise that many of our children take on additional roles and responsibilities that may impact on this wellbeing."

"A young carer is someone under 18 who may be caring for a family member who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems. They often take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Many young carers do not actually realise they are a young carer."

"Young Carers may engage in:"

- *Practical tasks (cooking, housework and shopping)*
- *Physical care (lifting or helping someone use the stairs)*
- *Personal care (dressing, washing, helping with toilet needs)*
- *Managing the family budget (collecting benefits and prescriptions)*
- *Managing medication*

- *Looking after younger siblings*
- *Helping someone communicate*

"We know that Young Carers may need a little extra support to enjoy and do well at school, and we are committed to ensuring that all pupils who are Young Carers are identified, and supported effectively with their wellbeing.

"If you think your child might be a young carer, or could be affected by any of the issues we've highlighted, please contact the school office to make an appointment to speak or meet directly with the Young Carers' Lead, Dr Silverstone.

"Any information that is given to us will be treated sensitively and no information will be shared without your knowledge."

Dr Silverstone further writes...

"As we approach the end of the school year, I'd like to remind families that our uniform standards and expectations remain. Please ensure students arrive to school in full uniform, including their blazers now that the hotter weather has passed, so that our pupils look and feel as smart as possible. Thank you!"

Finally...

Our Collective Worship this week has continued on the theme of "*Heroes and heroines of the faith*", looking at the story of Caleb – a spy whose story is told in the Old Testament. He combined courage and optimism in a way very few of his peers were able to, and as a result was respected well into his old age. We've also been looking at the courage shown by some modern-day faith heroes, such as Elizabeth Fry (who used to feature on the back of £5 notes). I hope our boys have been inspired by hearing about people whose faith drove them to action, hopefully to imitate them in the future!

With best wishes for a restful summer weekend,

Yours faithfully



Stephen Brierley
Principal.