**March 2024**

**Dear parents/carers**

Welcome to my March newsletter. Again, I am delighted that my staff are continuing to provide a holistic Catholic education for our great children here. Their commitment and dedication is strong and this bodes well for the future. I hope that you enjoy reading the below.

**Catholic Life of the school update**

* *Mission and Ethos Team [MET].* Our MET team, whose members include staff and governors, met recently to discuss actions the school is undertaking to promote our distinct catholic ethos. As you are aware, this team exists to promote, develop, and evaluate Catholic life and Collective Worship of St Anne’s. In a busy agenda, led by Mr Regan, we covered the successful Yr7 retreat days and welcome mass, Catholic Social Teaching awards, new daily form group meditation in the chapel rota, Advent liturgies and the Caritas group charity outreach were some of the events and activities that were discussed and evaluated for impact. Planning is now already underway for next term’s meeting where the MET will review our S48 SEF, how we can build on the themes of Pope Francis encyclicals for example *Laudato Si*, reflect on how we can offer more multi-faith opportunities, and plan for our Catholic Life SACRED day in July. Our school motto is *‘To know, love and serve God’*; our aim is to put this motto into practice day by day at St Anne’s. The MET is one way we are building towards this goal.
* **Caritas Ambassadors.** This Lent our ambassadors have been busy working towards our £1000 target for Mary's Meals. It has been an amazing whole school team effort with forms using their competitive spirit once again to come up with exciting fund-raising ideas including Easter Egg and hamper raffle, Friday cakes sales, Easter egg hunt, bingo, an arcade games lunch competition, Valentines’ hearts, a football tournament, refreshments at parents evening and a non-uniform day to show support for Mary’s Meals. The ambassadors have also educated our community on the amazing work that Mary's Meals does. Thanks to all that have contributed. It is appreciated.
* Dave Fitton from the **‘Good News Retreat Team’** led Lenten prayer and reflection sessions in the school chapel with KS3 classes. The students really got something out of these thought-provoking and faith filled sessions. The message was clear; in Lent we are called to look in the mirror with honesty and make a positive change in our lives. When that journey is a struggle, Jesus is there as our example and friend.
* In February, three of our Caritas Ambassadors from Yr7 and Yr8 went to The Wellspring in Stockport to donate the money raised during our Advent Appeal. The Ambassadors received a tour of The Wellspring and were able to see all the hard work the volunteers do there helping serve Stockport's homeless and much more.
* Finally, during **Holy Week** we celebrated our Lenten/Easter liturgies on Holy Thursday in year groups. Yr10 students led our services of gospel readings, multimedia reflections, prayers of intercession, and a final prayer of the resurrection. This is the prayer we used to conclude our liturgies. “*I realise afresh today what Your death and resurrection mean for me. Forgiveness, freedom, and the ability to walk to eternity. You are alive, in the beauty of the earth, in the rhythm of the seasons, in the mystery of time and space. Amen.”*

**Safeguarding Updates**

* This month Miss Rees delivered a forum reminding all staff about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the impact these have on our young people. Students display emotions in a variety of ways, and, whilst we maintain high standards and expectations, we will support students who are struggling. Staff know and recognise ACES and respond accordingly. Miss Rees highlighted that last month there were more families needing support in terms of uniform, finance, and food. We have started our very own St Anne’s food bank which is based in Miss Rees’s office. Please speak to Miss Rees if you feel you need any additional support and encourage your child to see Miss Rees or their Head of Year.
* It has come to my attention that a number of our students are misusing social media. Most of this is taking place **outside** school hours, but we still have the authority to sanction students even if this is the case. Can I ask parents/carers that you regularly check what your child is being exposed to online? Whilst we continue to educate our students about what is appropriate/inappropriate content in whole school assemblies and PSHE lessons, parents must also bear some responsibility. Please check social media platforms, online chats and conversations and photos, included deleted items. Your support on this matter will always be much appreciated.

**SACRED Day**

Our second SACRED day of the year took place on 9th February. It was a resounding success!

* Yr7 focused on creating a political party in their form groups, learning about writing manifestos, political campaigns and how to write persuasive speeches. The forms created incredible campaigns including campaign videos and writing raps. Kyro became 'Prime Minster' with his party 'The Education Party' after winning the democratic election at the end of the day following all party conferences. This activity educates pupils on the idea of democracy, a fundamental British value.
* Yr8 focused on enterprise and worked on making their own sustainable chocolate brand, learning about the cocoa bean, designing a hot chocolate mug, working out finances for Fair Trade farmers, composing an advert jingle and also making a chocolate lollipop from scratch with 'Oli the Choc'. Understanding finances is important for our students.
* Yr9 focused on Awareness of the World Around Us.  They took part in a workshop delivered by the police on knife crime and safety in the community. Students looked at building resilience techniques with Barclays Life Skills, discussed the importance of acceptance of others with Odd Arts Theatre Company and had a session with evangelist Chip K about the importance of curiosity in life before celebrating the end of the day with a 'Chip Party' which involved a lot of dancing and chips!
* Yr10 looked at revision skills delivered by GM Higher. Furthermore, workshops included The Money Charity discussing taxes and finances and Barclays Life Skills ran a session focusing on leadership and resilience.

SACRED days are now firmly embedded at St Anne’s and aim to build personal development, increase resilience, and educate our great children on a range of pertinent issues.

**Yr11 update**

Below is important information pertinent to our Yr11 students and parents as we fast approach the GCSE exams starting in early May.

* *Yr11 parental information evening.* I delivered a presentation on key messages to Yr11 parents last week. The key messages included the importance of 100% attendance, our high expectations, how parents can help and coping with stress. At the time of writing there are less than 20 school days to the start of the exams. The mantra must be ***‘don’t count the days BUT make the days count’.***
* *Behaviour.* As I have repeatedly said, and I reiterate here, the majority of Yr11 students are well behaved, and more importantly, have the **correct attitudes** towards their learning. This bodes well for the upcoming exams and their results in August. However, a small minority believe our rules don’t apply to them and they disrupt their learning AND the learning of others. For avoidance of doubt, this is unfair, and I will not tolerate poor behaviour, more so as the GCSE exams are approaching fast.
* *Exams.* Congratulations to the students who took exams in Health & Social and in Construction in January. Results through this week showed some outstanding performances. This represents a percentage of their final grade and they have given themselves a great chance to do well this summer. Well done and thank you to Mrs C Bowden and Mrs L Bowden for all their hard work in preparing these students for these exams!

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| **Date** | **Time** | **Teacher** | **Subject** |
| Tuesday 2nd April | 9.30am – 12pm  12.30pm – 3pm | LSC, SBY, GVA, RTU  SSW | English  Science |
| Wednesday 3rd April | 9.30am – 12pm  9.30am – 12pm  12.30pm – 3pm | SSW  LTO  LTO | Science  Spanish  Spanish |
| Friday 5th April | 9.30am – 3pm | JWR | Art |
|  |  |  |  |
| Monday 8th April | 9.30am – 12pm | MAN/RGA | PE |
| Tuesday 9th April | 9.30am – 12pm  12.30pm – 3pm | COS, TKH, DBR, JSU  NDO | Maths  Music |
| Wednesday 10th April | 9.30am – 12pm | ASI | Drama |
| Thursday 11th April | 9.30am – 12pm  12.30pm – 3pm | JLE, AWA  JLE, AWA | History  History |
| Friday 12th April | 9.30am – 12pm  12.30pm – 3pm | LRI  LRI | Geography  Geography |

**Attendance update**

As I have repeatedly said, good attendance is extremely important. Parents have a ‘legal duty’ to ensure that their child attends. As a school we are proactive in analysing absences and subsequently following this up. However, there are still issues irregular attendance of some students or parents asking for ‘permission’ for holidays during term time.

*Why does attendance matter?* Firstly, at St Anne’s, the curriculum is sequenced and builds upon prior knowledge. If your child is absent, then they will not be able to recall what has been previously learnt. Secondly, your child is safest when they are in school. Thirdly, they spend quality time socialising and forming relationships that support their general well-being and development. I ask that parents ensure that their child attends school regularly. **Arguably, by doing so you are giving your child the best chance to succeed in the future.**

On a more positive note, we have once again celebrated students with 100% attendance by sharing a rewards breakfast of pancakes and bacon rolls with them. Attendance trophies have also been awarded to the Form with the highest attendance. These trophies have become hotly contested and students are thrilled when their Form wins the cup; it is a delight to see them celebrating their achievement together.

**Yr10 update including Curriculum**

Yr10 students are now more than a third of the way through GCSE coursess. Since January, there have been improvements made towards their attitudes to learning, which is to be celebrated. However, a significant number of Yr10 students are not working hard enough in school or at home and/or disrupting the learning of others. I have personally spoken to several parents. For avoidance of doubt, repeated poor behaviour will not be tolerated at St Anne’s and several students are putting their places at **serious risk**. Additionally, Yr10 attendance is a concern. The government agrees that attendance is a national issue. However, my immediate concern is that a significant number of children in this crucial year are not in school learning. For example, attendance of Yr10 on Friday 22nd March was 90.2%. Our target is 97%. This includes having ‘broken’ attendance [a day off each week or fortnight randomly]. This GCSE content is not taught again, and students will struggle to learn new content as lessons are taught in sequences. I have spoken before about the strong correlation between attendance and attainment. In essence, those that have poor or irregular attendance achieve less than their peers and decrease their chances of better opportunities post-16. I again ask, respectfully, that parents support the school in ensuring that your child attends school every day.

St Anne’s continues to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that allows every child, regardless of ability or background, to succeed. We believe that all students should build cultural capital throughout their time at St Anne’s, engaging in learning opportunities from a full range of subjects, resulting in the highest possible academic achievement. We don't stop there. Over the past two terms, each subject curriculum has a review and as a result subject leaders and their staff are continually refining their subject curriculums. The review of students’ work in Yr10 demonstrates the level of challenge and hard work students are producing which bodes well for their final year in Yr11. Here is a reminder of the curriculum overviews that parents can access on our website: [Key Stage 4 (KS4) | St Anne's (stannes.academy)](https://www.stannes.academy/key-stage-4-overview)

**Want a tour of St Anne’s during the day?**

As a school community we are always willing to show off the positive atmosphere during the busy school day. Therefore, we will operate an open-door policy for you to visit St Anne’s and tour the school **every Friday morning at** **9.15-10am** to meet our staff and students and I will take you on a tour around the school. This is also an excellent opportunity to ask me any questions. Please ring reception to ‘book’ a tour. I look forward to seeing you.

**Childrens’ Mental Health Week 4th-9th February**

We raised awareness of mental health through a range of activities, many of which we posted on our social media accounts during the week. Yr7 and Yr8 took part in active registrations each morning learning that physical health improves mental health with Miss Burton leading them in circuits for 30 minutes. Our Mental Health ambassadors lead assemblies highlighting the support available in school. All students were given a mental health journal to support them at home, as well as taking part in a week-long focus looking at the theme of *'My Voice Matters'* daily in Form Time which culminated in students creating a display with uplifting messages and support for each other. We continue to support children as, after half term, *Kooth* visited St Anne’s to talk to students about the online, free and confidential service available to support students with their health. Yr8 started having workshops lead by our Mental Health Schools Team called *'5 Ways to Wellbeing'* and our counselling has continued along with the different mentoring programmes which support children in all year groups. Remember that everyone can suffer from poor mental health and that it is *‘good to talk’.*

**Interventions**

Our pastoral team, which includes Heads of Year and Form Tutors, work hard to ensure students are being well supported so they can access the curriculum. To facilitate this, St Anne’s runs several internal interventions, including supporting students to make positive behaviour choices or regulating their emotions. We also work closely with external agencies to provide counselling, NHS mental health support, speech and language therapy, or school nurse support. Most recently, we have been fortunate enough to be able to begin a mentoring programme for students who need support with issues including confidence, self-esteem, and social support. Students receiving mentoring have all reported that this intervention has been positive to their overall wellbeing and it is ensuring that they feel supported by school.

**Reading update**

We have seen success with our focused reading groups. We provide interventions at four levels to support our students with their reading and monitor progress through reading tests three times a year. The last test showed that students in intervention groups made an average of 15 months’ progress since September. We are so proud of the efforts the students are putting into their reading and their progress is a result of sheer hard work and dedication. The smiles on their faces when they know they have achieved great results is wonderful to see. Remember that the ability to read, and hence comprehend text, underpins all learning across the curriculum.

**POWER strategy**

The POWER literacy strategy is fed into all subjects across the curriculum and assemblies have been delivered to students about how important literacy skills are for their future. A high standard of literacy not only unlocks academic success but also provides more opportunities for the future of our students. Vocabulary plays a huge part in understanding and knowing more, and it is brilliant to hear students using words they have learnt in different contexts. It is clear to see around school, both in lessons and at social times, that students are embracing literacy and becoming em**POWER**ed to express themselves as individuals.

**Mobile phone use at St Anne’s**

Last month the Government spoke about a ‘crackdown’ on the use of mobile phones in schools. For the record, there will be no changes to our procedures, which are simple, transparent, and effective. In fact, our procedures are now embedded and accepted in a mature manner by our students. But for clarity, the use of mobile phones by students is not permitted anywhere in school, at any time. If a student has their phone out on school premises, it will be confiscated, and a parent/carer will have to collect it. There are no exceptions to this simple rule. May I take this opportunity to thank parents for their support in this matter.

**Early Career Teacher [ECT] update**

ECTs have successfully completed another term here at St Anne’s, each developing different aspects of teaching to improve their practice. This has included embedding Formative Assessments using Walk Thru strategies delivered during CPD in twilight sessions this term. Their evidence continues to grow towards the 8 teaching standards and students in their classes continue to make good progress in their lessons.

**Staff profiles**

As part of our overall massive improvements to our curriculum, we are increasing our intake of Geography and History uptake at Key Stage Four. This is part of the process of moving towards delivering an Ebacc curriculum. Therefore, in this month’s newsletter I have decided to share with you the profiles of subject leads in Geography and History.

* *Miss Riley, Head of Geography.* I grew up in Radcliffe, North Manchester, and from a very young age I’ve always been passionate about the world around me. My mum tells me I used to walk around with an atlas, telling anyone that would listen facts about the environment! I moved to Nottingham to study Geography at the university and then to Bristol to complete my PGCE. I’ve been here at St Anne’s for just over 2 years, and I absolutely love it. I’m incredibly proud of our students and to be part of the school’s rapid improvement. Outside of school, I’m a Manchester United season ticket holder, which now isn’t always a fun way to spend my weekends. I’m also incredibly passionate about music and I spend a lot of time going to gigs. I also love to travel and share my adventures with the students. Over Easter, I’m going to the Sahara Desert, so no doubt the photos will end up in one of my lesson PowerPoints!
* *Mrs Lee, Head of History.* I grew up in Cheltenham in Gloucestershire in a family that loved the Humanities. My dad was a Geography Lecturer at our local University and my brother went on to study Politics and History. So, it was with little surprise that I developed my love of History to study at degree level at Lancaster University. I'd been drawn to the North-West as my parents were originally from the Lake District and one of my passions is to walk the Lake District fells. Upon leaving University, I trained as a lawyer and worked in this capacity for a number of years in Manchester City Firms. However, my passion for History gnawed away at me and 8 years ago I decided to re-train as a history teacher. I never looked back. Teaching is such a rewarding career and there is a real joy in the inter-action between students and me. Since coming to St Annes, myself and my colleague Miss Waghorn, have taken great pride in designing an ambitious History curriculum where students learn about their world, critique it and make their own judgements on it. In my spare time I take my 13- and 11-year-old children to their various sporting activities and enjoy travelling, walking, socialising, going to the gym and reading. If there was one activity that I could recommend fostering knowledge, power and life it would be reading!

**National Careers Week**

At St Anne’s, we celebrated National Careers Week from 4th to 8th March with a multitude of wonderful opportunities for students in all curriculum areas. Yr10 visited Manchester Museum, learning about different professions found in the museum. Stockport County Football Club joined us to enlighten students about the range of jobs available within the stadium. Some students visited Stepping Hill's Workplace Safari to research careers within the NHS and also to visit the new building site to see how all the different roles work together to create this amazing multimillion pound facility. In Music, artist Chip K, ran a workshop discussing his careers journey and Llandudno Ffin y Parc Gallery curator shared how this role works with GCSE Art students. Yr7 students were treated to a practical lesson from Dr Ecclestone, an A&E doctor who explained a day in the life of a doctor - we were exhausted just listening to him! Collectively, these raise our students’ aspirations to follow their dreams. A big thanks to Mrs Simmons for co-ordinating.

**International Women’s Day**

On Friday 8th March as part of International Women's Day, MMU Lecturer and England Squash Team nutritionist, Sarah Lowry spoke to girls in Yr8 and Yr9 about how amazing it is to be a woman, the different twists and turns in her career and how girls should believe in themselves and their abilities. This talk supports us in ensuring we have an inclusive learning community for all our students. We invited a PHD medicine graduate from the University of Manchester, who is currently working in the oncology department focusing on improving cancer research. She was a truly inspirational speaker who will hopefully inspire the next generation to pursue careers within STEM and help in the fight against cancer. To finish the day, we treated all our staff to a treat but asked the men to share it with an inspirational woman in their life! Since being at St Anne’s I have been overwhelmed with the commitment, tenacity and professionalism of the women that I have worked with.

**Sports updates**

March was a busy month for the PE Department. The brighter evenings have allowed the finishing of our football league and cup fixtures. Mr Andrews said that the attitude of the students was a ‘pleasure to watch’ and this has seen them claim victories against some much bigger schools. This was evidenced in a recent game against Cheadle Hulme High School where our Yr11 side were eventually beaten 2-1 but it was a close, competitive game. Callum Dakin captured the St Anne's spirit saying *"we battled for every ball, and we were unlucky not to get a result. I really enjoyed the game"*. Girls’ sport, under the guidance of Miss Burton, continues to grow, and the Yr7/8 girls had a fantastic basketball game against Hazel Grove recently. Our new facilities are enhancing our students’ experience of playing sport. Stockport Falcons, a National League side, now play their home games at St Anne's. I would encourage you all to head over on a Sunday to soak up the atmosphere and watch the talent on display. A huge thank you to Heaton Sports Club for their continued support as our link continues to provide more opportunities for our students. This club has a real community feel and offers lacrosse, tennis, rugby, and cricket throughout the year. A number of our students are now attending training at the club. Again, I would encourage you all to take a look on a busy Sunday afternoon.

**Personal Development updates**

* *British Science Week*. This was celebrated at St Anne’s through external speakers, trips to museums and a visit to Chester Zoo where students learned about the impacts of palm oil on biodiversity. This gave our students a real insight into the risks our planet is currently facing and what small measures they can take to ensure its conservation. As part of promoting STEM career pathways to students across both key stages, we welcomed the University of Manchester Chemistry department to perform their ‘Flash Bang’ event which was an entire hour of whooshes, bangs, explosions, and reactions, including dry ice, liquid nitrogen and hydrogen explosions. This helped students understand the applications of the curriculum they are enjoying currently and possible career pathways within the STEM umbrella of Chemistry.
* *DoE update.* Our Bronze Award students are working hard on the ‘skills and ‘physical’ sections of the award in a variety of areas including; football, playing the piano, karate, basketball and journalism. In addition to this, students are also out in the community volunteering for at least an hour each week, with students at Coach House Church on a Sunday leading Sunday Youth club and serving tea and coffee; working in local charity shops; helping at animal shelters and supporting the elderly to name just a few. All of these things contribute to the final award, which ends with an expedition in June. Well done to the participants who are learning valuable life skills!
* *Respect 100 program*. This is an initiative aimed at boys, consisting of 9 sessions, to support participants in the understanding of what it means to be a man. It includes challenging topics such as abuse, sexism, and gender violence but also an understanding of healthy relationships based on respect. This is currently being delivered by Mrs Corser with support from Mr McNally.
* Yr10 students participated in the Advanced Mathematics Support Programme’s *Maths Feast* competition and represented St Anne’s superbly! Our two teams of students were placed 8th and 9th out of 25 teams, with one of the teams coming first place for Round 3 of the competition. Congratulations to all the mathematicians involved and who represented our school with great pride. It is opportunities like this that enrich our taught curriculum and aspire our great students to achieve. The Maths department are super proud of you all!

**Finally… a date for your diary!**

We are excited for our St Anne’s *‘Got Talent’* Show on **Tuesday 30th April at 6pm**. This evening will showcase the incredible talents of our students from all year groups with acts from all over the Arts! Tickets will be on sale after the holidays from Mrs Simmons and Mr Donnelly. I ask that parents support this event. St Anne’s is your school, and it would be great to see a full-house. The last few events run by our Creative Arts department have been a sell-out.

I hope that you have a peaceful and holy Easter break and as always, thanks for your continued support. It is very much appreciated.

Mr Logue

Executive Headteacher