



In all things faithful

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Headteacher

Mr S Logue BA (Hons), M.Ed., NPQH

7th September

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Brief Updates

Firstly, and most importantly, all the staff and I have thoroughly enjoyed all our pupils returning to school. Without becoming complacent and not underestimating the many challenges ahead, it has been a resounding success. I measure 'success' in terms of 'happiness' and being 'safe'. Taking each of these in turn, I witnessed many children smiling all day long obviously pleased to be back at school. Our Year 7 pupils are already settling in and will quickly learn the 'St Damian's Way'. I have no doubt that they will thrive in our caring environment and become ambassadors for our school. Speaking to dozens of pupils in all Years it was obvious that they missed being here. Furthermore, as I walked around the school, there was a great buzz from the staff and it was obvious that they were equally glad to be back. From a Headteacher perspective, it was a joy to behold to see children and staff back in school. As I have said in previous correspondence, safety is my number one priority. I am delighted to report that only a few pupils 'forgot' their face masks, but compliance was 100%. Pupils were, as I expected, very mature and, again, 100% compliant with the new procedures in place. This bodes well for the future. But, I must stress that these are early days and we must not become complacent. Covid has not 'gone away'.

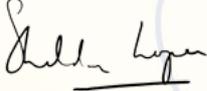
Based on the experiences, albeit limited, to date, I highlight the following;

- ✓ **Hair styles.** A very small number of pupils have come into school with hair styles that are not appropriate. Both the pupils and their parents will be spoken to and asked to rectify. The policy on hair is clear and hasn't changed. On the web site it says 'cult' hairstyles, eg shaven heads and dyed hair are not permissible. Hair should be a natural looking colour.
- ✓ **Uniform.** Quite simply, the manner in which the pupils presented themselves this week was a credit to them and you as parents. It was great to see our great pupils in neat smart uniforms. This reflects the fact that they are proud to be here. Long may this continue.
- ✓ **Attendance.** There was lots of negative media coverage with regards to pupils not attending school. I am delighted to report that, overwhelmingly, the attendance was as high as it's ever been. This reflects your confidence that St Damian's is as safe as it can be. I appreciate that pupils have 'missed' some of their education and it is vital that pupils attend school on a regular basis. In essence, there is a strong correlation between good attendance and achievement.
- ✓ **Behaviour.** As expected, St Damian's pupils always rise to the challenges. Many teachers commented positively on their mature attitude on return to school. I concur with their sentiments. As I walked the school, I saw pupils learning in a safe and welcoming environment that promoted positive attitudes to learning. I hope that this continues as the school year progresses.

Despite all the positives, I have to, sadly, say that on one occasion a parent 'shouted' at the member of staff on reception. This is not acceptable nor is it conducive to solving any issue, regardless of what that issue may be. The 'St Damian's Way' is built on the premise of respect and building relationships, both of which are very strong in our community. We pride ourselves on our positive relationships between pupils, staff and parents. I, therefore, respectfully ask that you speak to staff in a manner that that does not contravene our core value of respect.

Thank you for your continued support and having faith in our school community in these challenging times. I have spoken to many parents in the car park I will pass your kind words onto the staff.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Logue
Headteacher