

Dear Parent/Carer,

We would like to extend a warm welcome back after the summer holidays to our St Aidan's community; it has been a delight to see the students making such a positive start to Year 9.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the students for the dignified way in which they have conducted themselves during the last couple of weeks following the sad news of The Queen's passing. They have demonstrated compassion and respect around school, particularly during our service of remembrance.

Students are embracing the extended curriculum activities on offer, discovering new interests and skills, and reacquainting themselves with familiar hobbies. There are lots of opportunities available and we would like to encourage all students to participate in at least one of these groups or clubs. We are also looking forward to the Year 9 trips due to take place towards the end of the academic year; further information on these trips will follow shortly.

This half term sees the launch of our Year 9 Student Council. Students have had the opportunity to put themselves forward for election as 'Form Representatives', a role which includes consulting with their peers and working alongside staff to ensure that student voices are heard in school. We do hope that this is a valuable experience for our young people, particularly as this half term in PSHE we are learning about democracy and the political system in the UK.

As your child embarks on their final year of Key Stage 3, we thought it would be useful to go over what lies ahead. The first Progress Review will be issued to parents on **Thursday 15th December**. This will enable you to see your child's attainment and progress for this term. This information can help form the basis of discussions with your child about which subjects to follow at GCSE. We will have a GCSE Options Evening on the **Wednesday 22nd February**. This will be followed up by a Parents' Evenings on **Thursday 2nd March**, after which pupils will make their choices.

Students will have a variety of support throughout this process to help make informed decisions. Subject Teachers, Heads of Department, Form Tutors and our fantastic Careers Team will be available to guide students with their individual choices.

There is also an "examination week" for Year 9 pupils and these assessments will take place within individual subjects the week commencing **Monday 24th April**. A further Progress Review will be then issued on **Friday 16th June**.

Finally, from **Monday 26th June**, students will be sitting Yellis tests. It is important to stress that the tests are designed so that students do not need to revise in advance. The tests are not qualifications and the data produced by the tests will be only be used internally within the school.

As Head of Year and Assistant Head Teacher, we are very much looking forward to working with this cohort of young people during this pivotal point in their academic careers. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about the arrangements for Year 9.

Yours sincerely

Hannah Strickland

Head of Year 9

Clair King

Assistant Headteacher KS3 Progress