



ST. AIDAN'S

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

September 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

Academic Year 2024/2025

A very warm welcome back as we start week three of the Autumn term. I do hope that you and your family had a restful summer break and that everyone is settling back into the routine of normal life. I would particularly like to welcome families who are new to St Aidan's; those of you who have children who have started with us in years 7 and 12 and also to the few families who have joined us in other year groups. It genuinely is lovely having the school filled with young people again.

The term has started well, and I am sure you will be interested to hear that our summer exam results at A level and GCSE were some of the best results the school has achieved for many years. Schools are asked to compare their results to the pre-covid outcomes of 2019 and the last academic results of 2023; at A level, our results were higher in every headline measure with over 31% of students achieving a grade A/A* and nearly 60% of students securing a B grade or above. In our BTEC subjects 48% of students achieved a Distinction or Distinction* which is well above the national average. The headlines are very similar at GCSE where an impressive 86% of students passed their English and maths at grade 4 or above and our overall average progress score is higher than in previous years. I am pleased to say that the challenging academic targets we set ourselves at the beginning of the school year, as priorities within our whole school improvement plan, were all achieved. I am sure that parents and carers will wish to join me in thanking the incredible staff at St Aidan's who constantly go the extra mile to put all our students first and ensure they are supported to achieve their personal best. On behalf of all the staff I would like to thank you as parents who have worked with us to make these outstanding outcomes possible.

The school is looking slightly more colourful this year with the introduction of the compulsory lanyards. These are helping us to identify students more easily and allow students to access all areas with their ID cards. Students are also looking much smarter in their school jumpers so thank you for your support in ensuring your child is dressed in correct uniform each day.

You will be aware that over the summer break we migrated our whole school Management Information System from Bromcom to Arbor to bring us in line with the rest of our Yorkshire Causeway Schools Trust schools. This process was not without its complications, but I am pleased to say that the move has been successful. We have a few teething problems and some of these are to do with communications so please do continue to bear with us as we iron these out as soon as we can. There has been a slight delay on the introduction of our pre-order lunch facility, 'Aidan's Eats', but we will keep students up to date with when this becomes live. We are working towards the Arbor Parent App being ready to launch sometime after October half term and, once again, we will update you when this is ready and how you can access this as a parent/carers.

Headteacher: Mrs S Dover

I am pleased to share with you some of the priorities we will be working on as a staff body this year. Our September training day had a heavy focus around our vision and values and our role in safeguarding the students we serve. We also revisited with staff the 10 Teaching and Learning Principles (TLP's) which we pledge to use in all our lessons to ensure we are challenging and supporting each student to achieve their absolute best. Our TLP's derive from sound scientific research around metacognition and pedagogy and ensure that our teaching methods adapt to the varied learning styles of all students. They include methods we will use in our teaching to support students to know more and remember more whilst also focusing on the quality of instruction, content sequencing, and the use of assessment to identify gaps in learning and inform lesson design. This is underpinned with an emphasis on developing the literacy skills of reading, writing, listening and oracy which are taught during period 1 in our daily WALK time for students in Years 7 to 11. This is giving the opportunity to further develop confidence and competence in these abilities which can be transferred into all subjects and secures these skills for life.

We understand that for some of our students the start of term is always a difficult transition and that this can be a stressful time for parents as well. We urge you as parents and carers to reach out to us as a school if you need further information or support. Please see the link below to our parent wellbeing bulletin which we hope you will find helpful.

[Wellbeing Bulletin September 2024](#)

Many of you will be aware of The Beacon, our internal provision that supports students with particular social, emotional, and mental health issues. This is run by Mrs Atherton and Mrs Klauser for students in all year groups who may be needing some more specialist input to guide them through their time at school. If you feel your child is struggling with certain mental health issues, please contact their Head of Year who can make a referral to The Beacon, and we can ensure they get the care they need. A reminder of the Heads of Year and their contact email is below.

Year 7	Ms Reynard	e.reynard@staidans.co.uk
Year 8	Mr Bean	d.bean@staidans.co.uk
Year 9	Mr Huband	g.huband@staidans.co.uk
Year 10	Mr Alker	p.alker@staidans.co.uk
Year 11	Ms Strickland	h.strickland@staidans.co.uk
Year 12	Mr Margerison	l.margerison@staidans.co.uk
Year 13	Mr Dinsdale	n.dinsdale@staidans.co.uk

On a slightly different note, I would like to invite you all to join us at the St Aidan's Quiz and Curry Night on Thursday the 17th of October, details of which can be seen in the booking link below. This promises to be a great night hosted by our Friends of St Aidan's (FOSA) where parents and carers can come together to meet old friends, meet new friends, and feel part of the St Aidan's family. The event will also help to raise funds for the school, and every penny raised goes back into enhancing the educational experience of all the students at St Aidan's.

[Whole School Adults Quiz at Constance Green Hall, St Aidan's School, Harrogate event tickets from TicketSource](#)

Finally, this is the prayer we shared as a whole school at the start of term. We hope that you will take comfort in the knowledge that your children are cared for and nurtured by everyone at St

Aidan's and every child is an individual for whom we strive to give the best possible education and support so that they may experience life in all its fullness.

Father God, we thank you for giving us the time to spend together this morning. We pray for those who left our school last term; for the young people who are starting university, the staff who have moved on to new jobs or retirement, and the students who may have moved to other schools. May they feel your presence with them always.

We thank you for returning our students and young people safely back to school after the summer holiday and we think particularly about those who join our St Aidan family for the first time, most of whom are in year 7 or 12. For any who are anxious or uncertain, give them confidence we pray. May they find this to be a place where all are valued, cared for and nurtured so that they may flourish.

Lord God, we pray today for countries where there is war, random violence or only fragile peace. We think of the troubled parts of the world, where darkness prevails and where the light of the Lord seems so remote. We pray for people whose humanity is denied by others – for those suffering from malnutrition, illness and disease – for those living in fear, and those who feel there is no hope. May world leaders have the wisdom to know – and the courage to do – what is right.

In stillness and in busyness, in quiet and in noise, in crowds and alone, your love remains the same. Father, breathe your spirit into every aspect of the St Aidan's school community that all might know your gift of life in all its fullness.

Amen

With best wishes,



Mrs Siân Dover

Headteacher

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