

4th October 2024

Dear Families

We continued to have a very soggy week here at St. Paul's with very restricted opportunities for fresh air during breaks and lunchtimes. Despite this, our children have responded incredibly well. I spoke to staff on Wednesday morning about how school seems to have a very different feel so far this term. The number of children being sent to our reflection room and being suspended is much lower than this point last year. I spoke to all children in our Collective Worships on the first day back about the importance of kindness and respecting the dignity of all members of our community and they seem to have responded very well to this. I have noticed, however, that our attendance data has taken a dip so far this year. Our attendance has always been the best out of all Milton Keynes schools but this is no longer the case this term. Thank you to all our parents who ensure that their children attend school on a regular basis. The DFE have introduced new attendance regulations this year so please can I ask that parents support our pastoral teams when they make contact regarding children's absences. This is a requirement that all absences are robustly challenged and that we track this carefully. I cannot emphasise enough how important it is that children are in school learning as any missed time can seriously impact learning and outcomes for your child. Thank you for your support with this.

Our catering team have noticed that pupils with a spend limit of £3 a day are buying a snack at break and then not having enough for their main meal. The spend limit set by parents means that we can't put an overdraft on the account. We will always ensure that children have something to eat but please can I ask that parents and carers remind children about spending their money appropriately on a meal and not snacks.

Year 11 had an excellent visit to Kintbury on retreat this week. I hope they found this opportunity for spiritual reflection and growth beneficial. I am grateful to staff who accompanied them on this visit.

On Tuesday our Year 12 A-Level Mathematicians took part in the Senior UKMT Mathematics Challenge. This is organised to develop and extend the mathematical approach of students and is designed to challenge their thinking from numerous perspectives. We would like to take this opportunity to praise those who took part for their excellent efforts. We look forward to getting the results! We also recently celebrated our first entry into the Maths Olympiad for Girls, a contest designed to challenge pupils on extended mathematical problems. Well done to Yla, Claire, Eunice and Anne-Marie in Year 11 for their excellent efforts.

Our Year 8 Art students have been busy making giant bee lanterns that will form part of the MK Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture's City of Code & Light Parade Festival. The Light Parade takes place on

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Saturday 5th October and is setting off from outside Milton Keynes Library at around 7.45pm and proceeding to Campbell Park. Thank you to Route Canal Arts for working with our very creative students.

On Monday we have our first non-uniform day of the year. This will be for our Advent charity, CAFOD. We are trying to support parents by holding all non-uniform days on a Monday or Friday to support with washing and ironing! Normal jewellery rules apply on non-uniform days. On Monday evening there is a Curriculum & Teaching meeting of our Governing Board. On Tuesday evening at 6pm we have a PTA meeting. Please do consider joining our PTA, the meeting is an excellent opportunity to find out more about the work they do and how they support the school. Sixth Form students have the opportunity to visit Southampton University on Wednesday and on Friday a group of children and staff will be joining schools across our Diocese at the annual Diocesan Schools' Mass.

Thursday evening is one of our most important events of the year, our Open Evening. This is an opportunity for us to showcase our wonderful school to prospective parents and children who are currently in Year 6. If you have family and friends who are in year 6, please do encourage them to visit us. They also have the chance to join our school tours during the school day on a Friday. Thank you to all the children who have volunteered to help on the evening. They are rightly very proud of their school and the contribution they make and they will make excellent ambassadors for us. To allow us to set up for Open Evening the library will be closing at the end of the school day.

Also on Thursday evening we are holding a recruitment drop in between 6pm and 8pm in the library. If you are interested in finding out about our latest vacancies or would like some more information about careers in our school do please come along and have a chat with our Recruitment Manager.

Well done to all those who took part in sporting fixtures this week. The Year 9 boys' football team lost in the first round of the county cup against John Hampden Grammar School, who knocked us out last year. The boys struggled to adapt to the horrendous playing conditions and went into half time 3-0 down. Our coaches reminded the boys of the quality they have in the team, and that if they played to their potential, they would get themselves back in the game. Riley Savill and Joseph Maw scored a goal each in the second half, but sadly it wasn't enough to progress to the next round. It was also a loss for the Year 9 girls' football team in their first league game of the season away to Watling Academy.

Watling also came out on top against our Year 9 netball team who showed fantastic character and, despite the score, continued to play with their heads held high and a smile on their faces. The Year 10 netball team had a convincing 18-0 win against Milton Keynes Academy. Congratulations to all involved and a special mention to Sophie Brown for scoring 16 out of the 18 points. Year 11 gave a really good account of themselves against MK Academy but ended the game losing 8-3.

Our Medical Team has seen a huge increase in the number of students attending the medical room, especially during lesson time. Please remind your children that for non-emergency medical needs they should only visit the medical room during breaks and lunch times. Thank you for your help.

Finally, please can I remind all parents and carers to vote for the nominees for Parent Governors by Tuesday 15th November at 12 noon. You can find the voting form [here](#).

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I hope that you all have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



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