

# St. Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy



## Information for Parents/Carers of Year 7 Students

2018 - 2019

We hope that your daughter settles well into life at St Anthony's. Starting secondary school is an exciting new challenge which can be overwhelming for both students and parents. There are so many differences between primary and secondary school and they are expected to cope with a lot of changes in their routine and become more independent and responsible for organising themselves. As parents you will have your own worries about transition and in this booklet we have tried to give you as much information as possible to help you and your daughter adjust to the new routines. We have tried to provide as many practical tips and ideas as possible so you can help her to become more independent, enjoy learning and achieve her full potential.

### **Daily Routine**

The school day begins at 8.30 when girls will line up in the Year 7 yard to go to their form class to be registered. If pupils arrive before 8am they can go to the yard adjacent to the Sports Hall or the dining hall for breakfast from 8am.

**Registration: 8.35-8.40am**

**Period 1: 8.40 - 9.40am**

**Break: 9.40 - 10.00am**

**Period 2: 10.00 - 11.00am**

**Form time/Assembly: 11.00-11.20**

During this time the form tutor will:

- Lead morning prayers
- Check uniform is correct
- Give pupils reading time (pupils should bring a book with them or they can borrow one from the Learning Resource Centre)
- Check the planner is being completed and is signed every week (planner checks are on Fridays)
- Tell pupils about anything that is happening in school that day/week.
- Assembly takes place at this time one day each week.

**Period 3: 11.20 -12.20pm**

**Lunch: 12.20 - 1.15pm.**

**Registration: 1.15-1.25pm**

**Period 4: 1.25 - 2.25pm**

**Period 5: 2.25-3.25pm**

## **Equipment**

The pupils are responsible for bringing in the correct equipment for lessons. It is also important that pupils know whether it is week A or week B as their timetable might be slightly different. It is advisable that the pupils make a copy of their timetable in their planner. Highlighting any lesson changes in week A and B will make it easier for them too. Girls must be organised when it comes to having the correct P.E. kit. Spare kit is available but pupils are strongly encouraged to get into good habits of bringing their own. If a pupil forgets an exercise book for a lesson they should inform the subject teacher who will decide what action to take. Any punishments given by teaching staff for forgetting equipment or homework aim to develop the pupils' organisation skills and help make them more independent.

## **The Pupil Planner**

Part of ensuring a happy and successful transition to secondary school is being organised and planning ahead. Our student planner has been designed to help them with these important skills. Used properly, it is a fantastic tool to help your daughter manage homework, monitor progress and record achievements. Regularly monitored by parents, the planner becomes a key source of information on deadlines and progress. It is also a useful way of communicating information between parents and form tutors so please check it regularly and sign it each week. It is a good idea for students to pack their bag the night before, using their planner as a reminder of what they will need for whatever lessons are on their timetable for the next day. Pupils should tick off any homework that has been completed. Planners must be signed weekly by parents/carers to check homework is being completed on time and to read praise/ comments by teachers. In Year 7 we want positive planners! Merits/ stickers/ stamps are put in the planner to praise good work, attitude and homework. The cost of the planner is £2.50.

## **Homework**

Homework is a vital part of learning and encourages children to think independently and use their initiative. Students will be set homework tasks every week by their subject teachers. When homework is set, the teacher will ask students to write the task and deadline in their planner. You can then monitor the work they have been set and help them to organise their time to complete it. Students should try to get into the habit of doing their homework on the night it is set, rather than leaving it until the last minute. We believe that homework is important and expect students to complete all pieces of homework to a high standard and hand it in by the deadline set. If your child is regularly struggling to understand the tasks set for their homework their subject teacher will be happy to help them; all they have to do is ask. There is also the option of using the Learning Resource Centre before and after

school, break times and lunch times, if they need access to books or computers. Ms Jackson, our librarian, is always happy to help.

## **Attendance**

In order for our students to have the best possible chance to succeed and to be happy and settled at school, it is essential that we work together to ensure that attendance is excellent. A child who is absent from school one day each week misses an equivalent of two years of their school life, and being absent from school unnecessarily can affect motivation, confidence, enjoyment, and mean that students fall behind in their work.

If your daughter is sick and cannot attend school, please inform us on the first day of absence by phoning the school reception. If your child will be absent from school for longer than predicted, please phone school to let the pupil support manager know (Mrs Richardson-Dunn). When pupils return to school after a period of absence the child must provide a note briefly explaining the absence to the form tutor. If no contact from home is made the child's attendance will be marked as unauthorized.

There are certain times of the academic year when full attendance is of paramount importance. In November, February and June your daughter will sit internal Key Assessments which are used by staff to track and monitor her progress. Your daughter will be given the dates and times for the tests by her individual subject teachers. Reading tests will also take place throughout the month of November and MidYis tests take place in July.

If there are issues which are affecting your daughter's attendance please contact the academy.

## **Medical appointments**

Please try to make routine medical/dental appointments outside of school hours. In an emergency situation or for hospital appointments please send your daughter into school with a medical card/appointment letter and state what time your daughter will be collected from our main reception. Your daughter needs to obtain 2 signatures to be allowed to leave for an appointment (form tutor and Assistant Director or Deputy Director permission) and wait at reception until an adult collects them. Due to safeguarding we do not allow students under the age of 16 to leave for appointments on their own. Students will be given an official pass out which they need to carry with them. Pupils need to sign in at main reception when returning from their appointment. If there are a series of appointments try to ensure the day and time is varied to avoid missing the same lesson and falling behind with work. Every effort should be made to catch-up missed work.

## **Term time holidays**

The academy term dates are provided in the Academy planner at the beginning of each year and on our school website. Parents/carers are expected to take family holidays during academy holiday periods only. From 1st September 2013 the DFE amended the regulations surrounding holidays in term time. Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. These new amendments give no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Low cost travel or arrangements made by a family member or friends are not deemed to be exceptional circumstances.

## **The Year 7 Curriculum**

Pupils are taught in either mixed ability or in tiers and set classes.

### **Mixed Ability Classes**

These classes are based upon the tutor group that a pupil is in. Some classes are taught as the tutor group whilst others will be a mixture of combined tutor groups.

The subjects taught in mixed ability classes are:

PE, ART, Technology, Food, Careers and Guidance (CIAG), Music.

### **Tiers and Sets**

Pupils are taught within 3 tiers Fatima, Lourdes and Walsingham. This year the pupils have been placed within these tiers based upon a number of factors:

- Combined SATs scores at Key Stage 2 in English and Mathematics.
- Key Stage 2 teacher assessments in English and Mathematics.
- Other relevant information passed on from Primary schools (Statements, Special Educational Needs, etc).

Within these tiers the pupils are placed into sets using the following data:

#### **English**

- Sets are based upon their Key Stage 2 English score, their teacher assessed performance at Key Stage 2 and any other relevant information from the Primary School.

#### **Mathematics**

- Sets are based upon their Key Stage 2 Mathematics score, their teacher assessed performance at Key Stage 2 and any other relevant information from the Primary School.

Geography, History, RE, Science, Spanish, French.

- Sets are based upon their Key Stage 2 combined English and Mathematics score, their teacher assessed performance at Key Stage 2 and any other relevant information from the Primary School.

Modern Foreign Languages (Spanish and French)

- Pupils in tiers Fatima and Walsingham are allocated to either a Spanish or French class. There will be an opportunity for pupils to pick up a different language to which they have been allocated in Year 9 when they choose their options for Key Stage 4.

## **Reviewing Pupil Progress**

The performance of students in all subjects is continually reviewed. Should we think a pupil would benefit academically from being in a different set during the year we would look at making a decision at the end of a term in preparation for the start of the next term.

Any move would have to be made in consultation with all the subject teachers and would only take place should it be appropriate in all subjects.

Parents will be informed in writing of any moves.

## **St Anthony's Ladder**

In years 7 and 8 pupils are placed upon an academic ladder to monitor progress.

All students are continually monitored through classwork, homework and Key Assessments in all subject areas.

Pupils are expected to make a minimum of 3 steps progress a year on average. This expectation forms the target grade for each pupil in each subject. Pupils may have different targets for different subjects depending upon their prior attainment in different areas and their individual strengths and skills.

## **Starting points**

The starting point on St Anthony's Ladder for a pupil is determined as follows:

## English

- The Key Stage 2 English SATs score.

## Mathematics

- The Key Stage 2 Mathematics SATs score.

## Geography, History, RE, Science, French, Spanish

- The average Key Stage 2 English and Mathematics SATs scores.

## Technology, Art, Music, PE, Food

- These skill based subjects complete baseline skills assessments in the first three weeks of term. They are done through teacher assessment in lessons and pupils will not have been aware that this was happening.

## Reporting to Parents

Reporting to parents takes 2 forms:

### October Parents' Evening

This is your opportunity to meet your daughter's tutor and teachers and to ask questions around how she has settled into life at St Anthony's.

### Short Reports

These short reports are issued 3 times a year in December, March and June.

Should we need to communicate any issues in between these reports a member of your daughter's pastoral team would contact you directly.

## Literacy at St. Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy

### Reading

At St Anthony's we recognise that reading, and particularly reading for pleasure, has a direct impact on pupils' performance, progression and confidence. It has been proven that pupils who read for 35 minutes a day perform on average 3 levels above those who do not read. Our aim is to develop each pupil's potential to the point where they are reading at or above their chronological age. We monitor this development in Key Stage 3 using the Accelerated Reader Programme. This programme allows us to monitor your daughter's

reading levels and progress, offering an individualised reading programme. Your daughter will begin by taking a Star Reader test from which we can identify her reading age, reading levels and targets. Your daughter's reading progress, including her understanding of the texts she is reading, is monitored through the Accelerated Reader quizzes available on a variety of texts.

We expect every pupil in Key Stage 3 to have a reading book in school as part of their equipment. Your daughter will be expected to read daily during registration time and in some lessons. She may bring in her own reading book or borrow a book from the library, however we do not take responsibility for any Kindles brought into school.

The English Department actively encourages pupils to read regularly and will be supporting the Accelerated Reader Programme by setting reading homework throughout Years 7 and 8. This will be the main homework for KS3 English. Staff will monitor your daughter's reading using the Accelerated Reader quiz data.

As a welcome gift to St. Anthony's all Year 7 pupils are given a free reading book as part of the Book Buzz initiative.

### **10 tips to support your daughter's reading:**

1. Set a regular reading time into your daughter's day.
2. Encourage your daughter to switch off the electronic gadgets for 35 minutes to read.
3. Read with your daughter, discussing the book she is reading and encouraging a positive reading experience
4. Talk to your child about the books you're both reading.
5. Ask what books your child would like for birthday and Christmas presents.
6. Go to the library together - if your child is stuck for a new author, ask the librarian for guidance or look online at book reviews.
7. Encourage your daughter to read magazines, newspapers, or the sports guides. You can help with this by leaving suitable reading materials around the home.
8. Talk about what you are reading with your daughter.
9. Play audio books in the car. This will encourage reading for enjoyment.
10. Make use of e-books and e-book readers such as Kindles. You can access a lot of e-books for free.

### **Writing**

Your daughter's writing skills, and the continued development of her spelling, punctuation and grammar skills (SPG), are important for her progression. We aim to support this in all subjects, however as a parent or guardian you can also support this by:

Being positive and encouraging about her writing.



Encouraging your daughter to proof read her work and identify any SPG mistakes to correct.

Letting your daughter see you write often. You are both a model and a teacher. If children never see adults write, they gain an impression that writing occurs only at school.

Being as helpful as you can in helping your daughter write. Talk through her ideas with her; help her discover what she wants to say.

Involving your daughter in writing for real experiences, for example, helping with grocery lists, adding notes at the end of parents' letters, sending holiday and birthday cards, writing down telephone messages, writing notes or emails to friends, helping plan trips by writing for information and writing notes.

## **Behaviour**

We expect all pupils to follow the rules and routines of the Academy to ensure that daily life is calm, organised and that classrooms are a positive environment to learn. We aim to try to help pupils to a sense of self-worth, self-discipline and co-operation so that they mature into responsible adults.

At St. Anthony's we celebrate success and excellent behaviour in the form of awards, positive phone calls/letters home and merit certificates. However, subject teachers and form tutors will need to impose punishments for failure to comply with the school rules and routines e.g. comment in planner, a detention, early intervention report etc. More serious/persistent issues will be referred to the Assistant Director of Year 7 and if no resolution to the behaviour concern is found to Mrs Tomlin (Deputy Director KS3) and Miss Britton (Director of KS3 and 4).

Form tutors can communicate with parents regarding behaviour through the planner, or when necessary via telephone/letter. School detentions can take place during the school lunch break or after school. Early intervention reports are designed to support students in areas where they are struggling i.e. behaviour, organisation, punctuality to class etc. If an early intervention report is showing no signs of improving the situation a student will then be referred to the Assistant Director and then onto the Deputy Director. We do hope that most issues can be effectively dealt with and resolved at form tutor level.

## **Extra-Curricular activities at St Anthony's.**

Becoming involved in extra-curricular activities is a great way for your child to immerse herself into the heart of the school and make new friends that she might not meet in her class and form groups. Joining a group could help your child develop talents that she already

has, or could even help her realise an interest that she has not yet explored. In addition to this, becoming involved in a club is a fantastic way to make sure your child has lots of exciting opportunities throughout her time at the school. Here at St Anthony's, we have a variety of different clubs both at lunchtimes and after school. Just a small selection of the different clubs available for students at St Anthony's are listed below:

<b>Badminton Club</b>	<b>Jewellery Making</b>	<b>Dancing</b>
<b>Chess Club</b>	<b>Mini Vinnies</b>	<b>Poetry Club</b>
<b>Ski Club</b>	<b>Duke of Edinburgh</b>	<b>Living Streets</b>
<b>Netball</b>	<b>Youth SVP</b>	<b>Junior Choir</b>
<b>Athletics Club</b>	<b>String Orchestra</b>	<b>Mandarin Club</b>

## **Communicating with staff**

We have a number of ways of communication to ensure that your daughter's time in school is effectively supported.

### **School planner**

Our initial form of communication is the use of the school planner. Please write in the 'Comments' section if you would like to speak to a member of staff.

### **E-mail**

If you would prefer to communicate using email, you can send an email to [enquiries@st-anthonys-academy.com](mailto:enquiries@st-anthonys-academy.com) and this will be forwarded to the member of staff dealing with your concern/query.

### **Telephones**

In an emergency you can also call the school and speak to the receptionist. Your message will be passed onto the relevant member of staff to return your call; our telephone number is 0191 5658904. Please be aware staff may be teaching throughout the school day and we endeavour to return all calls within 24 hours. This may not always be possible if staff are out at meetings or study visits.

### **Appointments**

You can request an appointment with a member of staff if there are issues you would like to discuss face to face. Appointments can be arranged via email or phone.

## **Post**

You can write to us at St Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy, Thornhill Terrace, Sunderland SR2 7JN.

## **Website**

There is also the opportunity to communicate with us via our website with a 'contact us' page, where you can complete your details and they will be referred to the appropriate staff member who will get back in touch with you.

## **Keeping in touch**

Keep up to date with what is happening on our Academy website

[www.st-anthonys-academy.com](http://www.st-anthonys-academy.com) and Twitter **@St\_Anthonys3**

You will find copies of all our policies available on the Academy's website.