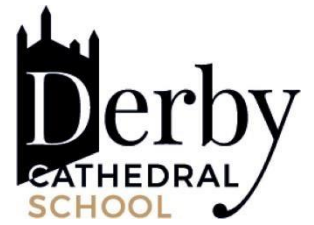


Derby Cathedral School
Family Newsletter
October 2020



**A message
from
the
Headteacher**

Dear Parents/Carers,

Having now been back at school for a month, I wanted to share some of the updates and developments that we have experienced during this time and those that we have to look forward to.

We all understand that the return to school after a long period of lockdown has been a real time of uncertainty. All of us have had to get used to a new way of operating in school. I am delighted that our students have coped really well with the return to school routine.

As I write this we have been dealing with a positive Covid case in our school community. Whilst this can be a worrying time for all concerned, this is something that many schools in the UK are dealing with. All schools have to follow the advice of Public Health England who tell us what actions to take. It is not always the case that an entire year group bubble will have to self-isolate. The first time something like this happens is always a learning curve and I would really like to thank all of the students and families impacted by this for their calm and understanding approach. For all schools in the UK, if any groups of students have to self-isolate for 14 days, they are expected to continue their education at home. We will be providing work by setting this on Microsoft Teams and will be trialling some live lessons too. More details will be provided on this over the next few weeks.

Despite all of the changes that we are experiencing due to Covid, it is important that we focus on what is important in school. Our focus this term is on our FAITH values and our 'student 7 essentials'. Both of these demonstrate the expectations and aspirations we have for all of our students. We want every student to be the best they can be and to have great opportunities in terms of future education, university and employment. We have already sent home the student 7 essentials and our FAITH values can be read in more detail later in this newsletter.

Our FAITH values look at developing our character; the way that we think and behave. This includes how we treat others too. Students will be reflecting on their behaviours using these FAITH values on a regular basis.

Year 9 will be choosing their option subjects after Christmas; this is an exciting stage in their education and requires a real focus on their future. It's important for all students, in every year group, to be thinking about their future steps. This is the time that good work habits are formed and they have the time to think about what their strengths are, what they enjoy doing and the types of jobs that are available. All students will have time in their PSHE lessons during the year to think more about this.

I hope that you enjoy reading the updates in this newsletter and I thank you for your continued support of this very special school community that we are all so proud to be a part of.

Mrs J. Brown

General Messages

Information for Parents

We would like to provide clear information for all parents/carers on certain aspects of school life. The senior leadership team are preparing a series of leaflets and video clips to give some more detail around topics such as:

- Home school communication
- Feedback
- Anti-bullying
- FAITH
- Homework
- Targets and progress
- Safeguarding
- Social media

We would love to hear if you have any suggestions of topics that you would like more information about. Let us know via info@derbycathedralschool.org.uk

Year 6 Applications and Virtual Open Event

With the current Covid-19 restrictions in place, we are not able to host a traditional open evening event.

However, we have a virtual event available on our school website. Videos from key staff, all subject areas and some of our students can be found under the 'Information' – 'Open Events' tab.

If you have a child that is looking to join us in September 2021 please do have a look at this event online and share with anyone you know who is also interested.

School Arrival Times

A large number of students are arriving quite early for school. We appreciate that some are having to work around bus timings. However, please can we remind everyone that:

Years 7 & 9 should not be arriving before 8.30am

Year 8 should not be arriving before 8.45am

Communication with School and Social Media

I have been made aware that there has been quite a bit of discussion recently on the Facebook parents group. These sites are not official school sites and we do not see or participate in these discussions. However, some parents have raised concerns to me about the content of these discussions and the negative impact these are having on them and the school.

I have spoken to the administrators of these groups who have been extremely supportive and a great example of school and home working together. Our mutual aim is to make sure that everyone feels supported in being able to have open, positive and constructive communication with school. It is so important for all of our students that this is a school they are all proud to belong to.

It is so important that our focus is on the quality of education and support for students. Parents/carers and school staff working together on this goal will always have the best results for your children.

We know that for the majority of students, their time at school will be a happy and smooth journey. However, this is not always the case and some students will experience difficulties at various points. As a school, we do not tolerate poor behaviour towards others and will always deal with these situations as soon as we are informed. As such, we ask that all parents let us know about any issues as soon as possible and do not use social media to discuss these situations. This is especially important when discussing other students.

Our channels of communication are, and always have been open and we enjoy a positive working relationship with parents.

I am aware though, that in a growing school, it is important for us to be really clear who to communicate with and what response times to expect. This information has been sent to all families and is available on our website.

In summary:

For general enquiries, use info@derbycathedralschool.org.uk or call reception on 01332 325710

Please note that we are experiencing a high number of calls every day.

For any other issues your child's tutor is the first point of contact – use the info@ email and title it for the attention of your child's tutor

We aim to reply to emails within 48 hours. If you haven't heard within this time, then please let reception know or send another quick email.

Enquiries may then be passed to your child's Head of Year and if more serious, a member of the senior leadership team. If it is a matter related to lessons or the curriculum, it may be dealt with by a Head of Department.

I will be sending out a leaflet and short video for all parents/carers to explain all of this in more detail.

I would also ask that parents/carers remain polite and courteous with school staff at all times. We understand that sometimes emotions may be running high but we will not tolerate abusive language towards staff either in person or on the phone. If this happens you may be asked to leave or we will terminate the call.

Education

FAITH

We have shared our vision with all students at the start of the year. A key feature of this are our FAITH values. This set of values are core to all that we do and encourage in everyone who is part of our community. Students will be given regular time to reflect on these values over the course of every year. The values are:

Fellowship - Collaborating with others, we treat everyone with respect, dignity and kindness.

Aspiration - We are ready to learn and grow, striving to be the best that we can be in every aspect of our lives.

Integrity – We demonstrate fairness, equality and honesty.

Tenacity – We are determined and resilient when faced with challenges.

Humility - We are gracious, calm and understand the importance of forgiveness.

Homework – Microsoft Teams

To help make the setting of homework more accessible, and to prepare all our students for the future possibility of remote learning, we are pleased to announce that we are now beginning to set homework for students through Microsoft Teams. All students have been working with their teachers to understand how to access Teams through their school email account and everyone asked has been very positive about this change. Teams is a great way for teachers to share work with students and can be accessed on any device that has internet access on it. We believe

it is really important to equip our students with the skills needed to thrive in the modern world and feel this is a great step forward for our school.

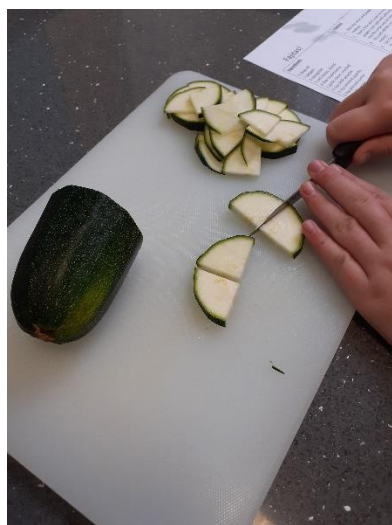
We will be supporting any families where there is currently no access to the internet at home to ensure that all our students are able to make use of this exciting resource.

Cathedral Christmas Card Competition

We are delighted to be working with the Cathedral on producing the artwork for their set of Christmas cards. All students are working on this as part of their first unit of work in art. The Cathedral will judge all entries and choose a set of three – four cards. It is great to be able to work together on this project and we're looking forward to seeing the final products.

Food Technology

You may already be aware that as part of our school development, we now have a bespoke room to deliver Food lessons. All students will have lessons in here for one term this year. This is part of the Technology carousel of lessons where they will have a term each of design & technology, graphic design and food. We are already enjoying seeing the delicious dishes that our students are producing. Students have been making healthy dishes such as fajitas, pizza and couscous salad. Technical cutting skills are also taught such as the 'bridge' and 'claw' methods of using a knife safely. We hope that some of the food made it home before it was eaten for you to try too!



Year 9 Options

All year 9 students will be choosing their GCSE options in the Spring term. We are currently working on the subjects that will be on offer. This information will be provided for all parents/carers in February/March. Students will have lessons as part of their PSHE programme to research this further.

Extra-Curricular

We know that many staff and students are missing the extra-curricular activities that were on offer last academic year. We are currently planning how we introduce some of these activities back into our after-school sessions. Please be aware that we are having to plan these cautiously and in-line with Covid-19 restrictions such as keeping students in their year group bubbles. Watch this space for further details!

Bike Safety

It is fantastic to see so many students cycling to school.

To help support this, we have installed many more cycle racks near to the front entrance and are continuing to increase this number in order to accommodate all bikes. We would appreciate the support of parents/carers in ensuring all students have a secure bike lock and wear a cycle helmet in order to keep themselves safe. The police have informed us that bikes are likely to be stolen if they are left unlocked.

Coronavirus Measures

As we have previously communicated, we now require all students to have a face mask in school.

This must be worn:

- In the hall/dining room/canteen areas before school starts
- In the dinner queue
- On the PE bus

The NHS has produced a Test and Trace App. This is a helpful tool that has advice around identifying symptoms, booking a test amongst other things. It can only be downloaded by those who are 16 years+

We have an additional full time cleaner in school every day who is constantly cleaning frequently touched surfaces. A long lasting anti-viral spray is used on all surfaces in school to reduce the risk of transmission. A deep clean is organised if we ever have a confirmed positive case in one of our school community. Hand sanitiser gel dispensers are situated at every entrance and every classroom door.

We would appreciate your support in ensuring that your child has the following with them every day:

Face mask (unless medically exempt – if this is the case, please inform their Head of Year)

Equipment (e.g. pencil case with pens, pencils, whiteboard pen, ruler, rubber, sharpener) as these cannot be shared.

Personal and Road Safety

As the school is currently situated in a very busy area we would appreciate all parents/carers speaking to your child/children about road safety. It is well known that teenagers are a high risk category for accidents with road traffic.

In particular, we need students to think about crossing the road in a suitable place where they have full view of the road. Students also need to be aware of having their full focus on their surroundings and not on their mobile phones whilst being close to and crossing roads.

Building Update

New Build

The building on our new site is making fantastic progress – it is very exciting to see how it is developing. We put regular updates and pictures on our school website and will include this section in each edition of the newsletter to keep you all updated. Due to the ever changing Covid restrictions, it is not possible to give a definite end date for the project. However, the progress to date has been really good and the contractors are confident that they will complete in the summer term. That will give us the necessary time to have a smooth move for a September 2021 start in the new building. If we are able to move any earlier then we will communicate this to you. Once the building is more complete and safer we hope to be able to take students to visit the site. We will be giving updates, including photos to all students on a monthly basis as well.

There is a short interview with the project manager on site on our website – this can be found under: Information – New Site Progress Update

Midland House

We are delighted with the work completed to refurbish the new side of school, predominantly used by year 7. As parents cannot come in to see this new section of school we have included some photos of some of the specialist spaces in this new area.

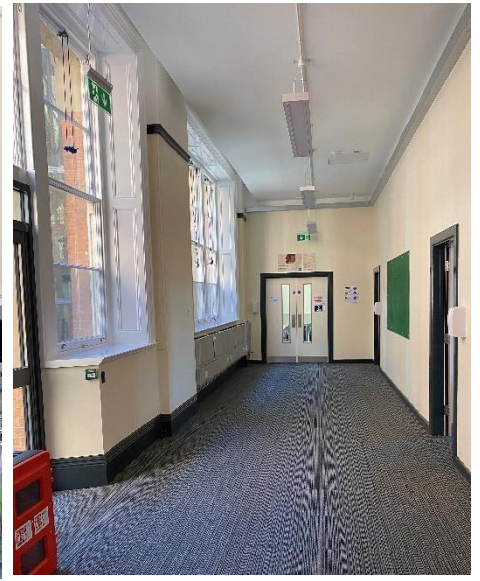
Dining Room



Canteen servery



Downstairs back corridor



Food Room



Atrium and stairwell



Art room

Indoor fitness space

This space is now set up with table tennis tables and will soon have some additional fitness equipment. This will be available for all year groups at certain times.



Contact Details

Our school telephone line now has a dedicated answerphone for reporting student absence.

Please be aware that we receive a high number of calls to main reception. It is often more efficient to send us an email. Please send any enquiries to info@derbycathedralschool.org.uk. Your email will be sent to the most relevant member of staff.

Most staff have a large teaching commitment and so will not be able to reply immediately. We aim to answer all enquiries within 48 hours. If you do not get a reply within this time, please do let us know so that we can chase your enquiry and reply.

If your enquiry is an emergency please make this obvious in your email or continue to try and call.

01332 325710

info@derbycathedralschool.org.uk