

23 March 2016

To: Parents/Carers of all students in Year 7 to Year 13

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am delighted to enclose our most recent Spring Newsletter, which highlights some of the fantastic activities and educational opportunities that take place at St Julie's Catholic High School on a daily basis. Please visit our website (www.stjulies.org.uk) to see many more exciting stories which give a real flavour of the enrichment opportunities and the academic achievements of our students across all year groups.

In September 2015, we introduced a new curriculum with a focus on a three year KS4 GCSE programme, starting in Year 9. It took two years to develop this programme to ensure that students and staff are fully prepared for the rigour and intensity of the new GCSE qualifications. Our new mastery curriculum ensures students have a deeper knowledge and understanding of GCSE content, and are fully prepared with a set of key skills that lead into A Level and Vocational qualifications. We recently conducted a parent/carer and student survey on the new curriculum which had an extremely positive response with over 90% of parents/carers and students 'strongly agreeing' or 'agreeing' that the new curriculum that it is preparing their daughters well for GCSE examinations.

Our GCSE results in Summer 2015 were in line with the students' prior attainment. The prior attainment of this particular cohort was below average from their Primary schools. However, with the new Government performance measures, relating to progress rather than attainment, the outcomes for these students were still very positive, achieving a Progress8 score of -0.06 (0 is the National Average and so virtually in line) and with a Value Added score above national average of 1000.8. This is a key strength, which highlights that regardless of students' prior attainment the outcomes are still very strong by the end of KS4.

We continue to celebrate the achievements in Sixth Form where we are ranked fourth in the City, out of 40 providers, and are in the top 20% in the North West and in the top 25% nationally for academic progress. Over 80% of students continued on to Higher Education and Universities of their first choice with over 25% (above national average) taking places at Russell Group universities (top 20 universities in the country). Our vision for Sixth Form is to move towards outstanding outcomes within the next 12 months. This is also reflected in our 0% NEET (not in employment, education or training) and students receive high quality careers information, advice and guidance.

We continue to celebrate the successes of English, which has performed significantly above national performance measures for the past three years, with English Literature also continuing to celebrate outstanding results. Our Maths department have celebrated many achievements this year and many changes, which include a new Leadership Team within the Maths department, a new curriculum offer across Year 7 – 10, and the introduction of 'Dynamic Learning' resources to embed key skills in problem-solving, mastery, numeracy and reasoning. Our recent survey results regarding the new 'Dynamic Learning' resources reflect greater confidence levels and improved outcomes for our students, with current progress being broadly in line with national performance by January with a view to achieving above national in the summer 2016 results.

Significant changes have taken place in the Science curriculum across KS3 and KS4 with a high proportion of students in Sixth Form going on to STEM related courses, and students being challenged at a higher level with their Science knowledge. This is supported by the continued partnership work we do with KS2 to support deeper knowledge and understanding of the Science curriculum coming from Primary school, supported by the Ogden Trust Partnership. Our website shows the many achievements of students during the recent National Science Week. These successes have come to fruition for our Year 13 Physicists, who recently achieved the British Aerospace Engineering Design Award for their project, which was celebrated at the National Final of the Science Big Bang Event at the Houses of Parliament.

At St Julie's, our vision for Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) is that all students are entitled to learn a foreign language, where as other schools may only provide this opportunity for Set 1 and Set 2 students. We are proud of our curriculum which enables 100% of students to be entered for a GCSE language qualification. This ensures students of all abilities have basic skills in a Language which opens doors for future career choices.

We ensure a broad and balanced curriculum offer for our students including, Performing Arts and Sports related courses, which are celebrated on a daily basis and is reflected in our newsletter and website stories. Year 7 Indoor Athletics City Champions, Cross country representatives at National level.

Thank you for your continued support as parents/carers. The survey results obtained on Parents' evenings have been extremely positive. Without the support of parents/carers we would not have the thriving community that the students benefit from here at St Julie's Catholic High School.

We look forward to sharing with you our forthcoming examination results, Summer 2016.

May I take this opportunity to wish you an enjoyable Easter.

Yours sincerely

Mr T Alderman
Headteacher

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