17th September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to the start of a new school year. It is with excitement and anticipation that I share a very warm “welcome” to St Anthony’s. The first two weeks have flown by. Our highly skilled team of teachers and support staff are spending the start of this year ensuring children and young people feel happy and safe in school. The majority of pupils have settled incredibly well to new classes, as we know that once children are secure in their environment then the academic learning will be able to flourish!

**COVID 19**

I hoped the new academic year would allow us the freedom to move forward, away from the constraints and restraints Covid-19 has brought with it the previous couple of years. In many ways we have moved back to traditional routines and systems, however, with positive cases of the coronavirus still high in our community, particularly so among young people – we must remain vigilant in our health and safety procedures and proceed with caution. Covid-19 hasn’t gone away; friends and family are still testing positive for the virus and sadly, some people are becoming very poorly indeed.

The government has made it very clear the education of our children cannot suffer the disruption it has across the last two academic years. Quite rightly, St Anthony’s will do everything they can to ensure children and young people are safe, settled and in a calm environment - however, we cannot remove all risk – only look to manage the risk in the best way we can to keep our children, staff and community as safe as possible.

School staff will continue to take twice weekly lateral flow tests (LFTs) all having tested prior to their return to school for the start of the new school year. The majority of secondary aged pupils tested twice upon their return to school and we have been asked to support them to test twice weekly at home until the end of September.

**Young people aged 12 to 15 to be offered a COVID-19 vaccine**

The Health and Social Care Secretary has [announced](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/young-people-aged-12-to-15-to-be-offered-a-covid-19-vaccine) that young people aged 12 to 15 in England will be offered one dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, following advice from the four UK Chief Medical Officers (CMOs). The main purpose of the COVID-19 childhood vaccination programme is to provide protection to the children who receive the vaccine and help to reduce transmission of COVID-19 in the wider population.

Like all school-based vaccination programmes, the vaccine will be administered by healthcare staff with appropriate qualifications who are trained in the vaccination of children and young people.

More information on the COVID-19 vaccine, vaccination programme and how it will work, as well as answers to some frequently asked questions, will be included in the guidance for schools from Public Health England to be published shortly.

Once again, I welcome families old and new back to St Anthony’s. It is my pleasure and privilege to lead this wonderful school community. I sincerely hope we are able to fulfil the pledge of trust you have bestowed upon the school and to work in partnership to educate your children to reach their full potential.

Wishing us all a happy, healthy, safe and successful year ahead! With my warmest wishes.

Mr R Page

Headteacher

**Term 1 Dates**

Monday 4th October Training Day - no pupils in

Friday 22nd October Last Day Term 1

Monday 1st November First Day Term 2