

Friday 16th December, 2022



Dear Parent/Carer

### **Parental Update 109**

Earlier this week I had the privilege of attending the funeral of Tom Adams, who sadly lost his battle with cancer earlier this term. Around 50 Year 9 boys came too, all wanting to pay their respects to a talented young man who touched so many lives in the 13 years of life he was granted. None of us get to choose how many years we are given, but all of us can choose how we spend them – and it was good to hear some happy memories of a student who made so many wise choices.

Do please continue to hold Tom's family and friends in your thoughts and prayers, especially over the Christmas period.

### **Farewell...**

At the end of this term, we're saying goodbye to Mrs Pedder and to Mr Zotos, both of whom have made invaluable contributions to our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities ('SEND') provision – in Mrs Pedder's case, for nearly a decade! We're so grateful for everything they have given to our school, and wish them every success in their future endeavours.

There's also a 'changing of the guard' as far as our SEND support is concerned. Sue Warrior and Leah Matthews, from All Saints Multi-Academy Trust, are handing over to colleagues from elsewhere in the City – I'll introduce them formally to you in our next newsletter. A big *Thank You* to the All Saints team for all their work here over the last couple of months!

In the meantime, the [SENDadmin@stmargaretsacademy.com](mailto:SENDadmin@stmargaretsacademy.com) e-mail address, now fully up and running, continues to be the main way to get in touch with us about any matter relating to SEND.

Finally, we're also saying 'Goodbye' to Mr Fieldhouse, who's leaving us at Christmas after a long period of 'supply teaching' in the Maths Department. We've been very grateful for his services too, and he leaves with our best wishes for the future.

### **Christmas Jumper Day**

Thank you if you were able to support our Christmas Jumper Day appeal last Friday. The amount of food that St Margaret's families kindly donated to local foodbanks was truly astonishing – the picture hasn't captured all the tables, or any of the food underneath the tables! Such a large collection says a great deal about the values that we share as a community. Thank you too to our School Council, whose idea it was to support our local foodbanks in this way.



### Christmas concert

What an evening we had on Wednesday! A huge number of students kept us royally entertained at our Christmas concert, with poetry, drama and any number of groups and ensembles performing Music. As well as those performing on stage, even more students were involved back-stage, or front-of-house, or in creating refreshments under the watchful eye of our Head of Food and Nutrition, Mrs Moore.

A huge *Well Done* to all concerned, and particularly to the staff who gave up so much time to get everything ready. Thank you so much, Miss Smith, Mr Mulligan and your teams of helpers – and an even bigger thank you to all the students involved for a truly memorable night.

### News from Liverpool City Council

The latest letter from Liverpool's Holiday Activities and Food ('HAF') team is appended to this *Update*.

I've also been asked to let you know that all students entitled to Free School Meals – whichever Local Authority they live in – have been sent £30-worth of vouchers to cover the Christmas holiday period. If you've not received yours, or if you have any questions about the vouchers, please get in touch through [this e-mail address](#).

### Class charts

Have you signed up for Class Charts? If you haven't already, it's really important that you do!

One reason for this is that from January, we'll be sending all notifications of detentions through Class Charts – and we won't be sending notifications through ParentMail, as we have done in the past.

If you haven't signed up yet, it's quick and easy to do: you can do so at [here](#). If you need a reminder of your access code, please email [this e-mail address](#) and we will send a reminder.

### Carol Service, Wednesday 21st December

A quick reminder of the arrangements for next Wednesday...

- Students should **not** report to school on Wednesday 21st December. Instead, they should make their way to the Anglican Cathedral (L1 7AZ).
- Students in Year 7 should arrive at 10:30am. Students in Years 8 to 11 should arrive at 12noon. Post-16 students are strongly encouraged to attend, but attendance is not compulsory.
- Students will be dismissed from the Cathedral at the end of the service (roughly 1:30pm).
- **Parents and carers are very welcome to join us for the service** (which starts at 12:30pm). There is no need to book – there's plenty of room at the Cathedral!

### Coming soon... Revise till Five

In recent years we've run a highly successful revision programme from Christmas to support Year 11 students get into good revision habits for their GCSEs. Called 'Revise till Five', it is a nightly session for students from 3:20pm to 5:00pm – attendance every night is part of the programme!

The programme will begin on Monday 9th January and we will be writing out with more details just after Christmas.

Finally...

This week, in assemblies, we've been considering the question "*Does friendship have to be symmetrical?*". It's an interesting question – and one that I would answer with a firm "*No*". Friendship, in essence, is a gift – it something one human being gives to another. And gifts should be given without any expectation of anything in return – unlike, say, a contract where two parties are obliged to give each other something. All of that is relevant for Christmas, because in John 15 Jesus says "*I no longer call you servants*" – ie people bound by a contract; "*instead, I have called you friends*".

At this time of giving, let's remember God's gift to us: a little baby who grew up to point us towards *friendship* with God. Not a symmetrical friendship, but a friendship nonetheless.

I wish you, and all St Margaret's families, a restful festive season – one where we can reflect on friendship, and on giving, and on the baby who transformed our relationship with God Himself.

Our next *Update* will be published on Friday 13th January, at the end of our first full week back. Do look out for it!

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Brierley', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Stephen Brierley  
Principal.



Date: 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Dear Parent or Guardian

The Winter HAF programme starts on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December and there are lots of great activities happening over the school holidays.

Children and young people will be able to access hundreds of activities throughout the winter break including specific provision available for children with SEND. There's a great range of activities across the city including **music tuition, puppet making, circus workshops, football, podcasting, dance, Christmas parties and grottos, cooking, climbing, films, bowling, arts and crafts, drama, trips out, mindfulness** and much more! Every day there will be a meal available for every child that attends.

To find out where your nearest scheme is please click on this link - <https://merseyplay.com/haf-holiday-activities-and-food-fund/> or visit [www.Merseyplay.com](http://www.Merseyplay.com) and click on the HAF link.

When you have chosen an activity, you will need to contact that organisation to book a place. Each organisation will have either a telephone number, email address or online booking system. If your child has any additional needs or dietary requirements then please discuss this with the organisation when you book. There is no central booking system so please read the details of the programmes on the website and ring the providers directly.

Liverpool City Council is working with the local schools, voluntary and community organisations, and childcare providers to provide the HAF programme. The programme is funded by the Department for Education and is targeted at children and young people, aged from reception to 16 years old who are eligible for benefits related free school meals.

The Early Help Directory also provides a wealth of useful information and support for families - [Early Help Directory - things to do](#)

Regards

*Sally Dobbing*

Sally Dobbing - HAF Project Manager