

July 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

Before we break for the Summer holidays we would like to take this opportunity to update you on some developments and new systems that we are introducing in preparation for September 2018. As we have frequently stated, the positive partnerships between parents/carers and St John's are key to raising the aspirations and achievements of our students and, with this in mind, we believe the changes will help us to support our young people with their education to enable them to fulfil their ambitions.

As ever, if you feel that you need any further clarification on any of the following, please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss the points in more detail.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Following concerns regarding declining standards in uniform, we have issued a separate uniform letter and have updated our website with important changes for September 2018. Please note that our high expectations regarding uniform have not changed since 2009 but, unfortunately, we are experiencing an increasing number of students wearing skinny/legging or jegging type trousers; such items are not permitted as school uniform. To avoid any confusion, please ensure that you refer to our previous letter and website information so that your child is wearing the correct uniform for September 2018. Please let us know if you need any assistance in finding/purchasing the appropriate style of trouser or formal footwear and thank you for your support with this matter.

SCHOOL DAY, LUNCHTIME ARRANGEMENTS AND MEAL DEALS

From September 2018 the **timings of the school day will remain as 8.55am – 3.00pm**, however, we will be moving from three 30 minute lunchtimes to two 40 minute lunchtimes.

Unfortunately, due to rising supplier costs, our meal deals will be increasing from £2.25 to £2.30 per day from September 2018. Those students, entitled to free school meals, will have their allowances increased accordingly. The Governors have not taken this decision lightly to increase costs and we are currently working with Hutchisons, a contract catering company, to review our provision and quality of service. We intend to monitor the new lunchtime and pricing arrangements during the Autumn term and we will be gathering feedback from students, staff and parents/carers during this period.

STUDENTS' USE OF MOBILE PHONES

Whilst we fully understand the benefits of digital communication, we have a growing concern regarding students bringing/using mobile phones on and around the school site, particularly as it often distracts students from their learning and can lead to misuse. **We strongly discourage students from bringing their phones into school** but recognise that, from a parent/carer's perspective, there may be exceptional circumstances when you may like the reassurance of being able to contact your child during their travelling times to and from school. **In these circumstances, we are prepared to allow mobile phones onto the premises, but they must remain out of sight and switched off until the student has left the premises at the end of the school day.** If you need to contact your child during the school day, please call the school's main switchboard and we will be happy to convey the message. If you require any further details regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

PARENTPAY

In response to requests from our school community, and in an attempt to reduce the amount of cash and cheques received in school, we are asking all parents and carers to use our e-payment method to pay for dinner money and trips etc. This can be done online using a very secure website called ParentPay or in cash at local stores where you can see the PayPoint logo. Details of this system can be obtained from the Finance Office.

MYED PARENT APP

The free parent app *MyEd* is proving to be a very effective way of sharing information with you regarding your son/daughter's education. The app gives you direct access to your child's attendance details, timetable, absence records, achievements, and much, much more.

If you are a first-time user of the *MyEd* app, it is available for both Apple iOS and Android devices and can be found on either the Apple App Store or on Google Play by searching for *MyEd*. Once you have installed and opened *MyEd*, search for **St John's School and Sixth Form College** and follow the simple instructions to identify yourself.

Please do not worry if you do not own a smartphone, or would rather not use the app. We will still provide you with regular feedback and written correspondence regarding your child's education and events at school.



PROGRESS EVENINGS

Whilst we have acknowledged the benefits of the *MyEd* app, the opportunities to discuss your child's progress in person are invaluable. Our Progress Evenings will continue from September with our subject staff available to answer your queries, provide details of progress and celebrate your child's achievements. From September our Progress Evenings will continue to take place on Wednesdays and will begin at 2.30pm in an attempt to accommodate the majority of families. **On the day of a Progress Evening, the school day will end at 2.00pm** with normal transport arrangements in place. These key dates will be available on our website and via the 'Key Dates' section of the 'MyEd' app at the start of the new academic year.

END OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

Friday, 20 July 2018 will be a non-uniform day for all students and we ask that students contribute £1 which will be donated to our school's charitable funds including Project Peru. The school will close at 1.00pm for the Summer break. Our end of term newsletter will be sent out by email on Monday 23 July 2018 at the latest.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and we wish you a very enjoyable and relaxing Summer holiday. We look forward to welcoming all students back for the new academic year which begins on Wednesday, 5 September 2018.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Byron
Headteacher

Chris Parker
Deputy Headteacher