



St Antony's Roman Catholic School

Respect † Love † Integrity † Service † Resilience

St Antony's Autumn Term Newsletter December 2023

National Language Competition



Headteacher's Introduction

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to our termly newsletter that provides you with an update of all the things that have been happening at St Antony's during our Autumn Term.

As usual, it has been an incredibly busy term and I cannot quite believe we are finishing for the Christmas break in a matter of days!

I want to say a big thank you to you all on behalf of all of the staff who work at St Antony's for your support over the last term. This is never taken for granted and makes such a big difference to us in helping to educate your child. I hope you recognise how committed we all are in continuing to drive up the standards at St Antony's and are beginning to see, via your child, the impact of this work in terms of what we teach and how we do this in their lessons.

Finally, during this term we said goodbye to Mr Murphy, our Curriculum Leader of RE and Teacher of Business, who has moved on to another high school in Trafford after serving our school community for the last 15 years. At this end of this term we also say goodbye to Mrs Edge, our RE teacher and Head of Y10, who is leaving us to take up a new post at a high school in Salford. We thank both Mr Murphy and Mrs Edge for their service to our school and wish them both all the very best for the future. At the end of this term we also say goodbye to two colleagues within our LSA team. Miss Kwiatek is moving on to a new role outside of education and Mrs Gazda is retiring after many years of outstanding care and support for our pupils. Both of these colleagues go with our very best wishes and the best of luck for the future.

Joining us from the Spring Term will be Mrs Atkinson, who will assume the role of teacher of RE and Head of Y10 having held a similar position at St Monica's High School in Prestwich. In addition, our LSA team will be strengthened further by the addition of Miss Chaisty, Mr McDonald and Mr Shaw. I know I can count on all members of the St Antony's community to give our new colleagues a very warm welcome when they take up their new roles with us.

School reopens to all pupils on Thursday 4th January 2024 and we look forward to hearing about all their adventures over the Christmas holiday.

May I take this opportunity to wish all pupils, parents and carers a very happy and holy Christmas.



Mr Campbell – Headteacher

Key Dates

- Thursday 14th December – Y8 HPV Catch Up Immunisation
- Thursday 14th December – Y11 Parents Evening
- Friday 15th December – Flu Catch Up Immunisation
- Friday 15th December – Friday 22nd December – Ski Trip to Spain
- Tuesday 19th December – Whole School Mass at 11.15am at St Hugh of Lincoln Church (pupils come in at the normal time and we will walk them to/from church)
- Tuesday 19th December – Christmas Dinner
- Wednesday 20th December – Christmas Jumper Day/Own clothes day £1 donation
- Wednesday 20th December – Early finish at 1.15pm - Break up for Christmas
- Thursday 4th January – Return to school at the normal start time
- Thursday 18th January – Y8 Parents Evening
- Monday 5th – Friday 23rd Feb – Y11 Mocks
- Tuesday 6th February – Parent Forum
- Thursday 8th February – Y10 Parents Evening
- Thursday 8th February – Students finish for half term
- Friday 9th February – Staff Only Day
- Monday 19th February – Return to school
- Friday 22nd March – break up for the two-week Easter holiday

PTA

A big 'thank you' from all the staff, students and parents to Jaddy Goddard who has been the Treasurer of the PTA at St Antony's for 5 years. She has done a great job but has now handed the reigns over to Tracey Derbyshire whom I'm sure will be fantastic! We wish you all the best.

The PTA have met frequently in order to keep up to date with plans for future events. The next fundraiser is the Christmas Hamper Raffle, which is always popular with the students. Tickets are £1 per strip and there will be a large hamper per year group and other smaller hampers. An additional hamper for staff, parents and visitors is also up for grabs, so get your tickets from the school reception now. The draw will take place on Tuesday 19th December – Good luck!!!!

Just before the summer, the "splish the boss" and Krispy Kreme doughnut sale went down a treat with the students and raised a total of £208.47. The Easyfundraising app currently has 13 supporters and has raised £136.25 this year, we would urge more parents to sign up for this via the following link:

[https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/search/cause/?q=St.%20Antony%27s%20\(Urmston\)%20PTA&cat=cause](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/search/cause/?q=St.%20Antony%27s%20(Urmston)%20PTA&cat=cause)

The PTA have some great fundraising ideas in mind for the next academic year and are hoping that lots more parents are able to get on board and get involved. If you are interested in joining then please email: k.rothwell@st-antonys.com with your contact name and mobile telephone number.



Year 7 PGL Trip



A residential trip to PGL Newby Wiske was an unforgettable adventure filled with exciting activities and team-building experiences. The centre provided a perfect setting for outdoor adventures and personal growth. Pupils enjoyed a diverse range of activities from mud-covered laser tag battles to the adrenaline-pumping thrill of ziplining – the days were filled with laughter and togetherness. Archery tag added a strategic twist to the fun, while the infectious energy of a silent disco had everyone dancing into the night. The trip not only offered thrilling adventures but also created lasting memories and built new friendships.



CCF



This term has been a busy one for the cadets. At the beginning of term, the cadets were able to take part in a field gun drill where they practised assembling and disassembling a replica antique field gun before competing with each other to see which team was able to do it fastest. It was lots of fun but quite exhausting as the gun is very heavy!

We have been able to set up an archery range in the gym, and the cadets have been enjoying practicing their archery skills - they are getting better every time. We're also looking forward to a cadets reward trip soon to reward all of our fantastic cadets for their effort and enthusiasm.

Student Focus

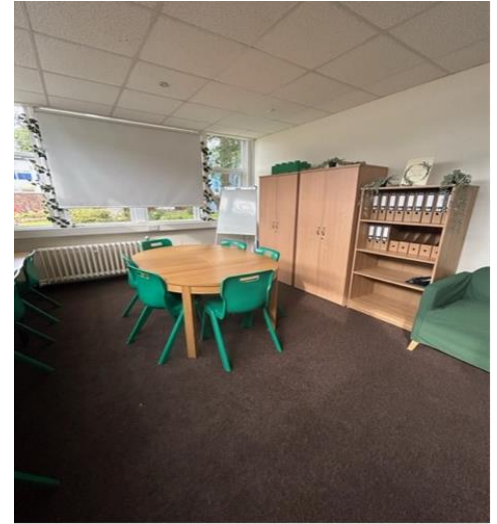
At the end of this term we would like to profile our Head Girl, Leah. Leah is an asset to St Antony's. Her amazing work ethic and attitude to all aspects of school life make her a great role model to other pupils both inside and outside of the classroom. Leah has aspirations of attending Loreto College to study Biology, Chemistry, Sociology and Criminology before attending University to study Law. We are incredibly proud to call Leah a St Antony's student and know that she will continue working to the highest of standards to ensure she gets to where she wants to be.



The Hive



We have now opened our new SEND room, The Hive. This has been designed using natural colour schemes, with minimal distractions visible, making it a relaxing environment with its very own 'Calm Corner'. This room is staffed during Lunchtimes to provide pupils with a quiet and calm space to spend their time. We have a variety of books in there and also some games to encourage their communication skills. This room will also be used at some points during the day for interventions for pupils who have additional learning needs.



Staff Focus



As a new member of staff at St Antony's I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Robert Williams and I am the new literacy and library assistant.

I have previously worked for Waterstones, in a high school library in Blackburn and for Wigan Schools' Library Service. Before joining St. Antony's I was a full-time writer with three novels published by Faber. I am still writing and working (slowly) on the fourth book.

I have been here a few months now and love working with pupils on the Fresh Start reading/phonics programme. Alongside this I want to help make the library a warm, welcoming creative space the children want to visit, spend time and, importantly, read. We have run a Harry Potter Book Day, a Blackout Poetry event and will be showing festive films in the Christmas week with more events planned for next year. In the next few weeks all year 7 pupils will be visiting the library in class time so I can welcome them and they know where we are and what we offer.

I am also running an after school Creative Writing Club on Tuesdays. If you know any budding writers send them my way!

Thank you for the friendly, warm welcome I've received since starting at St. Antony's.

MFL

Here at St Antony's we believe learning a language plays a pivotal role for our young people in helping them develop into conscious and active global citizens. This year we have introduced Spanish to our current year 7s. We're hoping to build our profile of languages and open up options to our future GCSE students. So why learn a language? Here are just a few reasons why:

The 26th September (European Day of Languages) is a well-established opportunity to raise awareness about language learning and linguistic diversity. To mark this day at St Antony's we sent out a teacher brags quiz asking forms to compete in guessing the correct teacher for each brag. Turns out we're quite a talented bunch with languages spoken or known ranging from French, Spanish, Urdu, Gaelic and Welsh (to name a few).

The National Language Competition (NLC) is a virtual competition where teams from schools around the UK compete against each other to solve language-based puzzles

Our contenders all received a certificate of participation, from GCHQ, as well as a rewards breakfast in the canteen to say a huge well done!

The top three teams from St Antony's also received a small gift from the MFL department.



Sports at St Antony's

Another busy half term for the PE Department. Lots of pupils enjoying attending extra-curricular sports clubs offered daily. Badminton club at lunch time is as popular as ever and the popularity of Samba football is ever increasing. The netball and basketball teams have played numerous games and competitions against other schools within Trafford, with mixed success. Mr Brownbill and Mrs Doherty took a group of aspiring runners to the Trafford Cross Country competition with pupils competing against some of the best runners locally and performing well. Finally, the school Ski trip departs on Friday 15th December to Spain. 64 pupils and 8 staff are spending the week Skiing in La Molina, Spain.



Reading and Literacy



This year has been a groundbreaking one for the reading culture in our school, as we have celebrated the opening of our new library, the appointment of Mr Williams as library lead, invested thousands of pounds in new books and most recently had the Scholastic book fair visit for the second year to help put more books into your homes!

All classrooms now have a 'Bookflix' display, to help pupils to read around their subjects. Teachers will discuss interesting and informative books that will help guide children to read about their subjects in a range of genres.

As well as the abundance of books in our school, we are also helping our children to develop their reading skills through form time reading three times a week, ensuring that they have a shared experience and appreciation of books. Where we identify children struggle with aspects of literacy, we can support with smaller group sessions, Fresh Start Phonics intervention and Reading Speed support at KS4. We know that reading for pleasure is more possible when the barriers are removed!

Finally, the highlight of our term so far will be the graduation of the first group of pupils who have successfully completed the Fresh Start Programme. We look forward to celebrating this with some of you! Again, this is another step forward in helping to ensure that young people read more and have the skills to enjoy it!

Watch out for this term's Literacy Newsletter, with great ideas on reading and books!



Personal Development

Parents/Carers receive a monthly email update of the broad reach of Personal Development via *St Antony's Stories*, which we hope keeps you informed and connected with school. This term we have also held our annual RSE consultation with families.



In addition, at the Parents'/Carers' Information Evenings at the start of term, families were given an overview of the content of lessons for Y7-Y11 in Personal Development lessons each week – half term 1 has explored *Me and My Body* and half term 2 *Emotional Wellbeing*. We have used, and continue to do so, student voice to modify the lessons so that the activities afford more reflection time and discussion of topics, and you'll know that homework tasks are also now set for this subject. We hope that this is affording you some opportunity to have meaningful time to talk at home about some of the lesson content. A summary of the whole year's curriculum and its content can be found on the school website.

GIFT Team

Caritas Advent Appeal

The list of items we need to be donated is as follows:

- men's and ladies toiletries shower gel shaving foam
- toothbrushes and toothpaste
- hats, scarves and gloves
- men's and women's socks and underwear
- jumpers, coats, trousers, jogging bottoms, shoes and trainers
- mince pies, chocolates, satsumas
- shopping vouchers



Each form room has a box to collect items. GIFT Team pupils will come to collect these items on Fridays. The final day for donations is 15th December. Y7&8 are currently leading the way for the most donations!!

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The GIFT Team has taken the lead in collecting items for Caritas outreach centres, and we have been overwhelmed by the generosity of our school community. Your donations have made a real difference to those in need, and we are incredibly grateful for your contributions. In the spirit of giving, the pupils have planned a charity Christmas disco to raise money for Caritas. Having a special guest performance from our new choir, it promises to be an entertaining and meaningful event.

Our pupils have been spreading joy and goodwill at Flixton Manor care home. Our students lead the way in a Christmas craft activity, creating wreaths and Christmas cards with the residents. This is a wonderful opportunity for our students to engage with and bring joy to the elderly members of our community.

We appreciate your ongoing support and look forward to your participation in our upcoming charitable endeavours. Together, we can make a significant impact in our community.

Careers

All students have a Careers lesson in the last week of each half term but there has been year group or bespoke Careers support too. Our independent Connexions officer (Emma) has met with all Y9 forms to discuss post-16 pathways and some of the things to think about ahead of Options and Y11 are currently being seen for 1-1 interviews with Connexions to ensure that there is a clear plan for after the summer of 2024.



On December 8th, Y11 were involved in 1-1 interviews with post-16 education providers or employers as part of their Mock Interview Day. We hope that this will help to prepare them well for real interviews in the coming months. Y11 were very positive about the day, finding it useful for their confidence, receiving verbal feedback on the day and written feedback afterwards. Our visitors were very impressed with Y11 and their time at school generally - some were so impressed that they've offered Work Experience to individuals they interviewed in Y11!

Students in 3 year groups have now completed an online questionnaire about their future plans. This helps with bespoke planning and has meant, for example, that interested Y11s shared a working lunch with a Paralegal who explained her work and route into it, or Y9s interested in a career in the Health Industry spent a day with the NHS or the Eco Team attendance to a COP28 linked Careers day. 1 of the visitors to the Mock Interview Day works for Hewlett Packard Enterprises and delivered a working lunch session for Y9-Y11 on his role and the company itself, for anyone interested in employment in the Digital Industry.



Rewards

We are proud to announce that over the course of this term we have awarded 70,451 achievement points to students who have shown our school values and gone above and beyond whilst in school. The excellent effort and hard work of these students does not go unnoticed. Half termly rewards assemblies recognise the fantastic work of our students and celebrate this in front of their peers. Badges and other awards are given to students in these assemblies are used to highlight the achievement and effort of our students. Also, to recognise students hard work, badges are given out weekly to 'students of the week' for all subjects and also by Heads of Year. We are delighted to see that so many of our pupils are wearing these proudly on their blazers around school.

Lots of other rewards are given to students who deserve recognition. We have run 2 'Battle of the Forms' competitions with the winning forms having a pizza lunch with their form tutors. Hot chocolate morning with Heads of Year for those students who do the right things day in day out. Alongside this, we have run rewards trips for KS3 to watch 'Wonka' at the cinema and KS4 were taken bowling at the Trafford Centre. Rewards will continue to grow into the next year at St Antony's to ensure as many of our students as possible can be rewarded for going above and beyond.

Behaviour Update

Firstly, may we say thank you to the overwhelming majority of students whose behaviour has been excellent across this school year. Across each Year group we average 85% of all students in each year not entering the sanction system at any point. This is amazing and thank you to you as parents for supporting us at school in maintaining expected standards of behaviour.

What does school do for those students who struggle to regulate their behaviour?

We understand that behaviour can at times cause unwanted disruption to learning and some of our students will require additional support to help them meet our very expectations that relate to their choices both in lessons and outside lessons. On occasion the sanction system does not have the desired impact for all students. When this is the case there are other measures which school have and will put into place to support students. This ranges from outside intervention to mentoring, positive report cards, referrals to appropriate Early Help Services, step outs at other local schools, a place on our "reflect and reset" programme, to name but a few of our interventions.

What has school done to reduce negative behaviour in the classroom?

During half term 2 the behaviour system was restructured to support staff and students in ensuring that lessons are free of disruption. In doing so this promotes positive learning environments within school allowing all students to achieve their maximum potential.

As a result of these changes to the system, we have reduced minutes late to lesson by 80% and reduced the number of detentions by 20%. We have also focused on restorative conversations between staff and students where appropriate to build positive relationships.

If you require any additional information or support please do not hesitate to contact a member of the pastoral team.

Enrichment

Families and students last year told us that they'd like to see more creative subjects on offer – so we now have 2 choirs up and running (1 for Y7 and 1 for whole school). It's really exciting that the Choir is performing this week in a huge concert at a huge venue in Manchester – Audacious Church.

And there's lots for those creative with words too, for example we have run a Blackout Poetry session and each week there is a Creative Writing Club for pupils in Y7 & Y8.



Other new extra-curricular offers have included the Languages Film Club for Y7, GCHQ code-crackers for Y9, the History club for any KS3 student and a Games Club for Y11.

And, of course, some historic activities continue – to name a few, there's Samba Football and Badminton at lunch, CCF, Eco Team, GIFT team, Inclusion Forum and Homework Club.

But there is also the enrichment planning for all students planned by curriculum areas, so that there's all of a year group cohort involved in an experience rather than an opt-in situation. As an example of this, all of Y7 were involved in a Poetry Workshop delivered by Gareth Williams who's worked for Aldi and Coca-Cola on marketing campaigns.



Safeguarding

Staff have undertaken all statutory training in preparation for the year ahead. The safeguarding team have delivered a focussed training drop on domestic abuse.

Members of the safeguarding team have participated in 'Graded Care Profile 2' which helps professionals measure the quality of care provided by a parent or carer in meeting their child's needs, particularly where there are concerns about neglect. This is to be delivered to all staff in upcoming training sessions.

Attendance

St Antony's are committed to ensuring the best education and opportunities for every child in our school. **Regular school attendance is vital to this.** Evidence shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE results. By ensuring your child attends school regularly, you are providing them with the best chance of future success.

Regular school attendance not only supports your child's academic progress, but also helps them develop crucial life skills such as resilience and a strong work ethic that will benefit them throughout their lives.

Below are pieces of information for you and your child on fostering a positive culture around attendance:

- talk to your child about how important it is to attend school; ask regularly about how school is going
- inspire them to think about what they would like to be when they grow up, and how school can help with that
- ensure they have a good sleep routine, eat healthily and exercise regularly; help them to get everything they need ready for school the night before.
- use the NHS guidance on illness. [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
- book all holidays outside of term time
- book medical and dental appointments outside school hours if possible – and if not possible, ensure your child attends school before and after the appointment
- find out if your child wants to avoid school for a reason that they're frightened to tell you about – reach out to your child's form tutor to discuss these reasons further

The Government has published a recent blog on why school attendance is important. [Why is school attendance so important and what are the risks of missing a day? - The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://www.blog.gov.uk)



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Dear Lord,

As we prepare for your coming,
let us reflect on the journey your
earthly parents took.

They were tired and alone,
yet there was no room for them at the
inn. There was no one to lend a
helping hand.

Lord, help us to recognize those who
may need our help or love this
Christmas. Let us pray for those who
have none. We pray that those without
loved ones will still share in the
season's blessings.

We especially pray for those who feel
forgotten and unloved.

Lord, break our hearts for what breaks
yours. Help us to see with your eyes,
serve with your hands,
and to give of the talents and treasures
you have blessed us with.

We implore you, O Lord, to stretch
forth Your paternal arms to anyone
feeling the sting of loneliness or pangs
of sadness this Christmas season.
Please bring them into your love and
peace.

Amen.



**MAY GODS BLESSINGS COME TO YOU A THOUSAND FOLD; MAY THE LOVE IN
YOUR HEART NEVER GET OLD; AND MAY YOU FIND TREASURES MORE
PRECIOUS THAN GOLD.**