

17 July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

As this academic year comes to a close we can all certainly reflect on what has been an unprecedented period of time for our whole school community. It is this period of time, 17 weeks since we were forced to close school to the majority of our students, that I will reflect on in this end of term newsletter. In keeping with my previous newsletters, despite the difficulties and challenges we have all faced during the current pandemic, I want to highlight the many positives arising from our current situation that should be celebrated within our school community.

### **Home Learning**

We often talk about our students, staff and parents/carers on a learning journey together at our school. Well, this shared learning journey has certainly been apparent over the past 17 weeks as we have all adapted to a new way of learning. The task of providing remote learning provision for all students is one that has certainly stretched all of us at various points. Throughout this time we have been extremely grateful for the constructive feedback received from parents and students alike. We learned that, initially, we were setting too much work as parents and staff alike got to grips with balancing their respective jobs with home schooling their own children. We strove to ensure we could provide timely and purposeful feedback and maintain lines of communication and, in time, developed our own capability in providing online live lessons to further enhance remote provision.

Yesterday you should have all received a short parent survey on home learning/schooling via the MYEd parent app. Please take a few minutes to complete the short survey, which will inform our plans moving forward, by clicking on this link <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MTP28GJ>

The link will close on 24 July in order for us to collate and consider responses so I would be really grateful if you could spare us those few minutes before that date.

Although these are areas of work that continue to be developed, refined and improved I do feel there is much to celebrate, primarily, in the positive engagement of both students and parents with the work that has been set throughout school closure. I also want to celebrate the commitment of staff who have adapted their own skills and mode of delivery to support our students and how they have collaborated within and across departments to share good practice and support one another in developing this provision. Again, in many cases, balancing these requirements with the demands of caring for and schooling their own young children at home.



Resilience, patience, independence and determination are but a few of the key attributes so many of our students have had to draw on and demonstrated so successfully which, I am sure, will continue to serve them so well in the future.

I have also been heartened to hear of so much engagement in enrichment activities and physical workouts as well as the number of students and staff who have

found the time to read for pleasure and found reading such a positive outlet. Long may this continue as we cannot emphasise enough the impact reading for pleasure has on a child's educational progress. I know, from the amount of RUAH award cards that teachers have sent out, that the vast majority of our students have demonstrated a superb engagement in learning and I would like to thank you, parents and carers, for supporting them through this learning.

Rest assured we will continue to develop protocols and strategies for developing our provision of blended learning, as despite the fact that there is no substitute for live face to face interaction between student and teacher, we have certainly come to appreciate the many benefits and opportunities this affords us moving forward.

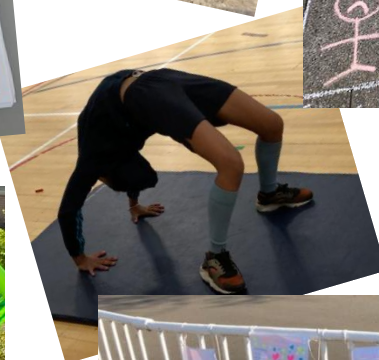
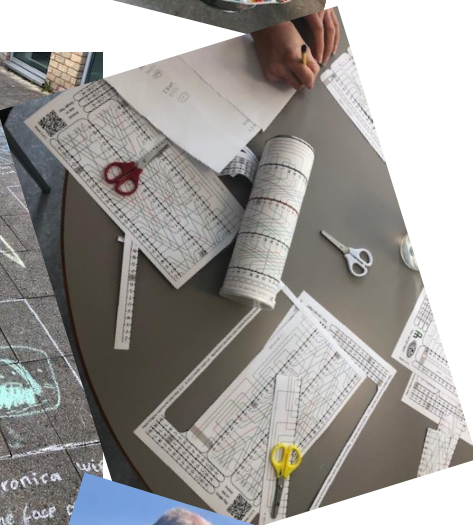
### **In School Provision**

That is not to say that there has not been face-to-face provision happening here in school over the past 17 weeks, including over the Easter and spring term breaks. You may well be aware that schools has continued to provide for children of critical workers to allow those parents to continue providing such valuable service to society during these challenging times. I could fill pages with description of some of the wonderful work produced by these students in school and the number of creative activities they have participated in under the supervision of our dedicated core of staff who have been able to be in school on a regular basis. So much to celebrate around the positive attitude and relationships forged between our students but sometimes pictures speak louder than words so I have included a montage of images on the next page of work produced in school to give you a flavour of 'All Saints' life during Lockdown'.

In recent weeks we have also had cohorts of Y10 and Y12 students back in school for face to face lessons and, once again, would like to applaud the attitude and level of engagement displayed by those who attended. Although the time we were able to accommodate these year groups was minimal the feedback from students was that it was great to be able to get back into the school, meet their teachers for face-to-face support and, of course, the opportunity to catch up with friends.



## Life at All Saints During Lockdown





## Year 11, Year 13 and Examinations

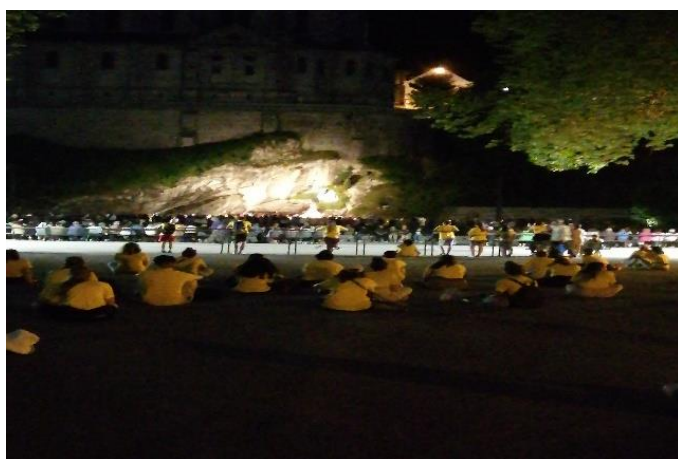
I would like to send special greetings and best wishes to our Y11 and Y13 students and families who, this year, have had not only their final examinations cancelled but missed out on what should have been special celebrations to mark the end of their journey through school. You have all remained very much in our thoughts and prayers during this time and continue to be as we approach exam results days.

The GCSE and A level results will be distributed electronically this year to ensure the safety of staff and students. A levels results will be distributed on Thursday 13 August and GCSE results will be distributed on Thursday 20 August. Students will receive an email to their school email address at 8:00am on the morning of the results day. There will be staff available in school should any student need support and guidance on the day itself.

Students in Y11, 12 and 13 who will be receiving results have been sent an email to their school email address. Please encourage your child to check that they can access their school email account, if they are unable to do this please email [ICTTechnicians@allsaintslearning.co.uk](mailto:ICTTechnicians@allsaintslearning.co.uk) for technical support.

I am sorry that we will not be able to share these exciting results days with our students, but they will be in our thoughts as always. Please be reassured that there will be support and guidance available for your child as they make important decisions regarding their future studies or employment.

Despite school closure we have still been able to ensure opportunities for participation in events beyond academic study. I include a couple of examples here:



### Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage

At the end of June the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes would normally have taken place with staff and students from school attending. This year, we were unable to travel to Lourdes, so instead, a Virtual Pilgrimage to Lourdes was put together by many people including staff and students from all the schools in the Diocese. Through the powers of social media there were a few live events and some pre-recorded on YouTube. These were made available

through a website **[www.hallam-lourdes.com](http://www.hallam-lourdes.com)**. This site is still open for anyone that would like to take part in some or all of the services. Although we were not on pilgrimage in Lourdes it really felt like we were. This was a very special week, Our Lady and St Bernadette visiting us in our homes. We look forward to celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Lourdes as a Diocese in 2021.



## Race Across The World

As social media seemed to be the way forward in terms of communicating with our students, the PE Department joined the world of Instagram ('allsaintspedep't') with the aim of motivating students to increase their physical activity during lockdown. Many other PE departments across the city have also used this platform for the same reason, so with many schools already involved, this allowed for the first ever virtual inter-school 'fixture' to occur. The Race Across the World competition was a format where we, as a city and for one day only, aimed to

be the most active city in the world. This was done by setting each school a target of getting from Zambia's capital Lusaka to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe which is 495km. So in order to help cover the distance, we challenged all students, parents/carers and staff to walk/run/cycle as far as they could on a specific day in July and send in screenshots of their efforts. Little did we know that the All Saints community would, once again, show its strength in collaboration by covering over 1800km which is an unbelievable effort considering this was our first venture into a virtual competition. We had 120 students who participated as well as large numbers of parents and staff. This mammoth effort actually placed All Saints with a podium position of 3rd place across the entire city. A massive thank you and well done to all who involved.

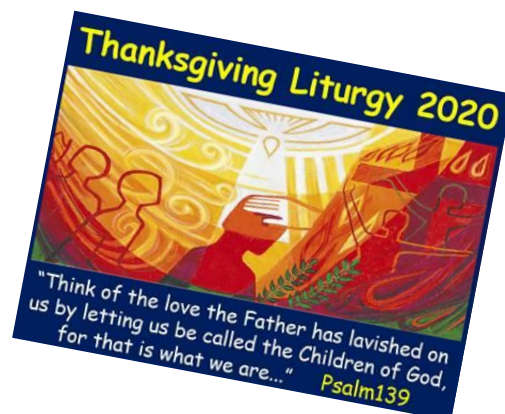
## End of School Liturgy

In usual circumstances, the final day of the school academic year is the only occasion when we are able to gather the whole staff and remaining year groups who are in school all together in our Sports Hall for our Final Day Liturgy. It is always a wonderful means of celebrating our community and the achievements of the past academic year.

We have put together a 'mini version' of the Liturgy celebration that will be posted via the website link at 2pm on Friday 17 July. Students will be able to access a version that includes a shortened 'Celebrate You' section via their Microsoft Teams log in. Mr Salim has emailed out to students how to access this version which will be available to view for 48 hours. This version also includes a backing track created by All Saints' students and staff who, under the direction of Mrs Nicholas, our subject leader for Music, collaborated as a 'Virtual Choir' to engage in their passion for singing.

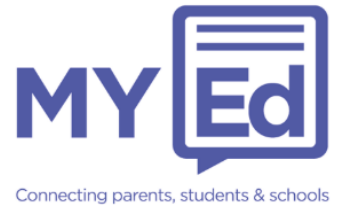


Bishop Ralph has kindly recorded a brief message of prayer and blessing for our students as they enter their summer break and we are delighted that he was able to come down to school and join in our celebration picnic and end of school liturgy.



## **Communication**

Can I take this opportunity once again to urge any parent/carer who has not downloaded the MYEd parent app to please do so. This is our primary form of communication and over the coming weeks there may well be key information we need to send out regarding our start-up in September. In addition, please monitor our school website and Twitter account for all relevant information about the school.



**Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your invaluable contribution to the school this year, particularly over these past few months where we have relied on your support, patience and understanding.**

**I have now been Headteacher at All Saints for three years and whilst I continue on a steep learning curve and whilst the challenges that come with the role continue in different and, sometimes, unexpected forms, I never take for granted the privileged position I am in. I have certainly found out so much about our school community over the past few months where care, compassion and love have been needed more than ever. I want to acknowledge our wonderful staff who have gone above and beyond in their service, our Governing Body for continued support, to our parents and carers who have worked with us in that spirit of partnership and, of course, our amazing students who, despite additional burdens and disruption to their education, continue to engage with the level of positivity and commitment that reminds us of how blessed we are to be working with and for them. They epitomise our key principles of Respect, Understanding, Affection and Humour. They are a credit to you and to All Saints Catholic High School. I wish each of them and you a wonderful and relaxing summer break.**

**God Bless**

**S P Pender  
Headteacher**

