

4th September 2026

Dear Families

Welcome back to the new academic year at St Paul's and a particularly warm welcome to all new members of our community. I hope that you had a lovely summer with your families. Our teams have been very busy over the holidays with lots of alterations to the school site. The most significant change is our new Sixth Form Centre. The handover was delayed slightly but we are ready to open to Year 12 & 13 on Monday. This will be an excellent facility for our Sixth Form to use as a dedicated space. We have also had A-level, Vocational and GCSE results over the summer. There are some excellent individual results and students should feel extremely proud of themselves. In terms of next steps, the majority of our Year 13 students gained places at their first preference universities, with some excellent destinations and courses selected.

Our first week back has been busy but it has been lovely to welcome Year 7 and all new students to our school. We started the week with two staff training days. Thursday was our first day back and this started with time in form groups and included a welcome back Collective Worship. I have attached my PowerPoint for this to this letter so that you can see what we covered. During the morning tutor time Tutors shared tutor group notices and went through some key changes that we are introducing this term. The first significant change is the introduction of our 'Shields'. I have attached a poster and PowerPoint so that you can familiarise yourself with these. Essentially, there are two sets of shields – one gold set and one purple set. The gold shields make our expectations of behaviour and conduct very clear for everyone. The purple shields outline our expectations of learning.

The second significant change is linked to how teachers provide marking and feedback during lessons. We are moving to a system of 'Live Marking'. All teachers have been trained on how to do this over the training days. There is a brief introductory PowerPoint attached so that you can see what it is that we are trying to do. Your children will have seen a similar presentation on Thursday morning.

We have also made some simplifications to green and red points on ClassCharts. Many of the red point categories will remain as they are important ways for us to communicate with you regarding the choices your child is making. This year, however, green points will be awarded in two ways. Mission points will be awarded to children who are demonstrating our school mission in practice, particularly behaviours relating to the gold shields. Scholarship points will be awarded for excellent learning that matches the purple shields.

We have also devised a new rewards system for green points. At St Paul's, we believe in recognising and celebrating every student's achievements, effort and positive contribution to school life. Through

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our ClassCharts rewards system, students earn positive points for demonstrating our school values, excellent behaviour, hard work and commitment to learning. Students should continue to visit my office each week if they achieve 60 green points in a week. I will then give them a praise certificate. As students reach key point milestones throughout the year, they are awarded Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum and Purple certificates, with recognition from Tutors, Pastoral Leaders, Heads of Faculty and the Headteacher, alongside opportunities to win prizes. In addition to certificates, students may receive rewards such as positive phone calls or emails home, praise in lessons, tutor group recognition, achievement displays, reward evenings, leadership opportunities and nominations for termly praise assemblies and educational visits. Our rewards programme ensures that students' successes are recognised regularly, encouraging them to strive for excellence while embodying our school motto: *Love, Serve, Do the Best that is Possible*.

A friendly reminder to all parents and carers to check ClassCharts daily for information about your child's school life and homework. If you are a new parent to the school, please don't worry if you have not yet received your ClassCharts access code — these will be sent out over the next two weeks. Thank you for your support in keeping up to date with your child's achievements.

If your child is in an Angela Tutor Group, then please be aware that they are currently collecting food items for our local foodbank. Please give as generously as you can over the next month.

Next week, our Bronze Duke of Edinburgh students are off on their expedition on Monday and Tuesday. Monday is the deadline for applications for Year 12 & 13 Student Leaders. Do speak to your child about applying for this important role. On Wednesday Year 8 students have a trip to MK Theatre to see Barnum. On Thursday evening Year 7 parents are invited to an Information Evening on transition and study habits at St Paul's. Finally, on Friday we have our First Year 6 Parent Tour of the year. If you know of families who have to make applications for secondary school places this year, then please do let them know that we have parents tours each Friday morning until half term and these can be booked via our [website](#). Also on Friday, our A-level RE students are visiting St Mary's University for a Theology Taster Day.

Thank you to all the Year 7 parents who have purchased phone pouches. If you have not done so please make sure you purchase one via your WisePay account. The pouch will be given to your child by their Form Tutor.

So, it has been a very busy start to the year, but it has been wonderful welcoming everyone back to school.

There are two family activities happening on Saturday. From 12 – 4pm The Woughton Festival is on at @Alphabet Park, Farthing Grove, Netherfield with a variety of fun activities on offer. Also on Saturday, The Parks Trust is holding Big Park Hangout, a free event for young people aged 11–17, supported this year by a £10,000 grant from The National Lottery Community Fund.

The event aims to reduce isolation, improve wellbeing and strengthen community bonds. For more information, visit theparkstrust.com/bigparkhangout.

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I hope that you have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



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