



Arrangements for the new academic year

New classes

Last week the children were able to spend some time with their new teacher. Teachers have been working collaboratively over the past weeks, sharing information that will enable a smooth transition into the next stage of your children's learning.

There have been some changes to the teaching arrangements for next year. It is with a heavy heart that we say goodbye to Miss O'Donnell at the end of term, who is moving back to Ireland, prior to getting married at Christmas. Miss O'Donnell has been an amazing member of the St Charles family for 9 years and she will be greatly missed. Mrs O'Brien has also decided to reduce her hours to allow her to explore other interests, but has agreed to continue her welfare role at lunchtime. We wish them both well in their new endeavours. Miss O'Donnell will be replaced by Miss Alison Gagan, a member of our parish who has been working in South Manchester for the past 10 years, I think she will be a great fit for our team.

Nursery	Mrs Williams	Mrs Copacova & Mrs Webster
Reception	Mrs Holt	Mrs Hamer
Year 1	Mrs Leckey	Miss Kennedy
Year 2	Mrs Coussons	Miss Grange
Year 3	Miss Symington	Miss Berry
Year 4	Miss Gagan	Miss Jervis
Year 5	Mrs Brown & Mrs Steedman	Mrs Starkie-Smith & Miss Buckland
Year 6	Mrs Hackett	Miss Kenzitt

As we move forward into a new school year and with a refined management team, I'd like to clarify our uniform and attendance expectations. Since COVID, both have seen a decline in standards.

Uniform

From September, children should wear a navy cardigan or sweater, **grey** pinafores, skirts, shorts and trousers, a pale blue polo shirt and socks/tights should be white or grey. These are all readily available from high street supermarkets and shops. There is no requirement for t shirts to have the school logo.

Uniform can be purchased from Pinders via this [link](#). Deliveries are free to school, deliveries can be collected on Thursday 31st August and Friday 1st September. There are a number of new products on offer this year including fleeces, bottle carriers, backpacks and tracksuits.

PE Kit

On PE days, as long as children are wearing full PE kit (white t shirt, navy shorts and black trainers or pumps), they may attend school in their kit. They also have the option to wear a plain navy blue tracksuit. Please do not allow the children to wear patterned clothes, football kits or branded tracksuits on PE days. We have lots of non uniform days in the year for them to do so. This will be reviewed if necessary.

Forest school

Forest school clothes should be kept in school, on pegs, at all times. They will be sent home when they become wet or dirty. Please keep a spare pair of socks within forest school kit bags.

School shoes

School shoes should be plain black – NO TRAINERS! Children can change into trainers or wellies at play time, but please ensure they have plain black school shoes on during the day. A set of labelled wellies should be sent into school in September.

Please ensure as much uniform as possible is labelled, including wellies, coats and particularly cardigans and sweaters.

Jewellery

Only stud earrings may be worn for school. They should be removed or covered with tape or plasters on PE days for safety.

Sickness

We know our children love coming to school, they love learning new things and we love teaching them. As parents ourselves, we understand that children get sick and particularly after Covid, they're not as resistant to bugs and bouts of sickness as they should be.

In cases of sickness and diarrhoea, please adhere to the 2 day rule and follow doctors guidance for illnesses such as Scarlet Fever and Chicken Pox. However, for a sniffle, cough or a mild sore throat, that can be placated with a dose of Calpol, please send your child into school, they are very resilient and often the distraction of their friends and teachers makes them feel better than sitting at home wallowing.

As normal, we will ring you if we notice that your child would benefit from some medication or is too unwell to stay in school.

Attendance

Now for a little moan. Having reviewed our attendance for this academic year, there has been a marked decrease in our figures. Our persistent absence (attendance below 90%, which is the equivalent of 20 or more days off school) has quadrupled this year. Some of this is sickness but the equivalent of 752 days learning has been lost to holidays. As a lover of exploring new places and spending away from home, I understand that holidays are extremely valuable to family life and creating lasting memories. BUT... school opens for 39 weeks each year, which means it is closed for almost 13 full weeks. We understand that holidays during term time are cheaper, but each time you go away for a week, your child misses a large chunk of learning that is built on each week. When attendance falls below 90%, it equates to more than 100 lessons missed.

Changes to legislation

Last year, the government began to implement changes to attendance legislation that have previously not been statutory. From September, schools are required to show that they are addressing any issues around extended sickness and holiday absence. The attendance audit has identified a number of families who are booking 2-3 extended holidays per year. Where this is the case, moving forward, multiple holiday absences will not be authorised. Where children holiday with parents separately, please ensure that both parents are aware of these changes.

I know this is not the case for all families, but I wanted you all to be aware of the changes in national legislation. Please be honest and tell us if your child will be absent, don't ask them to lie. We do worry when a child is missing without an explanation and as part of our safeguarding procedures, we have to contact Social Services if we cannot locate them.

Whilst some of you may not agree with these changes and may even roll your eyes at them, they are in the best interest of your child's development, dealing with absence and uniform issues detracts from your child's learning on a daily basis. Getting these habits established in primary school will support their transition to high school and beyond. I am happy to discuss this with you at any time.

I feel very honoured to be leading St Charles into the next academic year and am very proud of the family centred approach that makes St Charles such a special place. With your support, the staff and I will be able to build on the successes of the past 10 years and provide more opportunities and better outcomes for your families. We have lots of exciting events planned for the next academic year. Calendars will be available during the first week of term. Our doors (emails in the holidays) are always open, we can offer a wealth of support and advice on the most unusual of topics, so please don't be afraid to ask for help.

Email accounts will be monitored intermittently during the holidays. If you have a safeguarding concern, please email stcharlessafeguarding@gmail.com and this email will be checked daily, otherwise, emails will be dealt with on our return in September.

School will reopen to all pupils from Reception to Year 6 at 8.55am on Monday 4th September.

Have a lovely summer making treasurable memories with your beautiful family.

Mrs Drake