

2 April 2026

Dear Parents & Families

In advance of the new term, we wanted to provide all families with some key updates. These are intended to support families and keep you all up to date with information relevant for next term at St Dunstan's School.

The Headteacher will be writing a separate letter to celebrate the term and share some further updates with you.

Uniform Expectations

As we move into the summer term, we would like to update you of some key aspects of uniform:

Necklaces- Despite our efforts to adopt a flexible approach by allowing students to wear necklaces provided they remained tucked away, we continue to experience persistent issues. Managing constant requests for students to hide or remove these items has become a significant distraction to the school day. Consequently, we have made the decision that necklaces will no longer be permitted.

Any student found wearing a necklace will be asked to remove it immediately; repeated instances of non-compliance will result in the item being confiscated and held in the school office until the end of the day.

Pin Badges- We have noticed an increase in students wearing several pin badges on their blazers in addition to the rewards and roles pins distributed each term. Moving forwards we ask that students do not wear personal badges and pins on their blazers. Students will be allowed to continue to wear their rewards and roles badges along with one appropriate personal pin only.

Shoes - As the school year progresses it is inevitable that shoes will become tired or in need of repair. Please ensure that your child returns in the correct footwear and arrangements are made for repairs over the break. These can be found on the website in the uniform section if you are uncertain.

Piercings- Over the Easter break there may be a temptation to get a fresh piercing. Please be advised that St Dunstan's School does not allow any facial piercings. Fresh piercings generally take a minimum of 4 weeks to heal. For this reason we advise against having new piercings over the break. Students will be expected to return to school with facial piercings removed and plasters or spacers will not be permitted.

PE Kit

Over the past two terms, we have noted a significant increase in the number of students requesting spare PE kits at the start of lessons. We always aim to support students on an occasional basis, however, the current volume of requests has become unsustainable and is causing a disruptive delay to the start of lessons. To ensure a smooth transition into lessons, we kindly ask for your support in checking that students have all necessary items in advance of the new term. As a reminder, our required PE kit consists of black shorts, sports leggings, or a skort; the black and maroon PE polo featuring the St Dunstan's logo; white trainer socks; and appropriate trainers for both indoor and hardcourt use. By ensuring students arrive fully prepared, we can maximise their time spent in active participation. Thank you for your support.

Enrichment Activities

A letter and Google form has been shared with all families in Years 7-9 containing the details of our enrichment activities for the end of this school year. Enrichment days are Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 July.

Please can families ensure the form is completed in full by no later than **Tuesday 21 April** in order that arrangements for payment can be made.

This final week of the school year will also host our year 10 Work Experience week and final Duke of Edinburgh expedition, so this will be a positive and exciting end to our academic year.

Year 11

Year 11 students have been invited to attend revision sessions in the second week of the Easter holidays. These have been deliberately planned to give students a chance to revise in a structured environment under the guidance of teachers as well as provide students with a break from school during the first week. We will be looking to arrange half term revision sessions too, for subjects that may not be running in the Easter break ahead of the exams.

Our key message to students is to 'make Easter count'. Whilst the Easter break should be a time for rest and recuperation, it should also be a time of independent study and revision. The majority of students will have a long 12 week break after the

completion of the exams to make up for the time over April and May when they prioritised their studies.

We would like to make all families aware that the final day for our Year 11 students will be Friday 12 June 2026. Students are expected to attend school full-time up to and including this date.

To provide the best possible preparation, we will implement a bespoke exam timetable during the formal assessment period. This schedule is designed to offer intensive, last-minute support from class teachers immediately before each exam.

We will share the full details of this specialised timetable with students and families at the start of next term.

Mobile Phones

As you may be aware, the Department for Education (DfE) recently updated its national guidance, recommending that mobile devices are not used, seen, or heard throughout the entirety of the school day. This includes break times and lunch periods.

While St Dunstan's School has maintained a "not seen, not heard" policy for several years, these updated national guidelines reinforce the importance of a focused educational environment. Over the coming months, we will be collaborating with our partner schools across the Trust to explore these suggestions further. We will also consult with students and staff to hear their thoughts and perspectives. We are currently evaluating options that best suit our specific community context.

We would like to make you aware that we will be moving away from the use of phones to purchase food in the canteen. These changes will come into place later in the summer term and we will write to you nearer the time to make you aware of these procedures.

Safeguarding

The Department of Education is currently updating its "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (KCSIE) guidelines to better address modern challenges, and these proposed changes are now open for public consultation until April 22nd. The revisions introduce a stronger focus on shielding students from AI-generated deepfakes, implementing more robust policies for mobile phone use during school hours, and establishing clearer protocols for supporting gender-questioning children

that prioritise partnership with parents. By centering on mental health and online safety, these updates aim to ensure school safeguarding practices remain effective and up to date with the latest technology and social trends.

Personal Development

Starting 1 September 2026, the Department of Education is introducing updated statutory guidance for Relationships and Sex Education that addresses several important themes including digital safety, gender and sex, harmful behaviours, mental health, physical safety, and safeguarding. To keep you fully informed, we will share the revised PSHE and RSE curriculum with you before the new school year begins. This allows you time to review the specific teaching materials and provide your feedback before any of the lesson plans are finalised for your children.

Staff updates

This term, we say goodbye to two valued members of our team, Mrs Payne (ELSA) and Miss Linden (Teaching Assistant). Additionally, we would like to acknowledge Mr Jarrett, who retired from the site team in February. We thank them all for their dedication to the school and wish them the very best for the future.

Thank you all for your continued support and we look forward to seeing the students return after the half term break.

Yours sincerely



Mr P Balkwill
Headteacher

Ms K Haden
Deputy Head

Mr T Armstrong
Assistant Head

Mrs A Richards
Assistant Head

Mrs N Watson
Assistant Head