



October Newsletter 2021

Headteacher's Address

Dear Parents and Carers,

Well, here we are at the end of the first term of 2021. It has been a great start to the year so far and staff have been delighted to welcome students back to school under slightly more 'normal' conditions. Year 7 have made a very positive start to their secondary school career and it is wonderful to see them finding their way around the school and engaging with their learning as well as the wider life of the school. In the same way as the new students, our new staff are also settling in and enjoying being a part of the St Dunstan's Community.

Throughout term one, our weekly assemblies have focused on each of our core values in turn so that the whole school understands the elements that make up each value, has been shown examples of those values in action and all of us have been able to consider how we can live each value. Tutor time activities have followed up on assemblies so that there is room for discussion and reflection. In addition to the values assemblies, we have celebrated Black History Month with an assembly from Mr Atkinson and activities in tutor and PSHE lessons – more of this later in the newsletter.

I would like to give a special mention to Year 11 whose GCSE course has been disrupted by Covid. All of the staff are very proud of the resilience that the year group have shown as they have returned to school this term; they are working hard to prepare for their mock exams next term as well as being supportive to younger students and setting a great example for the rest of the school. They are a delightful group of young people who embody the St Dunstan's Way. Well done Year 11!

I would also like to thank all the staff who have thrown themselves back into the life of the school with gusto setting up sports clubs, chess clubs, art catch up sessions, drama club and mentoring as well as taking time out to check in with students on a regular basis. It is lovely to see how many praise emails are being sent home and how many housepoints are being issued!

Mrs Gray is very active in running the Inclusion Room to support with students' wellbeing and has a timetable of specific interventions; please note that these are by referral and there may be a waiting list. In addition to the work done by Mrs Gray, Mrs Chinnock is delivering Solutions Focused interventions and we are working closely with the school nurse and our PFSA to help students – again this is by referral.

Of course, the 'elephant in the room' is Covid 19 which is still with us and will be for some time to come. We have been very conscientious in the measures that we have put in place and have been fortunate to have had very few cases; as we move into the winter months, we still need to be mindful of the virulence of the disease and how easily it can spread. Please encourage your children to wear masks when in communal areas as well as reminding them to practice good hygiene by washing their hands regularly and using a handkerchief if they are coughing or sneezing. We will continue to follow government guidance and hope that the road to recovery for the country continues.

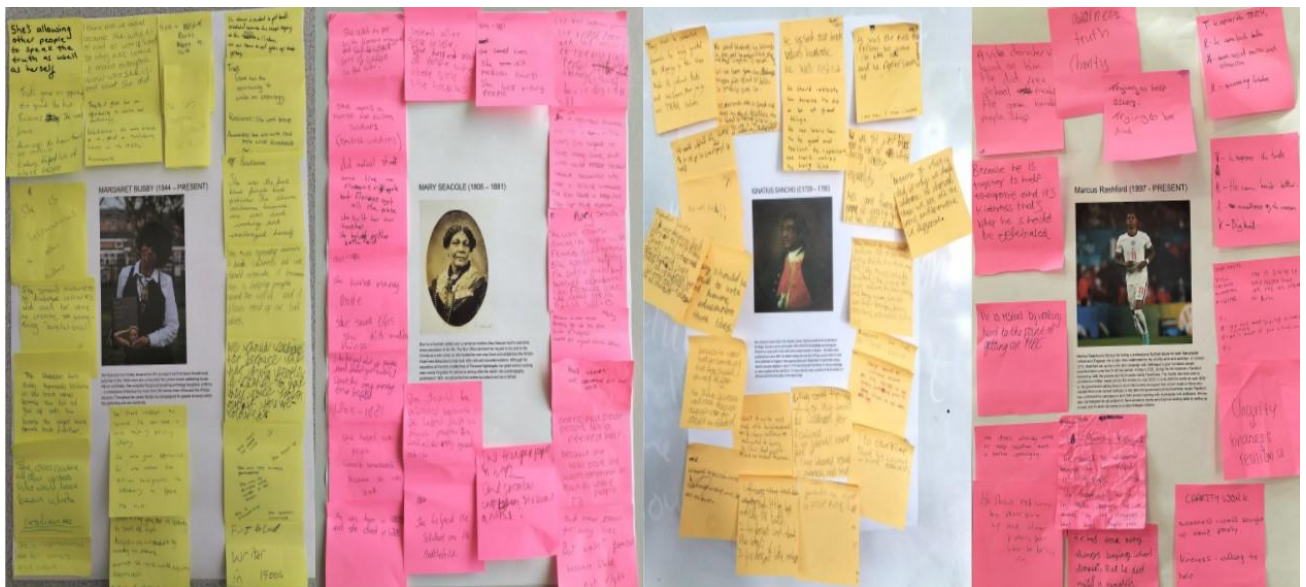
It has been very pleasing to see that the vast majority of students are punctual to school, wearing the right uniform and living our core values of Truth, Resilience, Awareness and Kindness to stay on TRAK. Please ensure that these very high standards continue as we move into next term. Please note that trainers are not permitted for day to day wear. Thank you, as always, for your support – have a great half term break and we will look forward to seeing everyone at 8.45 on November 1st.

Mrs Bevan

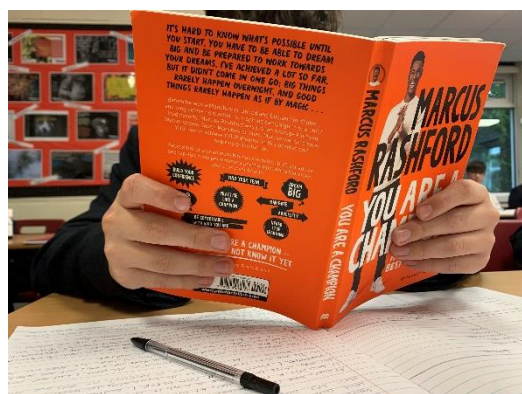
Black History Month

October is Black History Month and as a school – and for the whole Trust – it is an important opportunity to raise awareness, and celebrate the achievements of black people in the United Kingdom and across the world. The Trust supports the Stephen Lawrence Foundation and, on INSET in September, staff were privileged to hear a talk by author Nikesh Shukla, about prejudice and its impact. His talk was very powerful and very moving for all staff.

Following on from Nikesh's presentation, we have put a lot of thought into how best to celebrate Black History Month this year. We started with an assembly from Mr Atkinson which had the whole school spellbound. Following on from this, each tutor group was asked to study a significant person from black British history. Students then wrote down their reasons why we should celebrate them, what we can learn from them and how they represent our TRAK values. These opinions, thoughts and ideas were articulated onto post-it notes and stuck around the person's biography. These have been collected and a gallery celebrating British Black History has been created in the main corridor of the school. Here are some of the results.



In addition to tutor activities, PB and PSHE lessons have focused on celebrating being Black and British through the theme 'proud to be'. This includes studying significant Black Britons through history and reflecting on what we are proud of at an individual level. This has culminated in classes creating displays and asking poignant questions about the study of diversity in education. We have been grateful for the donation of four copies of Marcus Rashford's book which are being shared with students. They are finding it an inspirational read. Thank you to our anonymous donor.



Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award

Year 11 students finally had the opportunity to complete their slightly COVID modified D of E expedition at the end of September.

Our groups showed real determination and resilience as they walked for over 6 hours each day over the two days. The weather was kind to us and the students showed their true colours, looking after one another and getting through as a team.

Congratulations to James, Albert, Tegan and Nafis who have now fully completed their Bronze award; and to Jodi who has achieved the Bronze certificate of achievement.

This expedition has been the result of over a year of commitment to training sessions in school along with their volunteering, skills and physical sections. It has been a challenging time to continue and complete their D of E - their perseverance and resilience is to be applauded. They have really lived our TRAK values to complete their Bronze Award. Well done to them all!

We are looking forward to working with the thirty students from years 9 and 10 who have signed up to complete the award this year.

Mrs Manning and Mrs Potter



Year 11 Conference

We are planning an evening of bespoke support and revision tips for Year 11 on November 11th (Covid permitting) – Year 11 parents and carers will be receiving a letter in the post with more details over half term.

Year 11 Update

We have missed seeing our Year 11s face to face in the final week of term although we are delighted to see all the work that has been submitted by them so far. Here are some updates for the year group:

Mock Exams

Mock exams will take place during the week beginning November 22nd for one week. Please make a head start in preparing for these. Revision guide letters will be distributed during the first week back after half term if you would like to make a purchase.

Interventions

Interventions have started in English and Maths. These continue to target specific areas for development. Please audit your own skills so that you know which areas you need to work on.

Revision Sessions

Revision sessions for English and Science will start after half term on Weds (Science) and Thursday (English). These will take place between 3.20 - 4.15 in the English and Science Blocks

Bridgwater College

Our Year 11s enjoyed a talk from Bridgwater College about the courses available and the application process. There will be an opportunity later on in the year for students who wish to go to Bridgwater College, to attend a taster day.

Strode College

We are in the process of rearranging our visit from Strode College that was due to be held on the 18th October. We will be taking all

Year 11 students there for a taster day on the 1st of December. (Covid allowing). More details to follow.

College and 6th Form Open Evenings

All of our local 6th Form providers are holding Open Evenings. These will need to be booked by students / parents. We have been delighted to hear how many students have been proactive in reserving a space.

Prefects, Student Leaders and Sports Leaders

We have been proud to see our Tutees taking up their responsibilities in their leadership roles around the school. It is great to see the maturity and the commitment that they have shown by undertaking these important roles. We are also really proud of their performance during our recent Open Evening.

Housepoints

Year 11 have made a great start earning house points. Our current, top 5 individuals are:

Sarah T
Blake C
Tegan L
Tony M
Poppy C

Congratulations to them all.

If anyone is struggling at home or needs our support in anything, we are just an email or a phonecall away. We hope that you enjoy a relaxing half term break and do lots of things that make you happy.

Mrs Gregory and Mrs Manning

Careers

Our Year 11s enjoyed a talk from Bridgwater College about the courses available and the application process. It's exciting to start thinking about future chapters in their career journeys. Students now begin the process of seeking the truth about their career choices and requirements; testing resilience in applying and finding apprenticeship placements; growing awareness of the vast array of courses on offer and how they learn best and remembering to be kind to oneself along the way.



Year 11 Running Club

This year has seen the launch of another new club at St Dunstan's School - the Year 11 Running Club! Coached by Mrs Gregory, Mrs Manning and Mrs Potter, students have embarked upon the NHS' Couch to 5K programme; a course which aims to take you from a sedentary, non runner to someone who can run for 30 minutes non stop. So far we have even entered the Virgin Giving Mini London Marathon, running 2.6 miles at the same time as thousands of other students across the country. Students received a certificate and will get a commemorative pin badge as their reward.

Each week we meet a collection of familiar faces as students move up through the course and we have enjoyed road routes around the school site, in the community and even down the High Street. As an inclusive running group, we have runners of all paces and we encourage each other in everything we do. Our motto is that it's not about the pace, it's about maintaining the rhythm so that you can make it to the end of the suggested time. We have repeated week 3 because we wanted to be sure that we were comfortable with the 3 minute runs and now we leave our runners to practice over half term independently.

We hope that running will help our Year 11s with their resilience and their mental health at such a time in their lives when things can get stressful with exam preparation and the pandemic. Running helps clear the mind, destress and it's a win every time you lace those trainers up. Well done Year 11 runners - keep it up!



Drama Club

This term saw the return of Drama Club for all year groups. Students from Years 7 to 10 created an excellent piece of physical theatre based on a poem about climate change. There were giggles and laughter, rehearsals that took them all around the school grounds and performances that triumphed as passers by stopped to watch their progress.

Students will be visiting Millfield School later in the year to attend theatrical workshops and eventually to be involved with a Performing Arts exhibition that includes working with a number of schools around the area. This will be an exciting opportunity for students to develop their awareness of Drama as an art form.

It's lovely to be thinking about live performances again. Exciting times. Watch this space.

Race For Life (Take 2!)



Year 7 and 8 (now 8 and 9) finally got to complete their race for life on the 15th September and what a magnificent job they did!

The final amount raised by St Dunstan's for Cancer Research = **£1502.21!! Amazing!**

For every £1 donated, 80p is used to beat cancer (the remaining 20p goes towards raising funds for the future). The majority that cancer research spend each year goes towards their ground-breaking research. And thanks to research, cancer survival is improving and has doubled over the past 40 years in the UK. We are very proud that so many of our students took part and helped to raise such a wonderful amount of money. It was particularly pleasing to see Year 11 Sports Leaders out supporting the younger students as they took part in the race. Well done to everyone!



Safeguarding

On October 15th, we were delighted to welcome Androulla Nicolaou from the Child Sexual Exploitation Team. Andri delivered separate, age appropriate sessions to all students. Andri has many years' experience of working with young people who have been the victims of exploitation and now uses her expertise to keep other young people informed of potential risks that they might face as well as where and how to find help if they are worried for themselves or their friends. Expert visitors like this help us to stay on TRAK by equipping us with the education and awareness that we need in order to stay safe. Please discuss the content of the session with your child if you have the opportunity to do so.



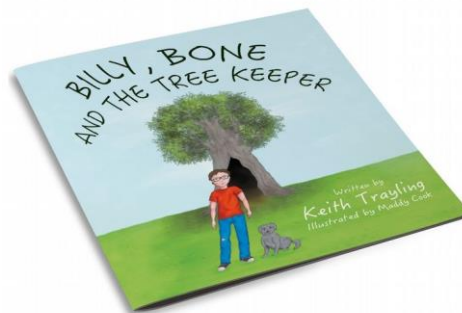
Talented Staff

We knew that Mrs Cook, our fabulous receptionist, was a talented artist but we had no idea how talented until we discovered that she has quietly been illustrating a children's book! We are all super impressed and look forward to seeing more of her work.

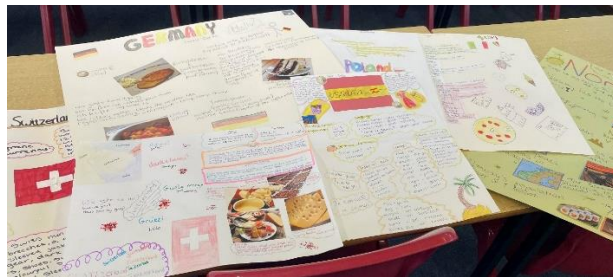
This easy-to-read story book has an environmental message that children of all ages will love. A book which makes a great bedtime story for parents and grandparents to read or for children to read to themselves or their siblings. It teaches children the benefits of caring for the planet in a sweet and engaging way.

Join Billy and his four-legged best friend Bone, as they find an intriguing hole in an old tree and decide to look inside. What, and more importantly who, will they find...?

For more, visit billyandbone.com



European Day of Languages



KS3 students took part in a poster competition to celebrate the European day of languages. Students had to seek Truth to find out about their country and were Resilient in using their time to create it. This competition was to raise Awareness of other European countries, languages and traditions. The Leadership Team had the very difficult task of selecting the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place for each of the classes. Well done to everyone involved!

The results are:

7a1 - Tia and Raeven, Molly B, Keira

7b1 - Macy and Daisy, Jasmine, Reuben and Harry

8a2 - Chloe and Hannah, Valentino, Felix

9a2 - Halle and Thalia, Charlie B, Molly-Boo

9a3 - Devin and Ruby, Lilly, Rebekah and Zion, Savannah

Thank You

Thank you for all the generous donations we have had including Lego, uniform, worry monsters and books . We are always very grateful for your kindness

Wanted



For every £10 you spend (in store or online) at Morrisons, you'll get a 'Grow Token' to help your school get everything they need to get growing. Download the MyMorrisons app today to start collecting Grow Tokens and choose the school you'd like to donate them to.

Your chosen school will be able to exchange their Grow Tokens for FREE gardening equipment to get kids growing.

We are collecting vouchers for the gardening equipment to help with extracurricular activities. Please register at your local Morrisons and select St Dunstan's for your vouchers. You do not need to hand them into school as they are automatically collected in the store via the app.

Does anyone have any spare bulbs that we could plant around the school? We have a number of keen gardeners who would love to spend some of their time making our school look beautiful in the Spring.

Graphics

Do you have any old magazines, particularly ones that are fashion or interior ones?
We would be extremely grateful for any donation big or small



Student Support and Inclusion

During lunchtimes Student Support and Inclusion are open to anyone who wants a quiet space. It can be a great opportunity to make new friends from different year groups. Do you have any good quality games or puzzles or activities that our pupils could use at lunchtimes?



We would be extremely grateful for any support
Thank you Cath Gray and Wendy Lewis

Extra Curricular Activities

Extra Curricular Activities running next term are:

| EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES Term 2: Nov-Dec 2021 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| Lunchtime Clubs 12:40 - 1:05 | Lunchtime Chess Club (Room 1) | | | | |
| After school SPORT clubs 3:15-4:15 | Year 7-9 Rugby (Field) Year 7-9 Hockey (Field) Year 11 Running club (KAG and JM) Year 9-11 Badminton (Sports Hall) | Year 7 - 8 Group A Badminton (Sports Hall) (See Mr Green if you are unsure what group you are in.) Year 7 - 8 Girls Netball (Courts) | Year 7 -10 Basketball (Sports Hall) | Year 10 & 11 Rugby (Field) Year 9 - 11 Netball (Courts) Year 7 - 8 Group B Badminton (Sports Hall) <i>Any newcomers please come on Thursdays!</i> (See Mr Green if you are unsure what group you are in.) | |
| After school 3:15-4:15 Other clubs | Yr11 Art (L3) Homework club (Library) | Homework club (Library) | Drama Club (Drama Studio) Yr 11 Art Week B only (L3) Year 8 Seasonal Cooking Club until 4:45 (Invitation only - HP) Homework club (Library) | Chess Club (Room 1) Homework club (Library) | Year 10 & 11 Art (L3) Homework club (Library) |

Notes:

- Full PE kit required for ALL sport clubs. Change after school. Meet at the changing rooms
- Clubs end at 4:15.
- Students attending 3 or more clubs will receive a participation point for the term.
- DofE Bronze (Years 9 and 10) - specific dates will be shared with the students involved. HP and JM

Clocks Back – Dark Nights

We'll soon be setting the clocks back an hour and summer-time will end. We thought it would be helpful to share the resources below that have been sent to us, that will help remind children, including teenagers, about road safety and keeping safe in the dark.

Teaching Road Safety: A Guide for Parents <https://www.rosopa.com/media/documents/road-safety/teaching-road-safety-a-guide-for-parents.pdf>

Safety First – Cycling at Night <https://www.cycletraining.co.uk/cycle-training-and-cycle-safety/safety-first-cycling-at-night/>

Road safety teaching resources for children <https://www.think.gov.uk/education-resources/>

Keeping Children Safe in the Dark <https://firstaidforlife.org.uk/keeping-children-safe-in-dark/>

Dark Nights <https://www.childcare.co.uk/information/dark-nights-children-safety>

Be Bright Be Seen <https://brightkidz.co.uk/initiatives/be-bright-be-seen/>

Hallowe'en

Speaking of dark nights, Hallowe'en falls at the end of half term. If children are out trick or treating, please be mindful of road safety and personal safety. Please also be aware that, for some people, it is worrying to have knocks on the door on a dark evening so do be kind as you are out and about. Have fun safely and thoughtfully!

Pastoral News

Staying on T.R.A.K

As you know, we have identified the values that we feel best represent our school.

- **Truth**
- **Resilience**
- **Awareness**
- **Kindness**

We believe that St Dunstan's students should:

- seek **Truth**, show a thirst for learning and question what they hear
- grow **Resilience** by working hard, staying positive and embracing challenge
- stay **Aware** of thoughts and feelings, their impact on others and the environment and share hope
- choose **Kindness** by showing gratitude, respecting all and including others

As a result of living these core values, students will stay on TRAK; these values will be central to our school life and will permeate all that we do.

Tutor Groups

As you know, we have moved to horizontal tutor groups for the next year – this means that each tutor group will be made up of students in the same year group rather than mixed ages. Our reasons for this are that, if Covid should still be looming, it will mean that tutor groups can continue if we have to go back into year group bubbles; this in turn means that our excellent pastoral care can continue with students being able to see their tutor every day. These tutor groups are working very well and students are receiving excellent support from their tutors. Please do contact your child's tutor as your first point of contact if you have questions or concerns.

Holidays During Term Time

Please ensure that you complete an official holiday request form if you wish to request a holiday during term time. The form can be found on the school website:

<https://www.midsomernortonschoolpartnership.com/uploads/files/leave-of-absence-request-form.pdf>

Please note that it is a two-sided form. Holidays during term time can only be authorised under exceptional circumstances – the second page of the form lists what does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

School Nurse

Our School Nurse service is running very successfully. If students have concerns or need to talk to someone, they can use the text number or QR code in the poster to access help or advice.



The poster is for ChatHealth, a service provided by Somerset County Council. It features a teal background with a pink speech bubble graphic. Inside the speech bubble, the following topics are listed: Emotional Health, Relationships, Sexual Health, Drugs, Smoking, and Alcohol. The text on the poster reads: 'Got a concern? If you're 11-19 it only takes one text to start making a difference'. Below this, it says 'You'll get confidential advice from your School Nursing Team and you don't have to give your name if you don't want to. Just send a text or scan me' followed by the text number '07480 635 516'. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner. Logos for ChatHealth, Somerset County Council, and Improving Lives are also present. A small disclaimer at the bottom states: 'Disclaimer: This is not an emergency service. It operates Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm and is only available by using a UK mobile number. Your messages are stored on our secure systems and can be seen by the School Nursing Team who run our ChatHealth Service. Although this is a confidential service in the event of an safeguarding issue the School Nurse has a duty of care to act on this and may escalate the concern.'

ChatHealth

Emotional Health
Relationships
Sexual Health
Drugs
Smoking
Alcohol

SOMERSET
County Council

Got a concern?
If you're 11-19
it only takes one text to
start making a difference

You'll get confidential advice from your
School Nursing Team and you don't have
to give your name if you don't want to.
Just send a text or scan me
07480 635 516

Improving
LIVES

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Covid Testing

As a school, we have had very low numbers of cases; please ensure that your child continues to do a Lateral Flow Test twice a week (Sundays and Wednesdays) and that you report the results to the government website and on the school google form.

Government website - <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

School form - <https://forms.gle/vp52QAkBMCW2Svrn7>

We know there has been a significant rise in negative online incidents and experiences for young people. A huge thank you to the NSPCC for running a webinar about online safety for us. A reminder that this webinar was recorded and we have uploaded it for parents / carers who were not able to attend. Please find the link below.

[St Dunstan's Online Safety Webinar](#)

We are hoping to run another such session next year, for people that would like to receive the training whilst having the opportunity to ask questions, and we will keep you informed about this. The NSPCC also provided us with additional resources to help parents / carers keep their children safe online and these can be found below.

Avon and Somerset Police Webinars – NEW!

As you know, there have also been webinars run by Avon and Somerset Police but places were taken up so quickly that it was difficult for a lot of parents to attend. We are delighted that the police have set up a YouTube channel so that you can see three recorded sessions covering topics including:

- Exploitation of children online
- Technical protective and safety measures available
- Tips on starting a conversation with children about the internet and how to use it safely.

Here is the link – we highly recommend viewing the videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCf41oqLODZCDKOmdj6ulSDg>

Net Aware: An easy guide to apps, games and sites:

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

NSPCC Online safety resources:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Advice and support for young people, via Childline:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/>

YoungMinds parent helpline:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-helpline/>

<https://vimeo.com/480839159>

Have a look at this film about who to trust online

<https://vimeo.com/uksic>

Please note that you can find the Trust safeguarding policy (and all other policies) by using this link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B5Z73cTOEMQdTVJCVU0weFZQb2s?resourcekey=0-mC9nM0f-rFEjRkAeis0sAw>



Medicines/Medical Conditions



Please remember to update any medical conditions or required medicines with the school office.

If your son/daughter suffers from Asthma and uses an inhaler or has an allergy and requires an epipen, please supply the school with a spare to keep for emergencies.

Prescribed medicines administered by the school or unprescribed medicines administered by students both require an authorised form to be completed which is available from the school office

Important Information



Keeping in contact



Please remember to update any changes of your contact details for your son/daughter with the school office.

You can make changes to your details by calling 01458 832943 or emailing:
secretary@stdunstansschool.com.

We are relying on email communication more than ever to send you updates and notices.

To help you to receive your emails promptly, there are a few things you can do to help

- Inform the school if you change your email address
- Check your email box daily including your SPAM mail
- Regularly sort and delete any unrequired messages to keep space in your inbox

We will look forward to seeing everyone back in their classrooms, in correct uniform and with the correct equipment (including a reading book) on November 1st. A reminder that students should be in their classroom at 8.50 and so should arrive on site by 8.45



Term Dates

Term 2 begins on Monday 1 November 2021

Term 2 ends on Friday 17 December 2021

Term 3 begins on THURSDAY 6 January 2022

Term 3 ends on Friday 18 February 2022

INSET Days next year are:

Tuesday and Wednesday 4 and 5 January 2022

Have a great Half Term!