



18<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Autumn Term Week 11 Headteacher Update**

As you are aware we had a visit from the Catholic Schools Inspectorate last week. Inspectors focused on the Catholic Life and Mission, Religious Education and Collective Worship. Thank you to all those parents/carers who completed the parent questionnaire and a special thank you to those who contributed to the inspection. It is clear from the answers how much our parents/carers value and support all that is on offer at St James'. I am extremely proud of our whole school family and a special thank you goes to Miss Purkiss, our Associate Assistant Headteacher and Head of RE who was phenomenal, and of course to all of our RE teachers and wider staff who supported in so many ways throughout the inspection. Unfortunately, I am unable to share the outcome of the inspection with you as it is currently undergoing quality assurance. As soon as it is published, I will be sending a copy to all.

On Thursday last week we welcomed our class of 2024 back to school for the final time for Prize Evening. It was a lovely occasion where we congratulated all of our former students on their achievements and found out how they are getting on in their next stages of their lives. Last year 38 students, or 24%, of the Year group passed 5 or more GCSEs at grade 7 or above (the previous A or A\*). 100 students, or 63%, of them passed 5 or more GCSEs at grade 5 or above. The Head Boy and Girl said in their speeches that the class of 2024 leave St James' with a legacy for all other Year groups, including their own, to follow.

Our Year 7 Meet the Tutor Evening took place on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> November, and it was a fantastic success. We were delighted to see so many Year 7 parents in attendance, engaging with tutors and showing an active interest in their children's education. The feedback submitted through the parental voice questionnaire, coordinated by Mr. Maidment, has been overwhelmingly positive. Parents expressed appreciation for the insights shared and the strong support system we have in place for our children. We're thrilled by the feedback and are eager to build on this positive start over the next five years, continuing to strengthen the partnership between home and school. The feedback summary is now available on our website for those who wish to review it can do so by clicking [here](#).

As I shared in my weekly letter earlier in the term, our school was shortlisted for the Educate Awards for the Careers and Enterprise Award. On Friday evening, the Senior Leadership Team and I attended the awards evening. It was a fantastic evening which really showcased the very best of education across the Northwest of England. Sadly, this time we did not win the Award but we are delighted to have received public recognition for the hard work and emphasis that we place on Careers education at St James'.

This week's Gospel from Mark gives us a vivid image: *"The stars will fall from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken."* These words remind us that change and challenge are inevitable parts of our lives. At St James', we recognise that each of us will face moments when things feel uncertain or even shaken. For our children, these times might come in the form of exams, new responsibilities, or simply the daily pressures of school life. But just as the heavens stand firm despite their shifting stars, so too do we stand firm in our faith, our values, and our family. When we face challenges together, with courage and resilience, we learn and grow stronger. Let us keep supporting one another knowing that even in times of difficulty, God is guiding us.

I hope you have a fantastic week and a reminder that school is closed on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November for our INSET day. Our staff will be unavailable via email from the afternoon of Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November until Monday 25<sup>th</sup>



# ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

November, thank you in advance for not contacting them during this period. If you need anything this week, please do not hesitate to get in touch [headteacherpa@stjamesheadle.co.uk](mailto:headteacherpa@stjamesheadle.co.uk)

Yours faithfully

Mr A Pontifex  
Headteacher



With God  
all things are possible

Matthew 19:26